

Contras attack farms, clinic in Nicaragua

BY HARVEY McARTHUR

COOPERATIVE MONTERREY, Jinotega, Nicaragua — At 2:00 in the morning on March 19, contra mercenaries armed by Washington attacked this farm cooperative near Asturias in north-central Nicaragua.

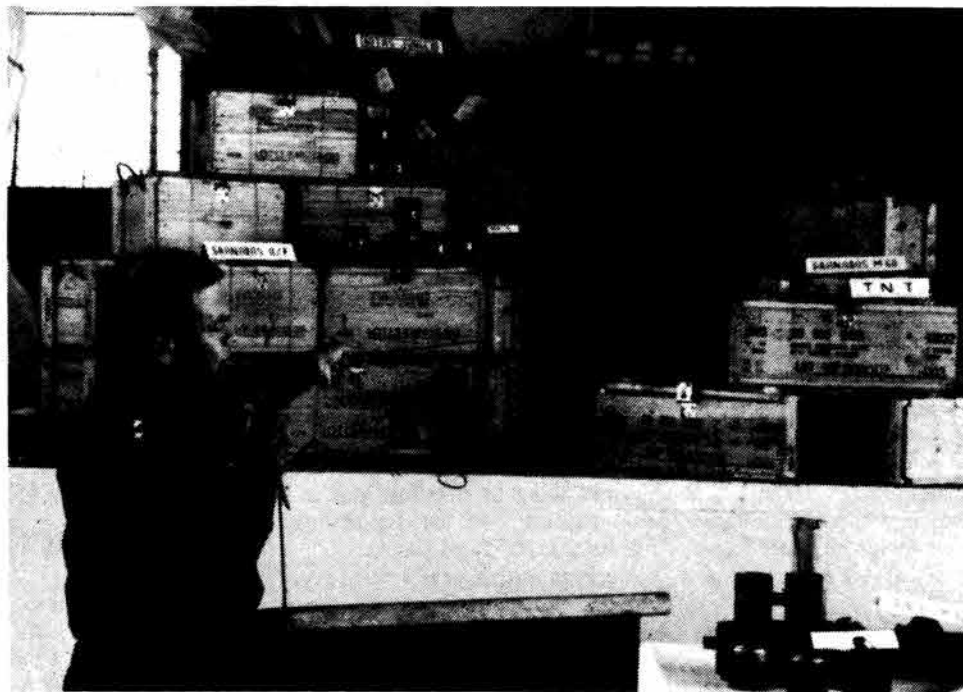
They killed two farmers and wounded several more, burned a warehouse containing five tons of freshly harvested coffee, and destroyed 10 houses. Estimates on the number of attackers ranged from 60 to 150.

When the *Militant* and other reporters arrived here March 21, the Red Cross had just begun emergency distribution of two truckloads of food, clothing, and blankets.

Marcelino González, a 35-year-old farmer, told us that he and 11 others had attempted to defend the cooperative, but were forced to retreat as the mercenaries bombarded them with rockets and grenades. His 66-year-old father, who was in charge of defense, was killed in the attack.

González said that a smaller group of contras had raided the cooperative the night of March 10. They burned one house and shouted that they would kill everyone if they didn't abandon the area.

The farmers stayed, said González, Continued on Page 6



At February news conference, Sandinista army official displays captured U.S. weapons dropped to contra terrorists by CIA. U.S. aid to contras permits them to continue killings and sabotage in Nicaragua.

Atty. General Edwin Meese: crusader against the U.S. Bill of Rights

BY FRED FELDMAN

Attorney General Edwin Meese is a busy man.

Even while preoccupied with helping the Reagan administration try to cover its tracks in the Iran-contra scandals, he pushed along a favorite project: the expanded use of the death penalty.

In February, the Justice Department he heads urged a commission to establish procedures for executing those convicted of certain offenses, such as "treason." No one has been sentenced to death on any federal charges since 1972, when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that then-existing death penalty laws were arbitrary and discriminatory.

A Meese flunky hailed "the substantial benefits in terms of protection of society" that execution supposedly affords.

The Justice Department's move sparked

a public outcry and the commission voted in March to turn thumbs down on the proposal.

The incident typifies how Meese and the Justice Department have conducted themselves as frontline fighters against the democratic rights of working people. And it highlights the resistance they are meeting from working people and others with a life-and-death stake in defending democratic rights.

Top defendant

Today Meese is a top defendant in a federal courtroom in New York City's Foley Square. As chief law enforcement officer of the United States, he heads up the opposition to the demand for an injunction barring government police agencies from using FBI files obtained through illegal spying on the Socialist Workers Party and

Young Socialist Alliance.

In a landmark decision last August in the suit brought by the SWP and YSA against the government's spy agencies, Judge Thomas Griesa ruled that a 40-year campaign of spying and disruption against these organizations had been unconstitutional. Griesa agreed to hold hearings to consider the scope of an injunction barring use of the files.

Now the Justice Department is demanding that the FBI and other government agencies have a free hand in using the illegally obtained files.

Justice Department lawyers — backed by affidavits from officials of 11 government agencies — argue that the government's need to carry out political surveillance over those it considers actually or possibly subversive overrides the Bill of Rights.

For the U.S. government, political surveillance, like the death penalty, is a weapon of intimidation wielded against workers, farmers, and others.

Nothing new

Taking aim at constitutional rights is nothing new for Edwin Meese.

The attorney general has headed the pack urging that the "war on drugs" be used to restrict democratic rights. On March 4, 1986, for instance, he defended proposals calling for drug testing of all federal employees. Meese insisted this was not an unconstitutional invasion of privacy "because it's something the employee consents to" as a condition of employment.

Speaking to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce on October 30, Meese made illegal drug use the pretext for a call on employers to carry out "surveillance of problem areas, such as locker rooms, parking lots, shipping and mailroom areas, and nearby taverns if necessary."

Meese has fought hard to get rid of affirmative action programs that have undermined the employers' ability to discriminate against Blacks and women and to di-

Salvador liberation fighters strike big blow against U.S.-trained army

BY HARRY RING

Liberation fighters inflicted a major blow on Salvadoran army forces by attacking and virtually destroying a key government military base. The U.S. military "adviser" stationed at the base was among those killed.

Target of the sudden, devastating March 31 attack was the army post at El Paraíso, 36 miles from the capital city of San Salvador.

Salvadoran military officials said more than 180 soldiers at the base were killed or wounded, including U.S. Army Sgt. Gregory Fronius.

Guerrilla fighters of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front, who carried through the stunning attack, were reported to have taken at least 200 prisoners and captured a supply of weapons. The bodies of eight guerrilla fighters were

found on the base.

Fronius is said to be the first GI to die in combat in El Salvador. He was the second U.S. citizen to die there in less than a week.

A few days earlier, Richard Krobock, a CIA agent, was killed when a Salvadoran military helicopter crashed.

The Pentagon admits that five other U.S. military men have been killed in El Salvador since 1983.

Washington has poured almost a billion dollars into propping up the Salvadoran regime. But the combined efforts of the two governments have been unable to crush the rural-based guerrillas or stem a rising fight-back by the urban trade union movement.

A March 31 dispatch to the *New York Times* said the El Paraíso guerrilla attack "was seen as a humiliation for the Ameri-

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4,000 in Detroit say end aid to contras

BY KIBWE DIARRA

DETROIT — Nearly 4,000 rallied here March 29 against U.S. intervention in Central America.

Students, trade unionists, and activists from Central America solidarity, anti-apartheid, peace, antinuclear, women's rights, and church organizations took part. It was the most successful action here ever against Washington's war in Central America.

Jackie Rubio from the Central America Solidarity Committee said the turnout reflected "the breadth of opposition to U.S. policy in Central America."

The march, which began at the Federal Building downtown, was youthful and spirited. Chants rang out of, "USA, CIA, hands off Nicaragua," "Boycott South Africa, not Nicaragua" and "Stop the bombing, stop the war — U.S. out of El Salvador!"

Union members could be seen in the crowd wearing caps and jackets from several United Auto Workers (UAW) locals, and from Teamsters, Machinists, and government-employee locals. An American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees union local marched with its banner.

While the theme of the march was "Stop U.S. intervention in Central America," many activists also carried anti-apartheid signs. The Michigan Anti-Apartheid Coordinating Council had a big banner reading "Stop contra funding from southern Africa to Central America."

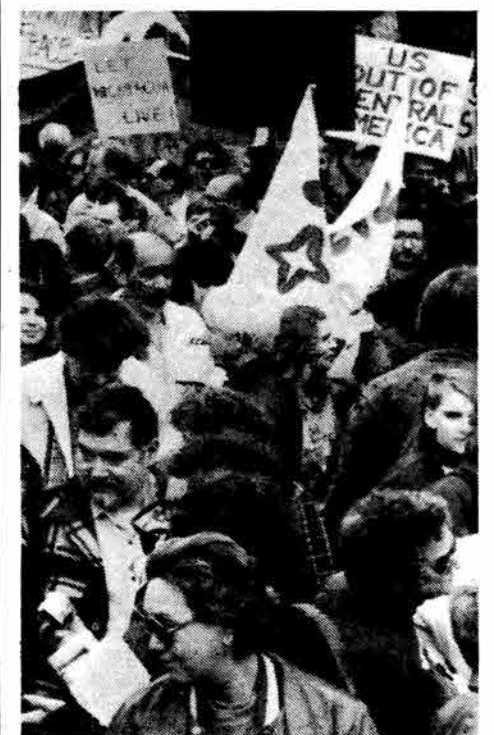
An enthusiastic contingent from Renaissance High School in Detroit carried a "High School students say no aid to contras. Free South Africa." banner.

Many marchers were participating in their first big protest. There were 50 students from Canton-Plymouth High who joined the action. Students came from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, as well as other college campuses in the state.

As the protesters entered the rally site, they were greeted by the Ujima Jazz Ensemble playing a tune dedicated to imprisoned African National Congress (ANC) leader Nelson Mandela.

Morrie Gleicher, chairperson of the broad coalition that built the demonstration, said it was intended to send a message

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Militant

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—BUILDING THE APRIL 25 ANTIWAR, ANTI-APARTHEID ACTIONS—

April 25 drive steps up in L.A.

BY OLLIE BIVENS

LOS ANGELES — About 140 unionists, students, and others attended the kickoff meeting of the recently formed Southern California Mobilization for Justice and Peace in Central America and Southern Africa.

The March 16 meeting opened a campaign here to bring large numbers from the Los Angeles area to the April 25 antiwar, anti-apartheid demonstration in San Francisco. The 20 buses reserved by the coalition have been filling rapidly.

The meeting was held at the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers' union hall here. In his welcoming remarks, Richard Rothstein, manager of the Southern California Joint Board of ACTWU, reaffirmed the national union's support for April 25. Two nights before, a fundraising event had taken place at the ACTWU hall to benefit SITTAS, a textile workers' union in El Salvador that ACTWU has adopted as a sister union.

Speakers at the coalition meeting included Mario Obledo, past president of the League of United Latin American Citizens and co-chair of the Western states' mobilization committee for April 25; Bernard Walker, organizer of the Free South Africa Movement; Marty Brent Wehrli, executive director of the Southern California Interfaith Task Force on Central America; Pat Reif, regional coordinator for the Pledge of Resistance; Arnoldo Ramos, a prominent Salvadoran activist; and James Lawson, president of the Los Angeles Southern Christian



March 22 Miami protest opposed contra aid, defended right to free speech.

Militant/Larry Lukehart

Leadership Conference.

Trevor Fowler, secretary of the Southern California chapter of the African National Congress, was in the audience and was introduced by the chairperson.

Members of United Auto Workers Local 148, Machinists Lodge 727, United Electrical Workers, International Ladies' Garment Workers' union, United Teachers of Los Angeles, and Service Employees International Union were at the meeting.

More than 10,000 leaflets and 250 posters for the San Francisco action had been printed up and were taken to be distributed by meeting participants.

Teach-ins on Central America and southern Africa are slated for March 21-30 at 14 sites in the area.

Additional information on the coalition and the San Francisco protest can be obtained from Mobilization on Central America and Southern Africa, P.O. Box 57337, Los Angeles, Calif., 90057. Telephone (213) 225-6136.

Miami rally says no to contras

BY ERNEST MAILHOT

MIAMI — March 22 marked an important victory for antiwar activists and all supporters of free speech here. Two hundred-fifty people rallied at the federal courthouse to demand no U.S. funding for the contras attacking Nicaragua.

The action marked the anniversary of an attack by right-wingers on a protest against contra aid last year. The success of this year's rally was based on the inability of the right wing to stop last year's demonstration and the statewide protests that followed the attack.

Speakers at this year's rally included representatives of the American Postal Workers Union (APWU), Antonio Maceo Brigade, United Methodist Church, Progressive Student Network, SCLC, National Organization for Women, Socialist Workers Party, Haitian groups, Irish Northern Aid, and peace organizations.

"The Nicaraguan people have a right to determine their own destiny, as it was our right in 1775," declared Betty Tsang, vice-president of the APWU here.

The participants included students attending a statewide conference organized by the Progressive Student Network. A representative of the network addressed the rally. "From Iowa to Massachusetts," declared this University of Iowa student, "thousands of students are demanding, 'CIA off campus' and 'End Reagan's war against Nicaragua!'"

150 unionists at Detroit meeting

DETROIT — More than 150 trade unionists met March 21 at the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers hall here for a meeting to support upcoming antiwar and anti-apartheid protests.

Dave Dyson, spokesperson of the National Labor Committee in Support of Democracy and Human

Rights in El Salvador, urged a massive turnout for the April 25 antiwar march on Washington.

"This demonstration cannot be dismissed," he said. "Nineteen eighty-seven may be the year we put the contras under for good."

Scores of participants took leaflets, buttons and T-shirts to publicize the upcoming actions.

Irish-Americans back April 25

BY MARC LICHTMAN

NEW YORK — Over the St. Patrick's Day weekend, Irish solidarity activists here distributed more than 1,500 leaflets headlined, "An Appeal to Irish-Americans to Support the Mobilization for Justice and Peace in Central America and Southern Africa."

The leaflet features the names of well-known local Irish-Americans who have endorsed the April 25 mobilization, including Paul O'Dwyer, former New York City Council president; Sandy Boyer, president of the Irish Arts Center; Daniel Kane, president of the Communications Trade Division of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters; and Catholic Church figures Maurice Burke and Regina Murphy.

The leaflet was well-received by 300 participants in a vigil for Joe Doherty, an Irish freedom fighter imprisoned for four years in the Manhattan Correctional Center, and by hundreds of supporters of Irish unity who marched in the St. Patrick's Day parade.

One parade observer, dressed in military fatigues, took a handful of leaflets to give to fellow Irish-American members of a Vietnam Veterans outreach center.

U. of Mich. students demand more Black enrollment

BY DEAN PEOPLES

ANN ARBOR, Mich. — A picket line of about 300 students here at the University of Michigan circled the administration building while another 130 students sat in, blocking the hallways, March 19-20. They chanted, "Hey, hey, ho, ho, racism has got to go!" and carried signs saying, "End racist attacks" and "Increase minority retention."

The sit-in was called after the university regents failed to respond to 12 proposals put forward by the United Coalition Against Racism (UCAR) and the Black Action Movement III (BAM III). These two student organizations were formed in response to racist incidents on the campus and to protest the low percentage of Black

and other oppressed minority students and faculty at the university.

The latest incidents involved racist jokes aired on the campus radio station and a flyer declaring "Open Season" on Blacks, placed under the door where a group of Black students were meeting. On March 21 members of a neo-Nazi group appeared on campus.

On March 23, about 4,000 people turned out to hear Jesse Jackson speak at a meeting sponsored by UCAR, BAM and the Michigan Student Association. The president of U of M also addressed the meeting and announced some proposals in response to the students' demands.

One proposal was to grant an honorary degree to jailed African freedom fighter

Nelson Mandela. The board of regents had refused to grant the degree to Mandela earlier because of a stipulation that honorary degrees be given only to those who can appear in person to accept them!

Other proposals include strengthening the Office of Minority Affairs, adequate funding for the Black Student Union, strengthening the Office of Affirmative Action, review of salary inequities between Black and other faculty members, and creation of a President's Advisory Commission, which would include representatives of Black faculty, student, and community organizations.

On March 24 a meeting of UCAR drew more than 250 students, including representatives of Asian, Hispanic, and

women's groups, as well as people from the Black community in Ann Arbor.

Marty Ellington, a member of the Black Medical Students Association and the steering committee of UCAR, indicated that while much progress had been made, in the past the administration had not implemented proposals adopted in the wake of student struggles. For instance, the goal of having a percentage of Black students equal to their number in the general population was never attained.

A wide-ranging discussion took place on making sure those responsible for racist acts are disciplined, and on winning implementation of all 12 proposals agreed to. A proposal for a campus teach-in on the issues was announced.

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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. We provide first-hand coverage of events in other countries, such as Cuba, Burkina Faso, and the Philippines. In addition, regular on-the-scene reports come from our Nicaragua Bureau.

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The Militant

Closing news date: April 1, 1987

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Published weekly except one week in August and the last week of December by the Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Telephone: Editorial Office, (212) 243-6392; Telex, 497-4278; Business Office, (212) 929-3486.

Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to The Militant Business Office, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014.

Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Militant, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Subscriptions: U.S., Canada, Latin America: for one-year subscription send \$24, drawn on a U.S. bank, to above address. By first-class (airmail), send \$60. Britain, Ireland, Continental Europe, Africa: send £25 check or international money order made out to Pathfinder Press and send to Pathfinder, 47 The Cut, London SE1 8LL, England. Australia, Asia, Pacific: send Australian \$60 to Pathfinder Press, P.O. Box 37, Leichhardt, Sydney, NSW 2040, Australia.

Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant's* views. These are expressed in editorials.

Why gov't is failing in assault on affirmative action

BY NORTON SANDLER

Recent Supreme Court decisions have dealt a crippling blow to the Reagan administration's six-year effort to roll back affirmative action programs.

The most significant decision was the Supreme Court's March 25 ruling. The judges upheld an affirmative action plan that allowed Diane Joyce, a Santa Clara County road maintenance worker, to be promoted to a road dispatcher's job ahead of a man who had scored slightly higher than her on a promotion test.

When the case began in 1979, no women held skilled jobs in the Santa Clara County Transportation Department. After Joyce was promoted, Paul Johnson claimed that his test scores showed he was better qualified than Joyce for the job. He filed suit challenging her promotion.

The Justice Department supported Johnson's challenge. The AFL-CIO filed a brief in support of Joyce.

In its decision the court explicitly stated for the first time that women can be promoted over men to "remedy an imbalance in traditionally segregated job categories." The court also stated that affirmative action programs for Blacks and women can be used to bring the composition of a work force in line with a particular area's population, even in cases where past discrimination has not been proved.

Earlier government setbacks

This defeat for the Reagan administration came on the heels of four other Supreme Court decisions upholding affirmative action. Reagan administration arguments were also rejected in those cases.

In July 1986 the court issued two separate opinions upholding the use of numerical quotas and goals as remedies to compensate for past discrimination in hiring and promotion. The decision allowed Blacks and other oppressed minorities to break into previously all-white skilled trades.

The first case involved the 38-year struggle of Blacks to be members of, and obtain jobs through, the sheet metal workers union in New York City. The second case involved the promotion of Black and Latino fire fighters in Cleveland.

The court rejected the Justice Department's contention that hiring goals and quotas are illegal and that relief should only be granted when someone can prove they were singled out as a victim of discrimination.

Last January the court upheld California's Pregnancy Disability Act. That law mandated employers to grant special job protection to employees who are unable to work because of pregnancy. The majority

opinion of the court said California's preferential treatment of women workers helped promote equal employment opportunity because it allowed them to take time off work during pregnancy without having to risk losing their jobs.

In February the court upheld the use of quotas to overcome discrimination in job promotions and hiring. In that case, the State of Alabama had challenged a court ruling that one Black state trooper had to be hired for every white hired until 25 percent of the troopers were Black.

Crusade of administration

The rollback of affirmative action programs was an important pillar of the Reagan administration's antilabor crusade beginning in 1981.

William Bradford Reynolds, who had just been appointed to head up the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division, told Congress in September 1981 that the administration would oppose hiring quotas designed to redress past discrimination.

Reynolds complained that affirmative action had become "associated with the endorsement of such preferential treatment to aid persons who were not identifiable victims." He proclaimed, "By elevating the rights of groups over the rights of individuals, racial preferences such as I have just described are at war with the American ideal of equal opportunity for each person to achieve whatever his or her industry and talents warrant."

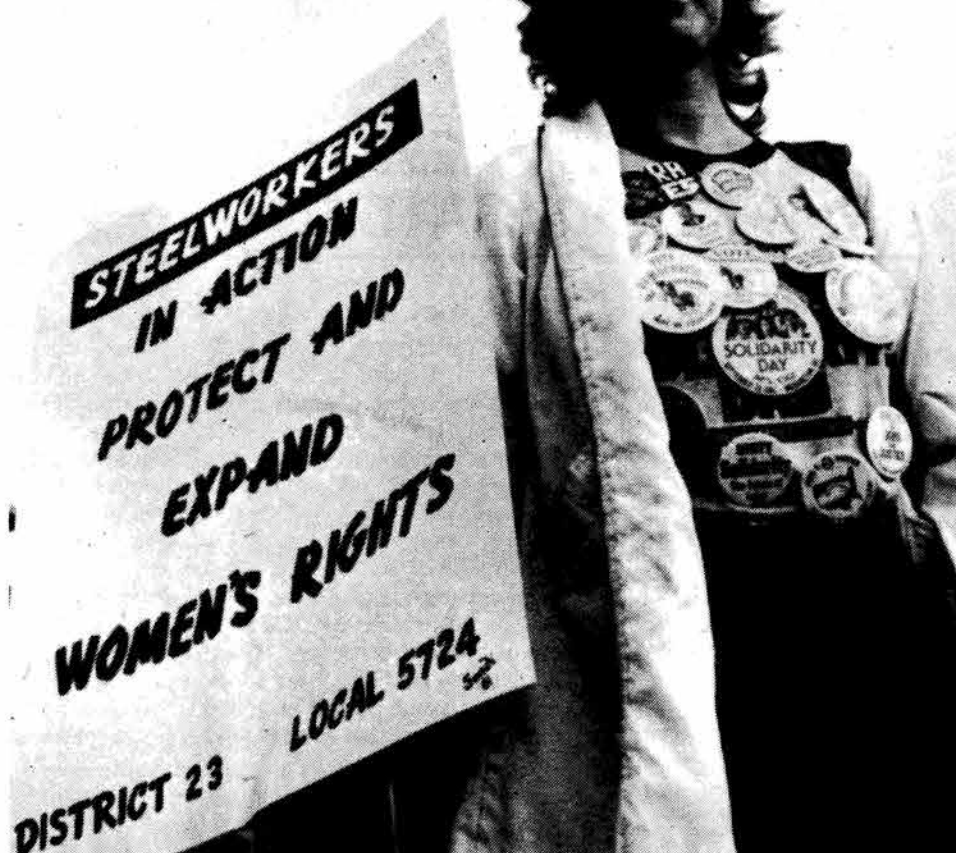
He added that hiring and promotion quotas lead to "a divisive influence inevitably [being] introduced into the work-place, the community, and the country as a whole."

A few months later White House and Justice Department spokespeople explained that they would seek to have the Supreme Court's 1979 decision in the Weber case overturned.

Brian Weber, a steelworker who is white, had challenged the affirmative action plan the United Steelworkers union had negotiated with Kaiser Aluminum Co. He said it was "reverse discrimination."

The Weber case was a watershed at the time. The United Steelworkers of America (USWA), along with civil rights and women's rights organizations, fought against Weber. The case was a major issue at the USWA's March 1979 civil rights conference. Throughout the first six months of that year, as Weber's case was pending in the court, many USWA districts and locals organized meetings protesting Weber's challenge to affirmative action.

The court rejected Weber's argument and upheld affirmative action plans designed to eliminate racial imbalances in



Militant/Lou Howort

In spite of six-year assault, employers and government have been unable to roll back affirmative action gains won by civil rights and women's movements.

segregated job categories.

But in 1984, the Supreme Court threw out the Memphis, Tennessee, fire department's affirmative action plan. That plan had given recently hired Black fire fighters job protection in periods of layoff, despite their low seniority.

This decision was viewed by the White House as a signal to step up the assault on affirmative action. Seeking the broadest possible interpretation, Reynolds told the press the decision had "ramifications with regard to hiring and promotion to the same extent" it had to layoffs.

In 1985 the Justice Department ordered 51 counties, cities, and states to modify their affirmative action programs in light of the Memphis decision.

Attorney General Edwin Meese began aggressively campaigning to overturn the 20-year-old presidential executive order requiring companies with federal government contracts to set numerical hiring and promotion goals. In 1985 there were 100,000 companies with government contracts.

Civil rights and women's movements

But the government and the employers, as they pressed the attack, ran smack into the determination of millions of Black and women workers to defend those hard-earned gains. They also confronted growing acceptance of affirmative action in the labor movement as a whole.

Affirmative action programs were codified in law as a result of the massive civil rights movement of the 1960s. The mobilizations of millions of Black working people began to beat down many of the racist barriers that had previously existed in every institution in this country.

The growth of women's protests in the 1970s helped expand and strengthen the fight for affirmative action programs.

These programs benefit the labor movement and the entire working class. The employers rely on having Black, female, Puerto Rican, Chicano, Asian, and undocumented workers carry out the lowest-paying and most menial jobs.

The employers use this to drive down wages and working conditions of all working people.

By defending affirmative action, the

Continued on Page 9

Danish brewery union backs women's rights

BY KARIN PEITERSEN

COPENHAGEN, Denmark — In January of this year, the unions for male and female brewery workers in this city fused. The united union organizes 2,700 workers at breweries owned by the two largest companies, Carlsberg and Tuborg. Seven hundred of the workers are women.

For more than 80 years the two unions had been separate. When the female workers organized themselves in 1903, the male brewery union would not admit them. It thought the women workers would be under pressure to sweat out more work and end up taking jobs away from men. So the women formed their own union.

For the past 20 years, discussions have taken place between the two unions about their relationship. But the first concrete negotiations pointing toward unity weren't held until 1983.

These discussions received a big impetus two years later when workers went out on strike for 10 weeks at Carlsberg and Tuborg. Strike activity, including meetings, picket lines, etc., were organized jointly by male and female brewery workers.

Following this positive experience, the workers voted to unify in May 1986, and the agreement went into effect on Jan. 1, 1987.

What makes this unification significant is the agreement the unions made, and got the employers to sign. It provides for an equal number of men and women being hired and for eliminating special categories of work based on sex. Moreover, they agreed to provisions that will give women one-third representation on all union bodies.

In the 1950s and 1960s a disproportionate number of female brewery workers lost their jobs as the brewery owners automated their plants. Jobs for maintaining the new machinery were given to men, and the number of women in the industry fell dramatically. In some local breweries outside of Copenhagen, women completely disappeared from production, and only remained in lower-paid service areas.

In Copenhagen, however, the women's union succeeded in making an agreement with the men's union and the employers such that when women's jobs were automated the new jobs should still be held by

women. An equal wage for men and women doing the same job was instituted.

But the fights during those years over jobs led to much bitterness between men and women workers. Many women were distrustful of men and saw their own union as a way to insure women's interests were taken up.

But the erosion of jobs as a result of new technology continued, and women recognized that a women's union could not alone insure their future in the industry.

The main issue in the 1985 brewery strike was automation. The workers proclaimed, "Technology should give us relief, not eliminate us." They demanded a shorter workweek and jobs for all the workers.

The strikers failed to win their demands, but they succeeded in forging closer collaboration between the two unions.

The resolution adopted supporting the fusion declared, "A united union will strengthen the solidarity and make us stronger and more active. It means a real equality of men and women at the work-place, and will insure women's jobs in the breweries."

Is famine in Africa and other parts of the world caused by overpopulation?...

...or is it a product of social inequality produced by the world capitalist system?

These questions are discussed in the reissue of a 1960 pamphlet by U.S. Marxist Joseph Hansen. Hansen's arguments are more timely than ever today.



Too Many Babies?

The myth of the population explosion



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North Carolina: reaching out to industrial workers

BY LAURIE BURKE

GREENSBORO, N.C. — Supporters of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* recently discussed how best to reach out to the many industrial workers in the

and employs about 350 workers. Some of them come from Vietnam, Korea, Pakistan, or Africa. During the fall subscription campaign, two *Militant* supporters in the plant sold 15 introductory sub-

scriptions. One of the people who frequently participates in this sale works in a garment shop in Greensboro where ACTWU is conducting an organizing drive. Selling at Highland is an opportunity to talk to other ACTWU members.

SELLING OUR PRESS AT THE PLANT GATE

Triad area of North Carolina. This area includes the cities of Greensboro, High Point, and Winston-Salem.

We decided our first priority was regular weekly sales at the four plants where *Militant* supporters work. Two are organized by the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU). The other two are organized by the International Union of Electronic Workers (IUE) and the United Steelworkers of America.

Highland Yarn Mills in High Point is organized by ACTWU

scriptions.

As contract negotiations began, unionists in the plant started discussing how we could beat back this attack. This led to other discussions — on South Africa, the Vietnam War, the movie *Platoon*, contragate, and the U.S.-organized war against Nicaragua.

ACTWU shop

Fiber Dynamics, also in High Point and organized by ACTWU, employs about 100 people. There are currently six *Militant* subscribers in this plant. In the past, we would sell one or two papers at the

plant gate. However, when the company announced that it was going to arbitrarily implement a 5 percent wage cut, eliminate shift pay, and force workers to pay one-third more for insurance coverage for their dependents, interest in the *Militant* picked up.

With the issue of the *Militant* covering the successful January 24 anti-racist march in Forsyth County, Georgia, we organized two sales to reach all three shifts. Five papers were sold. Another five coworkers who don't yet subscribe got the paper from *Militant* supporters in the plant.

Although unionists in the plant recently voted to accept the company's concession contract with a few modifications, the discussions in the plant and at the gate con-

tinued. An ACTWU worker from Highland who went to Montreal, Canada, to cover the successful strike of garment workers there for the *Militant*, has been able to participate in these discussions.

Nearly 100 percent renewals

We have been selling at Arnold Concrete, the United Steelworkers-organized plant, for almost a year. We currently have six subscribers out of a work force of 100, with close to a 100 percent renewal rate. We usually sell one or two papers weekly at the gate.

Three workers from this plant recently participated in a *Militant* Labor Forum on the lessons of the 1934 Minneapolis Teamsters strikes.

Bassick-Sack, the IUE-organized plant, is located in Winston-Salem. At the gate we regularly sell one or two papers. The week after the Forsyth County march, we sold six copies at this gate.

Another regular plant-gate sale is at the Cone White Oak textile

mill in Greensboro. The local at this large mill is a central component of ACTWU in this area. Response to the paper at shift changes is very good. From these sales we have been able to meet union activists in this local.

Special sales

Another priority is organizing special sales around important *Militant* articles. When an interview with locked out USX steelworkers appeared, we sent a sales team to Stroh Can, a United Steelworkers-organized plant, and sold six papers.

An unexpected snow cut into many of our sales the week the *Militant* covered the victory of the Montreal garment strike. However, in the two clear days available, we had 91 percent participation of Triad-area supporters and sold 24 papers on our plant-gate sales.

Laurie Burke is a member of ACTWU Local 2376 at Fiber Dynamics in High Point.

N.Y. supporters sell 70 subscriptions in one day

BY MALIK MIAH

The spring subscription campaign got off to a bang in New York City. Seventy subscriptions — 48 to the *Militant* and 22 to the Spanish-language monthly *Perspectiva Mundial* — were sold March 28, first Saturday of our 11-week subscription drive, which ends June 6.

Twelve teams, with a total of 44 salespeople, participated in the Saturday effort, said Dick Geyer, organizer of the sales campaign in New York. Distributors first gathered at the sales center on Leonard Street for breakfast. They heard a report on the objective of the campaign, picked up their literature, folding tables, *Militants*, and *PMs*, and went to their sales spots.

One team went over to the *Militant* Business Office across town to help process the subscriptions already on hand.

But the preparation for Saturday, Geyer said, began much earlier. "During the March 21-22 Active Workers Conference here, our sales committee talked to everyone present about joining a sales team the following week. More than 40 people signed up. Then, during the week, we contacted everyone we knew.

"The political discussion at the confer-



Dallas high school students at *Militant-Perspectiva Mundial* literature table.

ence and the preparation before the weekend is what netted us such a good response."

One example Geyer cited was the response at a mid-town high school event organized to build for the April 25 antiwar, anti-apartheid march on Washington. A

young woman who had bought a subscription last fall told a salesperson she would renew. But she asked what else she could do. After passing out some leaflets on the April 25 march, she joined team members when they set up a literature-sales table in lower Manhattan.

Another supporter who helped out Saturday is now thinking about joining the YSA, Geyer said.

In addition to the 70 subscriptions and sales of \$400 in socialist literature, New York supporters signed up four new sponsors to the Political Rights Defense Fund.

New York's success was not unique. Eight supporters in Phoenix sold 16 subscriptions. In Oakland, California, a sales team sold four subscriptions at a supermarket frequented by Latinos. Three subscriptions were sold at a couple of meetings in Denver despite a big storm.

At a March 29 antiwar protest of several thousand in Detroit, *Militant* and *PM* salespeople sold 142 *Militants*, five *PMs*, and 12 *Young Socialists*, as well as 18 *Militant* and two *PM* subscriptions. Some \$160 in books, buttons, and T-shirts were sold, reported Kibwe Diarra.

Forty people also attended an open house sponsored by the Detroit Young Socialist Alliance. *Militants*, *PMs*, and another \$70 in literature were sold at this event.

During the course of the campaign, we will be running a weekly scoreboard. We urge supporters to take a goal, order a bundle of papers, and join the spring subscription drive. Each city will be ranked by percentage of goal sold.

The national goal for the drive will be based on local goals and expected sales by national subscription teams. As the scoreboard below shows, a number of areas have not yet taken a goal. Next week we will report the national goal.

The miscellaneous category includes subscriptions sold abroad — especially in New Zealand, Australia, and Britain — as well as those from ads in other publications and from readers in areas without a goal.

The initial results, 790 *Militant* and 194 *PM* subscriptions, indicates the potential to win thousands of new readers this spring.

The Young Socialist Alliance nationally has made the spring subscription campaign a major priority. A number of goals are based on targets selected by YSA chapters and organizing committees in cities such as Athens, Ohio; Clovis, California; Edmond, Oklahoma; and Stony Brook, New York.

Readers interested in taking a goal for the campaign can clip and mail in the coupon below.

* * *

☐ I would like to order a bundle of _____ *Militants* and _____ *PMs*.

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Spring Subscription Scoreboard

Area	Goals		Sold		% Sold
	<i>Militant</i>	<i>Perspectiva Mundial</i>	<i>Militant</i>	<i>Perspectiva Mundial</i>	
Stony Brook, N.Y.	10	—	4	—	40
Amherst, Mass.	10	—	2	1	30
Denver	100	15	29	4	29
Toledo, Ohio	100	5	27	2	28
Pittsburgh	90	10	18	5	23
Milwaukee	100	25	23	5	22
Miami	110	40	27	4	21
Des Moines, Iowa	100	10	18	4	20
Detroit	190	20	35	2	18
New York	500	250	89	41	17
Los Angeles	250	200	46	28	16
Phoenix	80	80	21	5	16
Austin, Minn.	80	10	14	0	16
Capital Dist., N.Y.	110	12	16	2	15
Baltimore	130	8	16	4	14
Twin Cities, Minn.	200	15	26	0	12
Salt Lake City	100	30	12	3	12
Boston	240	60	26	4	10
Charleston, W.V.	130	—	12	1	10
Seattle	180	50	19	2	9
Chicago	225	75	23	4	9
San Francisco	100	60	5	9	9
Oakland, Calif.	150	50	16	1	9
New Orleans	90	10	8	0	8
Philadelphia	150	50	9	6	8
Washington, D.C.	160	50	12	2	7
Newark, N.J.	375	175	25	11	7
Cleveland	125	15	9	0	6
Annandale, N.Y.	70	10	5	0	6
Totals	—	—	790	194	—

*Goals not yet set

Mandela book hailed, Sharpeville massacre marked in Atlanta

BY KEVIN DWIRE

ATLANTA — "Today we have come to be part of a ceremony that is very important — a ceremony to educate the people of the United States and the peoples of the world about the South African struggle," declared Andrew Masondo, a leader of the African National Congress (ANC).

Masondo was addressing a March 21 "Tribute to Nelson Mandela and Commemoration of the Sharpeville Massacre" here. Currently the headmaster of the ANC's Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College in Tanzania, Masondo was the featured speaker at the broadly-sponsored day of activities celebrating the publication of *Nelson Mandela: The Struggle Is My Life* and the Spanish-language *Habla Nelson Mandela*. These two Pathfinder Press books contain the speeches and writings of the imprisoned ANC leader.

March 21 was chosen to also commemorate the Sharpeville massacre. On that day in 1960, the South African regime brutally attacked a demonstration against the pass laws and murdered 67 Blacks in Sharpeville.

Proclamation from Andrew Young

Atlanta Mayor Andrew Young declared March 21 "Nelson Mandela Day" with a proclamation that stated, "We commend the promoters of *Nelson Mandela: The Struggle Is My Life*. Wide circulation of this most timely book can aid in the campaign to free him and all political prisoners from jail as well as bring an end to apartheid."

More than two dozen organizations and individuals sponsored the Mandela tribute activities, which were held at the Woodruff Library on the Atlanta University campus.

More than 100 people attended the events, which included a rally, a reception, and the planting of a tree dedicated to Nelson and Winnie Mandela.

Joining Andrew Masondo at the tree planting ceremony were Guy Craft, president of the Woodruff Library; Joe Beasley, Rainbow Coalition; Bernadette Davenport, Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) Youth; Maceo Dixon, Atlanta Pathfinder Bookstore; Tandi Gcabashe, Southern Africa Education Program; Vernon King, Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change, Inc.; and Diane Mathewitz, U.S. Out of Southern

Africa Network/All People's Congress.

The tree planting was covered by all three local television stations and the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. It was featured on the front page of the *Atlanta Voice*, a major Black newspaper here.

Following the ceremony, a reception was held featuring readings from *The Struggle Is My Life*, poetry by Alice Lovelace, and a performance of South African freedom songs by local anti-apartheid activists.

Greetings and messages were sent from a broad range of groups and individuals in the Atlanta area, including Coretta Scott King; the Atlanta chapter of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists; and Anita Patterson, area director of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees.

Abraham Jackson, union steward for United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 10 at the Doraville General Motors plant, sent a message recognizing "the inspiration and strength through leadership from such a courageous person as Nelson Mandela."

"I am delighted to pay tribute to such a great individual and his achievements in the book *Nelson Mandela: The Struggle Is My Life*," said Jackson.

"A common hand behind the gun"

Speakers at the rally, in addition to Masondo, included Fred Taylor, SCLC; Timothy McDonald, Concerned Black Clergy; Mike Little, Georgia State University Democratic Socialists of America; Carrie Morris, All People's Congress; and Rick Congress of the Atlanta Committee on Latin America.

Congress told the rally that the struggles in Central America and Southern Africa "are linked by a common enemy."

"There is a common hand behind the gun that is killing farmers and children in Angola and Nicaragua, and the gun that is shooting down the people of South Africa. And the hand behind that gun is in Washington," Congress said. He encouraged everyone to "join in common action April



Militant/Katherine Sojourner

Tree planting ceremony dedicated to Nelson and Winnie Mandela. ANC leader Andrew Masondo is in center, with suit.

25 in the march on Washington against the U.S. aggression in Central America, against U.S. support for apartheid in southern Africa."

The meeting was co-chaired by community activist Jan Douglass and Maceo Dixon of the Atlanta Pathfinder Bookstore.

Dixon, a member of UAW Local 10, told the rally that "revolutionists like Malcolm X have been killed. Revolutionists like Mandela have been jailed. This is done to snuff out their revolutionary zeal, leadership, and ideas. You may kill and jail the revolutionary, but you cannot kill their revolutionary ideas. Mandela's ideas will bust through those prison walls."

He explained that Pathfinder publishes the ideas of Nelson Mandela, Cuban leader Fidel Castro, slain Grenadian leader Maurice Bishop, Malcolm X, and other revolutionary leaders to help working people "generalize the lessons from our common struggles, past and present."

Masondo, who spent 13 years in the notorious Robben Island prison with Mandela, is a former member of the ANC National Executive Committee.

He pointed to 1960 as an important year in the South African freedom struggle. Following the Sharpeville shootings came a wave of arrests and the banning of organizations, including the ANC. "1960 is the year when the ANC was forced to go underground," Masondo said.

"As Mandela says in the book, the

leadership thought it would be irresponsible to dissolve the ANC because the racist regime banned it. The continuation of the ANC is the continuation of the struggle of our people."

Apartheid regime's violence

Masondo added that as the freedom struggle has advanced, the apartheid regime has dropped all pretense of democratic rule and instead has "perfected methods of repression and suppression."

"They are not satisfied that the police were the ones that were allowed to kill. They have gone further. They have introduced the army to kill. They have started to mobilize killing squads. They have the vigilantes."

Masondo said, "Time and again it is projected as if we started the violence. That is why Mandela, when he was asked to relinquish violence for his so-called freedom from prison, refused. Because they were asking him to commit sacrilege, to say that he is not prepared to defend the eight-year-olds, the 10-year-olds who are being killed."

Masondo ended his talk by describing the work of the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College.

He said that the aim of the Freedom College is to make up for the educational gap created by both the racist apartheid educational system and the participation by the youth in the freedom struggle.

U.S. sought aid in Mexico for contras

BY ERNEST HARSCH

As part of the broad network set up by the White House to funnel covert aid to the Nicaraguan contras, U.S. officials sought the participation of right-wing political forces in Mexico.

This was revealed in a report in the March 27 *Miami Herald*, citing notes by an employee of one of the "private" fund-raisers used by Lt. Col. Oliver North to drum up money for the contras.

According to the notes, the fund-raiser, Carl Channell of the National Endowment for the Preservation of Liberty (NEPL), promised leaders of the right-wing National Action Party (PAN) that they would gain direct U.S. support for their election campaigns if they contributed funds to the Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries. The PAN opposes Mexico's governing Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI).

The notes were written by Jane McLaughlin, who worked for Channell at the time. A spokesperson for Channell confirmed to the *Miami Herald* that Channell had met with PAN leaders. He also confirmed McLaughlin's notes, though he sought to dismiss them as "personal."

Channell, McLaughlin wrote in her notes, told the PAN leaders: "If the president [Reagan] were to know that you and your people were actively supporting his policies in Nicaragua there is no doubt that he and the White House would be far more attentive to your plight in Mexico and far more inclined to acknowledge your fight for democracy."

The *Miami Herald* found no indication that the PAN made any formal public statements of support for the contras. In Mexico, where widespread opposition exists to Washington's mercenary war against Nicaragua, such a declaration

would have been very unpopular.

Channell met with the PAN leaders in Washington on Aug. 14, 1986. That was just one day after President Reagan received Mexican President Miguel de la Madrid at the White House, for what was billed as a meeting to ease "tensions" between the two governments.

Propaganda barrage

At the time, U.S. officials were leveling virulent public attacks against the Mexican government. Attorney General Edwin Meese and Elliott Abrams, the assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs, charged that the Mexican government was riddled with corruption and that many of its officials were involved in drug smuggling.

This was but a cover for the real reason for the U.S. attacks: the Mexican government's unwillingness to follow U.S. dictates on Central America, and Mexican participation in the Contadora group, which has urged negotiations between Nicaragua and other countries of the region.

According to a former CIA official, then CIA director William Casey "felt the Mexicans were not team players on Central America."

Elliott Abrams thought the same, according to a U.S. official cited by the *Miami Herald*. "Elliott never said that pressuring the Mexicans was linked to Central America," the official said, "but for Elliott Nicaragua and the contras are the only issue. I soon concluded that we were pressuring Mexico because of Nicaragua, not because we cared for any of the issues there."

These U.S. attacks provoked a sharp reaction in Mexico at the time. Some 60,000

people took part in a protest march in Mexico City and the government charged that the U.S. statements and pressures were "a clear and unacceptable violation of Mexico's sovereignty."

'Private' fund-raisers

McLaughlin has also provided documents on North's and Channell's activities to the office of special prosecutor Lawrence Walsh, who is investigating the Iran arms-contra affair.

Those documents show that Channell's outfit, the NEPL, sent at least \$1.7 million to a Swiss bank account operated by North to finance the purchase and delivery of arms to the contras.

On Channell's behalf, McLaughlin wrote letters to wealthy individuals to solicit donations for the contras. Some letters made it clear that the funds would be used for military purposes. In one, McLaughlin wrote that the contras needed "not simply humanitarian aid, but more importantly... effective military aid."


Some prospective donors were treated to private meetings with top White House officials, including President Reagan.

Channell's NEPL is only one of a number of supposedly "private" organizations and companies that North, the CIA, and other government agencies used to provide a cover for their contra arms network.

Despite the mounting evidence, Reagan continues to deny any direct knowledge of these groups' arms dealings. He also denies that they operated with official White House sanction.

Nevertheless, at his March 19 news conference, Reagan stressed that he considered these groups' activities to have been legal.

NEW! **NELSON MANDELA**
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Available from Pathfinder Bookstores (see listing on page 12) or by mail (include \$.75 for postage).

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Socialist campaigns in coal mine region

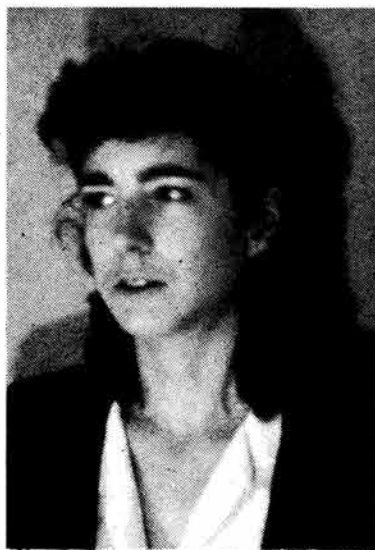
BY DAVE SALNER

CHARLESTON, W. Va. — Margaret Husk is the Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Charleston, metropolitan center of United Mine Workers District 17. She is an unemployed worker and chairperson of the local Young Socialist Alliance.

Husk and her campaign supporters are fighting undemocratic election laws to obtain ballot status in the April 20 elections. Husk was forced to pay a \$600 filing fee under protest, and unlike Democrats and Republicans, she had to petition for a place on the ballot.

The state's election laws declare that signers of nominating petitions lose their right to vote in the primary election. Husk called the law "unconstitutional."

When her campaign supporters informed petition signers of the restrictions facing independent candidates, many were angry. "They



Militant/David Marshall
Margaret Husk

saw the state's election laws as an attempt to silence a working-class voice that opposes the U.S. government's contra war in Nicaragua," said Husk.

Residents of the Orchard Manor housing project here signed Husk's petitions when they heard she was helping build a movement against the contra war. They op-

posed the Democrats and Republicans letting Ronald Reagan continue to spend millions on illegal wars, while they are just barely scraping by in the overcrowded project.

Campaign supporters sold many copies of the *Militant*, which had a front-page article on the Tower commission report. One resident bought a subscription and a copy of the *Young Socialist* featuring a 1965 interview with Malcolm X.

Boston student protests attacks on desegregation

BY BARBARA SIMONS

BOSTON — The Socialist Workers Party is running Mark Emanation for mayor of Boston and Denise McInerney for school committee.

Emanation is a 29-year-old garment worker and member of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union, from the Jamaica Plains district. He will face incumbent Mayor Raymond Flynn.

McInerney is a 22-year-old Boston University student. She is active in the fight for divestment of BU's investments with companies doing business in South Africa and in defense of students victimized for protesting the university's current policy.

In January, McInerney participated in the first all-student harvest brigade to Nicaragua.

As a candidate, she will campaign against recent moves to consolidate Boston schools and force students off school buses and onto public transportation, both aimed at undermining desegregated education in this city.

Auto worker runs as write-in candidate

BY JEFF POWERS

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — More than 200 workers from the Fairfax and Leeds General Motors plants signed petitions to place Marcia Gallo on the ballot here as the Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor. Gallo belongs to United Auto Workers Local 31 at

the Fairfax plant.

But the Kansas City Board of Elections has ruled her off the ballot, forcing her to seek write-in votes instead.

A judge had effectively barred Gallo from viewing the city's list of registered voters so she could prove the falsity of the board's challenge to her nominating petitions.

The February 10 ruling by the board was announced just after Judge Richard McKelvey ruled that Gallo could not view the voters' list unless she paid more than \$300 and had access to a computer terminal.

Gallo had taken the election board to court after officials claimed that she only had 978 valid signatures, 22 short of the 1,000 required. Gallo had submitted petitions containing 2,022 signatures.

Her supporters found numerous errors in the board's validation process. Access to the list of registered voters could have turned up many more. The board had invalidated scores of names because signatures were printed or for no apparent reason at all.

Honduran coffee farmers protest contra troops

The following article is taken from the March 12 *Barricada Internacional*, the Sandinista National Liberation Front weekly published in Nicaragua in English and Spanish.

Coffee growers in the Honduran department of El Paraíso announced that they will go on a "hunger march" to the capital to demand \$9 million from the United States "as compensation for injury and damages caused by the contras." They will join with other residents and displaced farmers from the Honduran region bordering on Nicaragua to protest the lack of an adequate response on the part of the Honduran government to this problem.

"Our patience has run out, we have become less gullible and have decided, despite the risk, to organize a hunger march to the capital," the growers wrote in a letter addressed to the Honduran Coffee Producers Association (AHPROCAFE).

In the last two years AHPROCAFE has complained many times about the plight of some 3,000 coffee-producing families as well as the other inhabitants of the region where conditions grow worse each day. "We are starving because they have pushed us off of our farmlands," said Alfonso Castro Mairena, regional secretary of the National Campesinos Union (UNC) of El Paraíso.

Since the U.S. mercenary war against Nicaragua began five years ago, the Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries have been gradually occupying the Honduran border areas. This has led to the violent displacement of the local residents.

According to figures gathered by AHPROCAFE, the contras now occupy some [280 square miles] of Honduran territory, which has been declared off limits for national and foreign journalists. In some cases, former residents of the area may return only if they can show a safe conduct pass issued by the counterrevolutionary leaders. An estimated 16,000 from some 60 towns and villages have been displaced by the contras.

AHPROCAFE says that thousands of growers in the area have been prevented from gathering the last three harvests. Unlike the rest of Honduras where large and medium-sized coffee plantations predominate, coffee in the department of El Paraíso is grown generally on small plots on state-owned lands.

The lack of an official response from the Honduras government to the grower's demands led them in October 1985 to turn to the U.S. embassy in Tegucigalpa for a solution.

If their current demands for compensations are not met, the growers say, they have authorized AHPROCAFE to begin

legal proceedings to enforce "our rights as persons displaced by war."

The complaints of the UNC regional secretary and the coffee growers' letter to AHPROCAFE contradict the assurances given by Honduran government officials that the contras no longer represent a problem for Honduras because they are now in Nicaragua.

However, El Paraíso's representative in the National Congress, who is a member of the governing Liberal Party, said in February that the presence of the contras in the area has prevented the harvesting of the coffee crop. He reported that people who had gone to pick coffee had had to return, and recommended to President José Azcona that a commission be sent to investigate the current situation in the "unlivable" border area.

The charge of the Liberal Party legislator openly challenged head of the armed forces General Humberto Regalado, who prom-

ised last year to redouble border security to safeguard the coffee harvest.

AHPROCAFE President Catarino Montoya, referring to Azcona's denials that the contras are still in Honduran territory, said that "the president has not been given complete information about the seriousness of the situation. We have invited various government officials to the region, but so far nobody has visited us."

Montoya disputed the claims made by officials in Washington and Tegucigalpa that the mercenaries moved into Nicaragua from Honduras after the disbursement of the first \$60 million of the \$100 million approved by the U.S. Congress last year.

As Jorge Arturo Reina, coordinator of the Revolutionary Democratic Liberal Movement — a faction within the governing party — has said, the contras must be using a "faulty compass, because instead of advancing toward Nicaragua, they are moving deeper into Honduras."

Contras attack farms, clinic

Continued from front page

since they had not finished the coffee harvest. Some spent each night in a nearby cooperative however, while others slept in the woods for fear of attack.

Another group of the U.S.-backed mercenaries attacked a farm settlement in El Cedro, also in Jinotega Province, on March 19. They killed four Nicaraguan soldiers, wounded three children, and destroyed the health clinic. Other contras sabotaged grain silos near San Sebastián de Yalí and burned four civilian trucks 10 miles south of Mulukukú that day.

Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega had earlier warned that the U.S. government planned to escalate terrorist attacks during March and April. Recent reports in the U.S. press indicate that the CIA has given the contras detailed plans of dams, power plants, and similar targets.

On March 26 contra saboteurs blew up an electric power line near the Honduran border, blacking out Ocotal and several other towns.

The day before, contras ambushed a truckload of lumberjacks as they drove to work near Nueva Guinea in the south-central part of the country. Nine of the workers were killed when the mercenaries opened fire without warning.

This push by the contras coincides with big U.S. military maneuvers in Honduras and the Caribbean, including the "Solid Shield" exercise that will involve 50,000 U.S. troops in late April.

In a report in the March 7 issue of the Sandinista daily *Barricada*, Capt. Ricardo Wheelock said that the contra forces in Nicaragua numbered between 3,500 and

4,200. This is much less than their peak strength of 12 to 16,000 during 1984. Wheelock is head of army intelligence here.

Most of the mercenaries were in the north-central provinces of Jinotega and Matagalpa, Wheelock said. This region includes a broad, sparsely populated mountain range that runs from Honduras to central Nicaragua and is the contras' favorite infiltration route.

Heavy fighting occurred in this area during January and February as Nicaraguan soldiers battled large numbers of contras entering Nicaragua from their base camps in Honduras.

In all, the army killed 805 mercenaries, wounded 392, and captured 69. Some 150 Nicaraguan soldiers fell in the fighting, Wheelock said. The army has the military initiative throughout the country and is pursuing the contra groups that remain, he added.

The Nicaraguan Revolution Today



Hear Cindy Jaquith Nicaragua bureau director of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*.

Washington, D.C.	Sun., April 5. Reception, 6 p.m.; forum, 7 p.m. 3106 Mt. Pleasant St. NW. Tel. (202) 797-7799.
Los Angeles	Fri., April 10, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W Pico Blvd. Tel. (213) 380-9460.
San Francisco	Sat., April 11, 7 p.m. 3284 23rd St. Tel. (415) 282-6255.
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Labor news in the Militant

The *Militant* stays on top of the most important developments in the labor movement. It has correspondents who work in the mines, mills, and shops where the events are breaking. You won't miss any of it if you subscribe. See the ad on page 2 of this issue for subscription rates.

Omaha youths are attracted to socialist movement

BY JOE SWANSON

OMAHA, Neb. — At the recent grand opening of the Pathfinder Bookstore here the *Militant* interviewed five new members of the Omaha Young Socialist Alliance about what had attracted them to socialist ideas and the YSA.

All had joined in the last four and a half months. Four are high school or junior high school students and one, the oldest at 19, had recently moved here to attend college.

What was it they liked about the new bookstore?

Jen Gentle, a student at Lewis and Clark Junior High School, said it will be a place where young people will come, finding books that are important for them to read. "I, for instance, bought three books today, *Malcolm X Talks to Young People* and one book each on apartheid and abortion rights," said Gentle.

Max Monclair, an Omaha high schooler, pointed out that the city has not had a bookstore like this before. It has "allowed me to get new information about South Africa, the Nicaraguan revolution, and the farm crisis. I am impressed with the literature available here on the farmer struggle, which is as much a part of the class struggle as the workers are."

Monclair has been reading *Perspectiva Mundial* and intends to buy books about Che Guevara and the revolutions in Central America.

It was the ideas available in books and newspapers in the new bookstore, and the organizational capabilities of the YSA, that helped sign up the new members.

April Kimmach, a 15-year-old, said, "I have found the YSA is an organization that is active in the same things I have been thinking about, such as abortion rights for women, the contra war on the Nicaraguan people, and ending apartheid in South Africa." Like Monclair, she came in contact with the YSA through the Youth for Peace group. With Gentle and the help of the YSA chapter, she is building the April 25 antiwar, anti-apartheid action among her fellow students at Lewis and Clark.

Eric Zeitner, 18, joined after reading about Youth for Peace in an issue of the *Young Socialist*, the YSA's paper. "I read the YSA's organizational material and was impressed with the YSA's ability to confront and accomplish things instead of going around issues," he said. "I also see the importance of the YSA being associated with the Socialist Workers Party."

Asked how he saw the significance of the victory of the SWP and the YSA in their suit against FBI spying and harassment, Zeitner said he will use it at his high school to establish the right of students to openly discuss U.S. government policies and "to hear the truth about U.S. involvement in Central America."

Monclair was also attracted by the YSA's political seriousness. "I had been looking into various groups for some time, ones that could be vehicles for gaining a socialist system." He found the "YSA's organizational methods and ideological orientation as the most viable vehicle for Marxist work."

Joe Suchomel, a student at Creighton University, testified to the importance of *Militant* sales teams in gaining new members. "I knew about the YSA in Minneapolis since my sophomore year in high school because I bought a *Militant* now and then. I moved here and again found the *Militant* through a sales team that came to campus. I had a discussion with them about the YSA, and decided to join."

Prior to joining the YSA, Gentle said, "I had mostly heard only negative or bad things about socialism, communism, and Russia."

"I am not an idealist," she pointed out, "so I don't expect a socialist system to be a perfect government, but it will be a much better one than the capitalist system we live under today."

"As a young person, I want to have a stake in my future and not sit around and do nothing — that's why I will be building April 25."



From right, Max Monclair, Jen Gentle, April Kimmach, and Eric Zeitner, who all joined Omaha YSA recently. Scott Dombeck, also a member, at left.

Guards suspected in Pittsburgh prison fire

BY BARRY SHEPPARD

PITTSBURGH — "The general consensus is that a guard had to set the fire, because 99 percent of the inmate population is locked up by 9:00 p.m.," inmate Gary Georgia told the *Militant*. He was speaking about a major fire that broke out in the early morning hours of January 27 at Western Penitentiary here.

The few remaining prisoners on night work detail are locked up by 11:00 p.m. and all prisoners were accounted for that night.

The fire started in a locked storage area beneath the north cell block of this maximum-security prison. Prison officials claim the fire erupted at 3:30 a.m., but a prisoner subsequently released told the *Pittsburgh Press* that inmates in the block began calling for help because of smoke at 1:30 a.m.

"No guards came until 3:30," Charles Westbrook was quoted as saying. "Another 20 minutes and some people would have died."

The north cell block was evacuated, with 700 to 800 prisoners sent out into the yard in the bitter cold of a windy, 4-degree night. They remained there all night and the next morning.

Inmates started bonfires to keep warm, and some later got into the prison auditorium.

By 4:00 a.m., hundreds of state and local police armed with shotguns and wearing flak jackets were deployed at the prison in a show of force.

The daily press ran sensationalist stories of senseless rampaging and fighting among the inmates, portraying them as berserk animals.

After some days, the press began to admit that fighting between inmates was largely directed against informants who snitch to prison officials. Normally the snitches are kept in segregated cells, but they were let out into the yard with the other prisoners when the fire began.

State troopers took control of the prison by 8:30 a.m., except for a group of prisoners who had barricaded themselves in the auditorium. At 9:45, another fire broke out in the auditorium.

Cop violence

Georgia said, "Several prisoners who could see some of what was happening told me, 'It was really incredible!' They were shocked by the amount of violence loosed upon the prisoners."

"One guy said, 'The guards and cops were like wolves who went from inmate to inmate, crushing whatever stood. When they left, inmates were just lying around, and I first thought they were dead.'"

Georgia recounted the situation in the south block, which was not directly affected by the fire and where no prisoners were evacuated.

"We were awakened by much smoke in the cell block," he said. "This caused us real fear because any inmate knows that no guard is really concerned with his well-being. But we soon ascertained that the fire was not in our block."

When they got up the next morning, they began to hear the news about the fire on radio and TV. But no one came and told them what was happening. They weren't fed or let out of their cells.

"At 2:30 p.m., we were given three hard, waxy, and very stale cheese sandwiches, a cup of cold soup, and a cup of cold coffee that contained so little coffee it was gray," said Georgia.

They were given similar fare the next day, and kept locked up until the following day when they were allowed showers.

The guards also came through the cells searching for "contraband." The prisoners were stripped naked in front of six guards, one of whom was a woman.

'Contraband' is confiscated

The "contraband" they discovered in the cells was anything prisoners "shouldn't have." For example, Georgia lost clothes, an extra pillow, a second blanket, and an extra towel.

A TV set was confiscated from an inmate because it wasn't "his" — he had borrowed it from another prisoner. All of these things were thrown out of the cells, over the railing, and into a pile to be put in the garbage.

This humiliation of the prisoners was matched by a greatly beefed-up guard contingent. "The unspoken message," said

Georgia, "was that 'We are making you pay for this.'"

City officials determined that the fire was arson. Since all the prisoners were locked up, and the fire started in a locked area, the finger of suspicion pointed right away at the guards or other prison officials.

The guards' organization (misnamed a "union," as if prison guards had something in common with workers) quickly tried to fix the blame on the inmates.

Their first story was that there was access to the area where the fire started from windows in an exercise yard. These turned out to be boarded up.

Then they claimed that some of the snitches told them the inmates had set the fire with a time-delay device. But fire officials found no evidence to support this.

Finally, they claimed the fire was started during the day, before the inmates were locked up, and "smoldered" until it erupted. But fire officials said the material that first caught fire cannot burn slowly.

It was physically impossible, fire officials said, for the inmates to have started the fire. Small wonder that the prisoners think some of the guards did it, "with intent to harm some inmates," Gary Georgia said.

Socialists host active workers conferences

The Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance have been hosting active workers conferences in March and April. The final two conferences of six will take place April 4-5 in Chicago and St. Louis.

Members and friends of the SWP and YSA and supporters of the *Militant* will discuss U.S. and international politics.

Each conference will feature a public talk by an SWP leader and reports on "U.S. Politics: New Openings

Emerging for Workers and Farmers" and "Organizing the Revolutionary Party."

Participants will discuss the SWP and YSA lawsuit against the FBI and Attorney General Meese and the upcoming campaign to increase the circulation of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*.

For information on the times and locations of the conferences* below, contact the SWP and YSA. See directory on page 12.

April 4-5

Host city Chicago

Participating
Austin, Minn.
Cleveland
Columbus
Detroit
Hudson, Wis.

Madison
Milwaukee
Oberlin, Ohio
Toledo

Reports:
"U.S. Politics":
Mac Warren

"Organizing the
Party": John Gaige

Host city St. Louis

Participating
Ames, Iowa
Cedar Falls, Iowa
Cincinnati
Denver
Des Moines
Fremont, Neb.

Iowa City
Lawrence, Kan.
Louisville
Northfield, Minn.
Omaha
Twin Cities

Reports:
"U.S. Politics":
Craig Gannon

"Organizing the
Party": Pat Grogan

Malcolm X Today Hear Jack Barnes

National Secretary, Socialist Workers Party

Chicago, Sat., April 4, 8 p.m., Americana-Congress Hotel, 520 S. Michigan Ave. (South Loop area)

The Nonaligned Movement and the Revolution in Southern Africa: An Eyewitness Report

Hear Sam Manuel Reporter for *Militant* and PM

St. Louis, Sat., April 4, 8 p.m., Holiday Inn, 2211 Market St. (Downtown)

Subscribe to the *Young Socialist*

This bimonthly revolutionary youth newspaper covers the fight against apartheid, Washington's wars, and racism, and the struggle for women's liberation, the rights of workers, and a socialist world.

\$3 for six issues. Send to YS, 64 Watts St., New York, N.Y. 10013.

Crusader against Bill of Rights

Continued from front page

vide workers along racial and sexual lines. His efforts suffered a big blow March 25 when the Supreme Court rejected the Justice Department's claim that affirmative action programs discriminate against whites and males.

Meese also organized Justice Department efforts — again unsuccessful — to reverse the 1973 Supreme Court decision that struck down state laws prohibiting abortion at any stage of pregnancy. The basis for this ruling was that these antiabortion laws violated the right to privacy, as protected by the Constitution.

All 'suspects' are guilty

The top lawman has also tried to roll back limits on the power of cops over "suspects." The 1966 Miranda decision by the Supreme Court, requiring that "suspects" be informed of their right to remain silent and have an attorney present during interrogation, particularly aroused Meese's ire.

"Most innocent people are glad to talk to the police," Meese claimed in an Oct. 11, 1985, attack on the Miranda ruling.

"You don't have many suspects who are innocent of a crime. That's contradictory. If a person is innocent of a crime, then he is not a suspect."

Although his efforts to dump Miranda have not made headway, Meese has kept on pressing his attack. This past January, he endorsed a Justice Department staff proposal urging the department to ask the Supreme Court to reverse the Miranda ruling. The staff proposal suggested replacing the information about rights that police must now provide with a statement that omits mentioning the right to an attorney and warns the "suspect" against remaining silent.

Calls for more censorship

More censorship has been another goal of the Meese Justice Department. That was the real objective of the report on pornography issued last year by a commission appointed by the attorney general. This was highlighted when the commission itself sent out letters in an effort to intimidate stores into dropping magazines that the commission considered pornographic. A federal court later found the commission's

4,000 march in Detroit

Continued from front page

to Reagan that people in Michigan oppose the U.S. war in Central America.

UAW Vice-president Marc Stepp led off the list of speakers. "We don't want war in Central America," Stepp said. "The UAW will be there in Washington on April 25 with hundreds of thousands demonstrating for peace, justice, and democracy."

National marches against the U.S. contra war in Nicaragua and apartheid in South Africa will take place April 25 in Washington and San Francisco.

Yolanda Campbell from the Autonomy Commission in Bluefields, Nicaragua, defended her country's right to decide on its own form of government free from Washington's intervention. "New nations are being born as mankind rises up," she said. "It's time to commit ourselves to be part of this process."

Susan Mnumzana of the ANC's Women's Section said the people of South Africa, led by the ANC, are "establishing their brand of democracy. And once established, they will defend it against any intervention." She expressed confidence in the eventual victory over apartheid, telling the crowd, "We have the support of those who matter in the United States."

Actor Ed Asner also urged demonstrators to join the April 25 march and rally in Washington, D.C.

Thomas Gumbleton, a bishop with the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Detroit called for the U.S. government to "negotiate with Nicaragua directly."

Other speakers included Vietnam War veteran Charles Liteky; Marian McCracken, president of the Michigan National Organization for Women; and Charles Adams of the Hartford Memorial Baptist Church.

Five hundred buttons publicizing the April 25 march were sold.

action to be a violation of the First Amendment.

In July 1985 Meese denounced as "bizarre" Supreme Court rulings that barred religious observances in public schools on the grounds that such observances violated the First Amendment of the Constitution.

In an Oct. 22, 1986, address, Meese proclaimed that decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court do "not establish 'a supreme law of the land' that is binding on all persons and parts of government. . . ." He specifically lashed out at a 1958 ruling that Arkansas Gov. Orval Faubus was required to enforce the 1954 court ruling on school desegregation. Faubus had called out the National Guard to bar Black children from previously all-white schools.

In the face of an avalanche of criticism, Meese beat a fast retreat.

Bill of Rights an obstacle

For Meese, the Bill of Rights — together with further amendments added to the Constitution since the Civil War (1861-65) — have become an obstacle to ruling-class attacks on labor at home and wars of conquest abroad. These provisions place the right of the people to oppose government policy and fight for social change right at

the heart of the supreme law of the land.

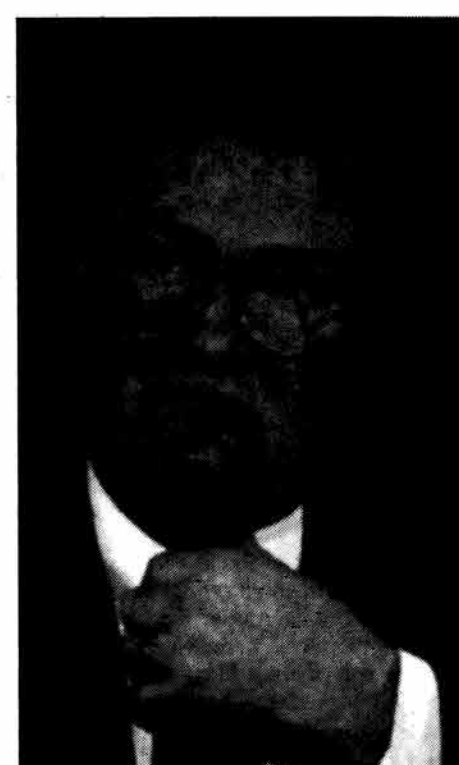
Most government officials and Republican and Democratic politicians try to get around these provisions while claiming to support them. But Meese prefers a frontal assault.

In the text of a July 1985 speech, he blasted the "doctrine of incorporation" — lawyers' language for the 60-year series of Supreme Court decisions, based on the 14th Amendment, that require all the states, not just the federal government, to observe the Bill of Rights.

"Nowhere else," declaimed Meese, "has the principle of federalism been dealt so politically violent and constitutionally suspect a blow."

Having tested the waters and finding them too hot on this issue, Meese backed-pedaled. He said he wasn't ready to challenge the applicability of the Bill of Rights to the states "at this stage of the game."

Meese's stands help bring what is at stake in the SWP case into sharper focus. The U.S. government and its cop agencies are fighting for the unfettered right to invade the privacy and disregard the rights of unionists, farmers, Blacks, women, and many other victims of exploitation and oppression. They want the power to silence



Attorney General Meese

opponents of the war in Central America and other reactionary policies.

The union movement and millions of other people have a stake in demanding that the Bill of Rights be upheld, and enforced to the hilt.

Nicaraguan ambassador draws 1,200 in S.F.

BY DANIELA DIXON

SAN FRANCISCO — A capacity crowd of 1,200 people greeted Nora Astorga, Nicaraguan ambassador to the United Nations, with a standing ovation here March 20. An additional 300 people were turned away at the doors for lack of room.

Outside, 100 right-wing contra supporters picketed the meeting from across the street.

The event was sponsored by Project National Interest, Friends of Nicaraguan Culture, Nicaragua Information Center, Nicaraguan Cultural Center, and the Nicaraguan Interfaith Committee for Action.

Astorga began her talk by explaining that she was moved by the warm reception. "I am very proud to represent our tiny country of 3 million people, knowing that we have love, pride, and a stubbornness to defend our revolution," she said. "We know we are not alone, that there are people around the world who have faith and hope in our revolution and that is what Reagan does not like."

She explained that Nicaragua has been fighting the U.S.-sponsored contra war for six years, suffering many hardships and loss of lives, but that the contras do not have the capacity to destroy the Nicaraguan revolution. "Augusto César Sandino, with a handful of men, defeated the biggest army in the world, that of the United States, and we will do it again," she declared.

"The problem is not, as Reagan would have you believe, between five Central

American nations," Astorga continued. "The problem is between the U.S. government and Central America."

"When I return to Nicaragua," she said, "I will take with me your solidarity and I will leave with you the enormous gratitude of my people for what you do for peace in Central America."

The meeting was chaired by Nancy Walker of the Board of Supervisors of the city. Other speakers were Andrea Carmen of the International Indian Treaty Council; Enola Maxwell, Potrero Hill Neighborhood House; Sojeila Silva, Coalition for Nicaragua, Santa Cruz; Fred Ross, Neigh-

bor to Neighbor Campaign; Holly Near; and Vivian Hallinan of Project National Interest.

Pat Norman spoke as co-chairperson of the Mobilization for Peace, Jobs and Justice and called on all those present to join in the national marches on April 25 here and in Washington, D.C., that will demand an end to the U.S. war in Central America and an end to apartheid in South Africa.

During her visit to this city, Astorga held a well-attended press conference. She spoke to 250 students at the University of California in Berkeley and to 300 students at San Francisco State University.

Liberation fighters in El Salvador

Continued from front page

can-trained Salvadoran Army and the Government. It comes at a time when the rebels are showing a marked resurgence of military and political activity."

The report said it was the second time in four years that the rebels had largely destroyed the El Paraíso base, "one of the army's most important and highly defended posts."

The base was designed by Green Berets to be "impregnable."

The *Times* report added that "the attackers appear to have concentrated, with almost complete success, on destroying the administrative offices, officers' quarters and intelligence center at the base."

It continued, "The rebels rained highly accurate mortar fire and rockets on the center of the base. Guerrilla sapper teams then cut the perimeter wire and raced in with satchel charges, blowing up barracks and raking dumbfounded soldiers with automatic weapons, according to survivors."

No Salvadoran army officer died in the fighting. Most of them took shelter in a bunker.

There are 55 officially acknowledged U.S. military advisers in El Salvador. Additional "temporary" forces push the number past 100. There are also unknown numbers of undercover U.S. "civilian" hirelings operating there.

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Organization _____
Signature _____

Send to: Political Rights Defense Fund, P.O. Box 649, Cooper Station, New York, N.Y. 10003

Burkina fights scourge of rural illiteracy

Campaign launched to teach peasants how to read and write

BY ERNEST HARSCH

DOUNDOUNI, Burkina Faso — With the teacher watching from the side, the peasant walked up to the blackboard, picked up a piece of chalk, and carefully wrote several words in Mooré, the language of this region. He read them aloud.

Sidonie Sawadogo, the village's literacy teacher, then called on the next student.

"January 6, 1986," the peasant wrote in the format of an accounts ledger. "Sold 335 sacks of millet." Off to the side he then calculated the total price, based on 45 CFA francs per sack. After a few mistakes and a verbal explanation of the multiplication process, he wrote "15,075" under the income column.

Next came the reading lesson. Nineteen men and one woman, ranging in age from 26 to 45, pulled out their Mooré primers and read silently. The stillness within the classroom was set off by the racket coming from just outside, where several goats bleated, a rooster crowed, and a dog barked away frantically.

After a few minutes Sawadogo, wrapped in a brightly colored print boasting the initials of the Women's Union of Burkina, called on one student and then another to read parts of the lesson aloud. It was an explanation of how to vaccinate a child against malaria and how to recognize the symptoms of the disease.

'Like a blind man given sight'

Sawadogo's students are like thousands of others throughout this West African country.

Peasants and stock herders for the most part, many are taking pencil to paper for the first time in their lives. They are gathering in bare classrooms, in community halls, in huts, and sometimes simply under trees in an effort to learn how to read and write.

A week before my visit to this small village in Bazega Province, I asked President Thomas Sankara about his government's literacy efforts.

"A man who has been made literate is like a blind man to whom you have given sight," Sankara replied. "Without literacy, the peoples of Africa will not be effective in developing their countries. So we allocate a lot of efforts to literacy."

"Of course," Sankara went on, "the popular masses are going faster than the government in this matter. When we ask a province to build four schools, they end up building 12. This causes problems, since we have to provide the seats, tables, chalk, schoolmaster, and so on. But it's maybe better like this — that the people are zealous, that they are committed and enthusiastic — than if they pull back."

An onerous legacy

This popular enthusiasm comes in response to a tremendous need.

Nearly a century of French colonial rule — and several decades of continued French domination following independence in 1960 — left Burkina with an illiteracy rate of some 90 percent, one of the highest on the African continent.

What little schooling existed was conducted mainly in French, which only one out of every 10 Burkinabè can speak. And it was confined mainly to the towns. Some religious institutions and other organizations carried out sporadic literacy efforts, but without real government support they were unable to get very far.

All this began to change in August 1983, with the beginning of the Burkinabè revolution. Shortly after seizing power, the new National Council of the Revolution set about tackling Burkina's legacy of underdevelopment, including its scourge of illiteracy.

1,256 classrooms built

One side of this has been an increase in the number of schools, particularly in the rural areas.

According to President Sankara, "We have raised the school-going rate from 10 or 12 percent to 22 percent in some regions. We have reduced school fees. We have built classrooms, just by organizing the masses. For example, under the [1984-85] People's Development Program, we



Militant/Ernest Harsch

Members of literacy class in village of Doundouni. Literacy drive is helping peasants to better organize, improve production.

built 1,256 classrooms, by ourselves, without any foreign assistance."

Schoolchildren are being taught how to read and write in both French and their mother tongue. But even with a further expansion of the regular school system, the impact on the overall literacy rate will only be felt over the long term.

For that reason, special programs aimed at adult illiterates, like the one here in Doundouni, are also being mapped out.

The difficulties facing such an effort are enormous.

Although Burkina has less than 9 million people, there are some 60 indigenous languages spoken in the country. Just 14 of them have written forms. Only French — which is barely known outside the towns — has any extensive published materials.

On top of all this, Burkina is one of the world's poorest countries. The material resources it can put into a literacy campaign are minimal. The pool of people who can be mobilized to teach others is very small.

'Alpha Commando'

Despite these hurdles, the first phase of a nationally coordinated literacy campaign was carried out over a seven-week period in February-April 1986. Called "Alpha Commando," it was a selective effort, targeting some 30,000 people throughout the country. About half of them passed the final evaluations and were deemed to have become functionally literate.

The campaign was conducted in nine of the indigenous African languages. The three main ones — Mooré, Jula, and Fulfuldé — cover a big majority of the entire population.

French was not used in the literacy campaign, mainly because so few people in the villages even speak it. Activists in the literacy drive also point out that using and developing the African languages will help strengthen Burkina's cultural identity and advance the long-term process of forging a Burkinabè nation.

Aimed at peasant activists

Another prominent feature of the Alpha Commando campaign was the direct linking of literacy to agrarian development.

Those taught how to read and write were peasant activists for the most part.

Here in Doundouni, for example, most participants in Alpha Commando were members of a local agricultural association known as the "revolutionary village group." It is the graduates of that campaign who are now pursuing follow-up lessons in Sawadogo's class.

Learning how to read and write has enabled these peasants to play more effective leadership roles and to advance the organization of the peasantry as a whole. As a result, Burkina's revolution is being further strengthened in the countryside.

These peasants' newly acquired literacy also makes it easier for them to manage their farms and to counter the exploitative practices of private merchants and corrupt government personnel.

Minister of Peasant Affairs Léonard

Compaoré told me that in the past officials from the government-run National Cereals Office were able to easily cheat peasants when buying their grain, since the peasants couldn't read the tickets indicating how much their grain weighed. "But now," Compaoré said, "they know how to read and can't be cheated."

The lessons used in the literacy classes also contain much concrete, practical information: how to irrigate crops, how to calculate the size of a field or the price of fertilizer, how to use mosquito netting to protect children.

This is a change from earlier literacy efforts, in which the lesson contents were not so directly related to the peasants' day-to-day experiences.

"Through Alpha Commando, we learned a lot about how to conduct our lives," one member of the revolutionary village group told me. "Health care for children and women, how to plant trees, many other things. We didn't know this before."

Adama Ouédraogo, an organizer for the Ministry of Peasant Affairs who accompanied me to Doundouni, commented, "Before, even if there was a literacy class, the peasants wouldn't come. They weren't interested. But now they see that what they can learn is very useful. So they come."

Toward a mass literacy drive

Alpha Commando was only a beginning. Those who completed the course still have only a rudimentary knowledge of the

written language. To deepen their understanding, the follow-up classes are now being conducted.

But the biggest task lying ahead is to extend the struggle for literacy to the population as a whole.

Leaders and activists of the Ministry of Peasant Affairs, the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution, the Women's Union of Burkina, and other organizations are now discussing how to organize and carry out a mass literacy effort.

As part of this perspective, a pilot literacy project was conducted in the village of Nomgaana, in the central province of Ouhritenga, in January and February. Its purpose was to train a core of peasants who could later teach the rest of the villagers how to read and write.

Whatever the precise form of the future literacy drives, they will build on the experience of Alpha Commando and its follow-up efforts.

A public decision has already been made to correct one of the chief weaknesses of the current literacy programs — the very limited participation of women.

Speaking to a mass women's rally on March 8, International Women's Day, President Sankara proclaimed, "Women's participation in the future literacy campaigns must correspond to their numbers in our society."

This was not just a promise. Already, women made up about half of those who took part in the recent literacy training project in Nomgaana.

Assault on affirmative action

Continued from Page 3

labor movement strengthens the solidarity of the entire working class and makes it more difficult for the employers to use race and sex divisions in their assaults on the unions.

Today affirmative action programs are institutionalized on a wide scale in many industries, in education, and in the government.

Composition of court

In addition to showing the gap between the Reagan administration's tough talk and what it can accomplish in practice, the latest decisions also reveal a great deal about the Supreme Court.

Last summer, Reagan appointed William Rehnquist to be chief justice and Antonin Scalia to the court. There was speculation by many liberals and radicals that reactionary court decisions could be expected for years to come. The recent affirmative action decisions are a reminder that the court does not function above the class struggle. Its decisions merely codify what has been won or lost in struggle.

Barry Goldstein, attorney for the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, said the recent rulings essentially "ratified the status quo." That status quo

includes, to the chagrin of the government, the generalized acceptance of the Weber decision, including its application to women workers. The court referred directly to the Weber case in several of those decisions.

Future struggles

The employers and the government will continue to try to undermine affirmative action programs. On March 31, for example, the Justice Department announced it will fight to uphold a lower court ruling against the Washington, D.C., fire department's affirmative action plan.

Many challenges lie ahead to defend and expand affirmative action. While most recent rulings have upheld affirmative action in hiring, the courts have not generally upheld programs that defend affirmative action during periods of layoffs.

There is considerably less support in the unions today for preserving the percentages of Blacks and women in industry during layoffs than there is for defending affirmative action in hiring and promotions. The challenge remains to win agreement in the unions to modify seniority so that past gains for Blacks and women are not wiped out because of discriminatory layoffs. The recent rulings can be an important tool in helping to carry that fight forward.

N.J. UAW members defeat union-busting bid

BY ELOISE LINGER

CRANFORD, N.J. — Cheers rang out from 200 battle-weary unionists as Peter Mershon, president of United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 726, opened a recent victory rally here.

When Harvard Industries purchased Elastic Stop Nut of America (ESNA) two years ago, it locked out the UAW members and reopened the plant as a nonunion operation. The rally was called after the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) ruled in early March that Harvard must make the UAW members offers "for their former jobs or . . . equivalent positions," even if this means discharging the replacement workers the company had hired when it got rid of the union.

The NLRB also ordered the company to give the workers the back pay they were owed since April 1985 and to "recognize and bargain with Local 726."

The ruling is a blow to corporations that use buyouts, mergers, and other maneuvers to try to get rid of unions.

Most members of Local 726 had served long years at ESNA before Harvard took it over. Their mood was jubilant as they began assembling for the rally.

People greeted one another with, "We got our jobs back!" and "Can you believe it?"

"Just to walk back in there — that will be great," people said.

Jackie Krowicki and Margaret Engell explained to the *Militant* that they had been notified on March 29 two years ago that the company was being sold. They were told two weeks later that they would be laid off.

"On April 12, the last day [on the job], they still did not give us one reason why. Everyone was crying. We were like family all saying good-bye," one of the women said.

In the meantime Harvard had begun taking job applications at a nearby hotel. When union members showed up to put in applications they were told the new ownership wanted a "union-free environment." Harvard agreed to rehire 68 workers in skilled categories and offered them jobs at their old wage but with reduced benefits. Seventy-five additional people were hired, none of them from the union.

After the union members decided none of them would go to work at the company until all were rehired, pickets went up at the plant. Only 12 of the skilled workers crossed the picket line.

Pickets were maintained for 12 hours a day from then on. Throughout the many

months, with support from other union locals, the workers stuck together. Some union members found other jobs but many had difficulty finding work because of their age. One worker said, "When you're over 50 forget it — they won't have anything to do with you."

"This great victory shows that it is possible to stick together, to wage a serious struggle and win," UAW International Representative Bill Kane told the rally.

In discussion at the rally, workers asked about the possibility of the NLRB ruling being overturned on appeal by the company. UAW lawyers said reversals of NLRB rulings were unusual. Other officials warned that the fight was not over and that it might be a while yet. But these uncertainties did not blunt the satisfaction of hard-won victory.



Militant/Eloise Linger

Unionists march by Cranford, New Jersey, plant in victory rally.

Pa. coal miners in long, bitter strike

BY KIPP DAWSON

PITTSBURGH — Miners have been on strike at the Canterbury Coal Co. mine near here since August 1985. Members of United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) locals 2456 and 6986 were forced on strike after a year of fruitless negotiations.

The company had refused to sign the national contract the UMWA negotiated with the Bituminous Coal Operators Association in 1984.

Canterbury wanted to get rid of union safety committees and also do away with individual miner's safety rights. That way only the company would have the right to determine what constituted a dangerous condition.

Canterbury's other takeback demands included a substantial pay cut, reduced holidays, and changes that would allow the company to recall laid-off workers by job classification instead of by seniority.

A year after the strike began, Canterbury made its first attempt to move coal that had been sitting on the ground at the Avonmore mine.

Noting the approach of a coal train, pickets sent out the word for help. Forty strikers and family members soon gathered. When the train engineer noticed the pickets, he refused to move the train. A Conrail supervisor took over and brought the train into the yard.

As the train began to move out, the pickets locked hands. They were attacked by Armstrong County police with cattle prods

and by state cops with billy clubs. Striker Sam Pierce was burned by a cattle prod, Joe Kotts clubbed by police, and five-year-old Danny Chicka, Jr., was trampled by police as his mother was being attacked.

After the attack, union members stepped up their efforts to publicize Canterbury Coal's union-busting.

Women United (formerly called Wives United for Mine Workers of America) has played a critical role in the effort.

On Oct. 4, 1986, a Hands Across Avonmore solidarity rally drew 2,000 miners, family members, and other unionists.

On April 4 members of Local 6986 will be hosting a Mitchell Day Banquet. They

will be joined by strikers from Local 2465 and by other supporters from UMWA districts 2 and 5 in Western Pennsylvania. Union President Richard Trumka will be the featured speaker.

Since December the miners' Outreach Committee has been publishing a newsletter called *United We Stand*. The most recent edition reports that Canterbury continues to drag its feet in negotiations.

Subscriptions to *United We Stand* can be purchased by sending a check for \$10 to "Outreach Committee," Box 382, Avonmore, Pa. 15618.

Kipp Dawson is a member of UMWA Local 1197 in District 5.

Sri Lankan official in Canada accused of torturing Tamils

BY ERLING SANNES

BISMARCK, N.D. — Tamil refugees living in Canada have leveled charges of torture at Sri Lanka's high commissioner to Canada, Gen. Tissa Indraka Weeratunga. They have asked that he be removed and sent back to Sri Lanka.

The 10,000-member Tamil community in Canada has also challenged him to drop his diplomatic immunity and face charges of human rights abuses in a Canadian court.

Weeratunga commanded the army in the district of Jaffna in northern Sri Lanka in 1979 when the government imposed emergency rule against Tamils living there. The Tamil people, 18 percent of Sri Lanka's population, have long suffered national oppression and government persecution.

Tamils now living in Canada have expressed outrage over the 1986 appointment of Weeratunga — known as the "butcher of Jaffna" or the "bull of Jaffna" — as envoy to Canada.

A 1982 Amnesty International report includes sworn testimony of dozens of Tamils who were tortured in the official residence where Weeratunga lived and was

in command in Jaffna. The torture chambers were reportedly one floor below his apartment.

One of the victims, Umapathisivan Pararajasegaran, voluntarily came to Canada in September 1986. At a news conference in Ottawa, he said he was arrested in 1979 along with dozens of others by troops personally commanded by Weeratunga.

Pararajasegaran said he did not know why he and the others were arrested, but he was jailed and tortured nine times over 15 days. He identified Weeratunga, who supervised his torture and kicked him when he did not provide the desired information.

A spokesperson for the Eelam Tamil Association of Quebec revealed that Weeratunga is related to Sri Lankan President J.R. Jayewardene, who appointed him as envoy to Canada. Tamils in Canada fear Weeratunga was sent to Canada to spy on them.

Several Tamil victims now living in Canada have offered to testify before the Commons human rights committee, but only behind closed doors. They fear for their safety and for the safety of relatives still living in Sri Lanka.

Virginia march against racism set

BY JERRY FREIWIRTH

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The Virginia chapter of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) announced an April 4 protest against racism in Colonial Heights, Virginia.

Colonial Heights is a 99 percent white suburb of Petersburg, a predominantly Black city of 41,000 people, 20 miles south of Richmond.

Curtis Harris, president of the Virginia SCLC, told the *Washington Post*, "We have every reason to believe that there is effort and intent to keep Colonial Heights all white. Coupled with that is the perception that Blacks are not welcomed."

March organizers drew parallels with the situation in Forsyth County, Georgia, another overwhelmingly white enclave where 30,000 people marched against rac-

ism last January.

The April 4 protest will begin at Virginia State University in Petersburg and then march to the courthouse in Colonial Heights. There a list of demands will be presented, including a call on Colonial Heights authorities to institute affirmative action programs in employment and housing and to end "fear and intimidation" tactics directed against Blacks.

Following the march, an evening rally is planned at the First Baptist Church in Petersburg. Among those scheduled to speak is E. Randall Osburn, assistant to the national president of SCLC.

Those interested in more information about the march and rally are urged to contact the Virginia Southern Christian Leadership Conference at (804) 458-4056.

Do you know someone who reads Spanish? Pan-African film festival

"We Africans are fighting to save our culture," said Philippe Sawadogo, general secretary of the Organizing Committee for the Pan-African Film Festival of Ouagadougou (FESPACO) in Burkina Faso. This 10th festival celebrated African culture and discussed the need for more films inspired by the realities of the African peoples.

Participants represented more than 40 African countries and liberation movements. Filmmakers also came from the Philippines, Peru, the United States, France, South Korea, Argentina, Cuba, and other countries. More than 300,000 people were estimated to have taken part in the week's events.

The April issue of *Perspectiva Mundial* features an on-the-scene report on FESPACO. It also covers the latest developments in the fight against FBI spying.

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

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Peasants fight for land in Philippines

BY RUSSELL JOHNSON
AND DEB SHNOOKAL

BARANGAY NAMULANDAYAN, Lupao, Philippines — During a visit here, we spoke to tenant farmers and farm workers about their struggle for land and for an end to repression by the Philippine army.

Sitio Padlaw, one part of this community, was the scene of the February 10 massacre of 17 unarmed peasants by the army.

The killings were in retaliation for the death of an army officer in a clash with New People's Army (NPA) guerrillas on the outskirts of the village.

Barangay Namulandayan is in the agricultural province of Nueva Ecija, populated by one and a half million people. It is in Central Luzon, the so-called "rice bowl" of the Philippines. The province has consistently been a top rice producer in the country.

But as a study by the local chapter of the Task Force Detainees of the Philippines stated, "The rich and wide expanse of agricultural lands does not offer prosperity to its tillers, who comprise the greatest majority of the people."

The great majority of the peasants work as sharecroppers or day laborers on the estates of big landowners who were basically untouched by the land reform measures proclaimed by the Marcos dictatorship. The landlords hold political power in the province, backed up by army units and locally recruited militias.

Nueva Ecija has long been a center of peasant struggles against landlordism. It was here, for example, that the Huk guerrilla movement was born in the struggle against Japanese occupation during World War II.

We arrived during the dry season here, when the countryside provides a striking contrast to the lush green irrigated rice-lands further south.

No irrigation dams

There are no irrigation dams in this area. Farmers must depend on one crop of rice grown in the rainy season, as compared to three crops grown annually on irrigated land.

Sometimes the peasants are able to grow a second, low-yielding crop during the year, but more often they plant a small area with vegetables such as onions, garlic, or peanuts, and water it by hand.

Behind Barangay Namulandayan, erosion-scarred hills stretch north. On these hills, Igorot tribespeople scratch out a living using slash-and-burn agricultural techniques.

The Igorots were displaced from their original lands by the development of the tourism industry and by the conversion of their lands into capitalist farms growing potatoes, cabbages, and other vegetables for the market.

These hills provide a haven for peasant guerrillas of the NPA. There is strong sympathy for the fight among the Igorots and the landless tillers in the surrounding low-lands.

Sitio Padlaw — now abandoned — is nestled beneath these hills. Former resident Ludovico Acosta explained that the nine families of Sitio Padlaw were tenants of two landlords. Acosta's parents had tilled 2.5 acres.

Because the Acostas' landlord lived in Manila, they paid him a share of the income from the sale of the crop rather than a share of the crop itself. They had a verbal arrangement with the landowner, whereby he got 25 percent of the gross income, while the Acostas kept 75 percent. The Acostas then had to repay the money lenders, who had financed the purchase of seeds and fertilizer, and provide for the family until the next rainy season.

When the crop was harvested, the villagers would sell it to the rice millers for 5 cents per pound. The millers often immediately resold it to the National Food Authority at the official price of 8 cents.

Landlessness

Of the 154 families in his neighborhood, farm worker Levie Ladia estimated that only 30 percent tilled land as tenants. The

other 70 percent had to find work as laborers for small landowners in neighboring districts. The pay ran as low as \$1 a day. This work is available only during the rainy season. For the rest of the year, the landless survive by selling bamboo poles and charcoal.

One consequence is the visible malnourishment of the children. "Usually we eat only two times a day," Ladia explained.

Tiofilo Dongallo is the Lupao chairman of the Central Luzon Farmers Alliance (AMGL). He tills 12 acres of unirrigated land belonging to Lorenzo Villanueva. Villanueva owns 220 acres in the district — 98 acres of which are tenanted rice lands.

The largest landlord in Lupao has more than 865 acres, Dongallo said, but the average holding is more like 125 acres.

Dongallo was 38 when his father died and he took over sharecropping the land. Almost all the young men in the district are landless, he explained, because virtually the only way to get land is to inherit a tenancy from one's father.

Verbal agreements

Dongallo estimated that only three out of every 10 tenants in Lupao had a Certificate of Land Transfer signifying that they are purchasing land from the government over a 15-year period. The certificates are part of the Marcos-era "land reform." About 50,000 peasants in this region have them. A few others have formal lease agreements with the landlord. The great majority have verbal agreements.

Alfredo Pascual, an AMGL leader, has farmed for 40 years, tilling 7.5 acres. His verbal agreement with the landlord calls for paying a fixed rent in rice each year. When he becomes too old to work the land, tradition grants his sons priority in working it.

In fact, he has already divided up the 7.5 acres between himself and his three sons, leaving each less than 2.5 acres from which to make a living. The average gross income per harvest from 2.5 acres in this area is less than \$400.

Peasants fight back

Dongallo, Pascual, and Ladia described the history of the AMGL in Lupao. It was formed in September 1986, following a meeting addressed by a provincial organizer for the Peasant Movement of the Philippines. All who work the land — tenants, farm workers, and their families — can join. By February, there were more than 1,000 members.

They formed the Lupao AMGL, we were told, to bind peasants together in the fight against exploitation. They are fighting the high prices for fertilizers, seeds, and other farm inputs, which most tenants have to finance through borrowing from moneylenders at exorbitant interest rates. But most of all, they are fighting for land.

This means giving tenants title to the land they are farming, the peasant leaders explained. And it means turning idle lands over to the landless laborers free of charge.

Among the idle lands that they demand be distributed among the peasants and agricultural workers are a number of big cattle ranches. The AMGL leaders explained that a significant area of former rice-growing lowlands had been converted into cattle ranches under the Marcos regime.

This move enabled some landlords to evade the land reform law, which was confined to rice and corn lands of more than 17 acres. Also exempted were mechanized farms and those where the landowner supervised farm work.

This hastened the development of ranches and mechanized capitalist farming, which displaced even more peasants and farm workers.

If these lands were brought into the land reform program and the government built irrigation dams that would allow more intensive rice cultivation, the peasant leaders felt there would be enough land for the 70 percent of families in the district who are farm workers.



Militant/Russell Johnson
Sitio Padlaw, in the community of Barangay Namulandayan, lies deserted after Philippine army murdered 17 peasants here.

This would mean a confrontation with the ranchers, they said, but their children are hungry.

Nearly 400 people from this area participated in a week-long "people's camp" mass sit-down at the Ministry of Agrarian Reform in Manila. That ended in the January 22 massacre of 19 peasants and their

supporters by the armed forces. It was the third time they had gone to Manila to press the government to carry out a genuine land reform.

Pascual and Dongallo still hoped that a peaceful land reform was possible. But Dongallo said, "They can't simply keep on killing the peasants."

—WORLD NEWS BRIEFS—

Ecuador paralyzed by one-day protest strike

Despite large police mobilizations, Ecuadorian workers succeeded in shutting down most of the country March 25. Even President León Febres Cordero admitted that support for the strike action was "significant."

The protest was called by the United Workers Front (FUT) to demand cancellation of sharp price increases imposed by Febres, in the wake of a devastating earthquake earlier that month. Although Febres also announced a suspension of foreign debt interest payments to private banks, many unions charged that his austerity policies were aimed primarily against the workers.

Patricio Aldaz, president of the General Union of Ecuadorian Workers (UGTE), declared that with the new price hikes, "the salaries we receive are not sufficient to meet our needs." Like other unions, he said, the UGTE demands "the immediate elimination of these economic measures and the non-payment of the foreign debt. We demand not only the declaration of a suspension of payment to private banks but to all international credit organizations as well, because the country cannot meet these obligations."

Ecuador's total foreign debt is \$8.3 billion.

Although the March 25 strike was proclaimed illegal by the government, members of workers', students', and peasants' organizations set up roadblocks, barricades, and pickets in Quito and most other major cities. Police attacked in some places, leading to street clashes and hundreds of arrests.

FUT President Fausto Dután said there was "total support" for the strike. The action, he added, was a "demonstration that the people are tired of the authoritarian and centralized policies of this government."

Protests hit jailing of Israeli activist

Protests within Israel and internationally have continued to mount against the February 16 arrest of Michel Warschawski, a prominent political activist and director of the Alternative Information Centre in Jerusalem.

The center, which publishes reports on police torture and other brutalities against Palestinians, was ordered closed for six months.

This action was widely seen as an at-

tack on press freedoms.

The journalists' union of Jerusalem, the Communist Party, and other political organizations, as well as members of the Israeli parliament, have protested Warschawski's detention and the closing of the press center.

A protest petition in Europe has been signed by more than 100 prominent figures, including members of parliament from France, Austria, West Germany, Britain, Ireland, Italy, and Denmark.

Workers' leaders hit Polish price hikes

The government of Poland announced sweeping price increases March 29 that would raise the cost of most basic foodstuffs, gasoline, cigarettes, alcohol, transportation, and postal services by 10 to 100 percent.

The officially sanctioned unions called the price increases "unacceptable to working people."

Lech Walesa, a founder of the now outlawed Solidarity union movement, also blasted the hikes. He charged that the Polish authorities "do not have a program" for solving Poland's economic crisis.

"This time the working world should not agree to these price hikes," Walesa said.

The former Solidarity leader said that the only way to initiate an effective economic reform would be to restore the rights won by Polish workers in August 1980. Those rights were suppressed following the imposition of martial law in December 1981.

Suriname rightists bid for more U.S. aid

Several prominent leaders of a counterrevolutionary military force seeking to overthrow the government of Suriname arrived in Washington in early March. Henk Chin A Sen, a former president of Suriname, met with State Department officials and unnamed "private" groups.

Chin A Sen publicly appealed for \$500,000 for the rightist forces, who have caused considerable destruction in that South American country. He said he was moving his exile headquarters from the Netherlands to Washington.

The government of Suriname has charged that the counterrevolutionaries are already receiving some Dutch and U.S. aid.

CALIFORNIA

Oakland

What We Can Learn from Platoon. A panel discussion. Translation to Spanish. Sat., April 4, 7:30 p.m. 3808 E 14th St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (415) 261-3014.

San Francisco

The Nicaraguan Revolution Today. Speaker: Cindy Jaquith, Nicaragua bureau director of the *Militant and Perspectiva Mundial*. Translation to Spanish. Sat., April 11, 7 p.m. 3284 23rd St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (415) 282-6255.

LOUISIANA

New Orleans

Discussion on the Movie Platoon: Lessons of the Vietnam War. Sat., April 4, 7:30 p.m. 3640 Magazine St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (504) 895-1961.

Video: Sun City. Discussion to follow on how to fight apartheid in South Africa and racism in the United States. Sat., April 11, 7:30 p.m. 3640 Magazine St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (504) 895-1961.

MARYLAND

Baltimore

Say No to the U.S. War in Nicaragua. An eyewitness account. Speakers: two Baltimore residents just returned from a three-week tour of Nicaragua. Sat., April 4. Dinner, 6 p.m.; forum, 7:30 p.m. 2913 Greenmount Ave. Donation: dinner, \$3; forum, \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (301) 235-0013.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

Socialist Workers Campaign Rally. Jobs Not War! Speakers: Mark Emanation, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor; Denise McInerney, SWP candidate for School Committee. Translation to Spanish. Sat., April 11. Reception, 7 p.m.; rally, 8 p.m. 107 Brighton Ave. 2nd floor. Allston. Sponsor: Boston Socialist Workers Campaign Committee. For more information call (617) 787-0275.

MINNESOTA

St. Paul

Film showing: El Norte. Introduced by Laura Flicker, Young Socialist Alliance and member United Steelworkers of America Local 2814. Sat., April 11, 7 p.m. 508 N Snelling. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

No More Vietnam Wars (What Was the First One All About?) Speaker: Will Reissner, former staff writer for *Intercontinental Press*, member United Steelworkers of America Local 2814. Sat., April 18, 7 p.m. 508 N Snelling. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (612) 664-6325.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

Behind the Struggle Against Repression in El Salvador Today. Speakers: Mary Ellen Donnelly, member Monmouth County Pax Cristi who attended In Search for Peace conference in San Salvador last year; representative of student delegation to University of El Salvador in January; others. Translation to Spanish. Sat., April 4, 7:30 p.m. 141 Halsey St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (201) 643-3341.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Eyewitness: El Salvador Today. Slideshow

and discussion. Speakers: Don Gurewitz, Socialist Workers Party, member International Union of Electronic Workers Local 201. Translation to Spanish. Sat., April 11, 7:30 p.m. 79 Leonard St. Donation: dinner, \$3; forum, \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum/Foro Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (212) 226-8445.

Grand Nica Party: Celebrate the 7th Anniversary of Casa Nicaragua. Sat., April 11, 9 p.m. until. Brecht Forum, 151 W 19th St., 7th floor. Donation: \$5. Sponsor: Casa Nicaragua. For more information call (212) 769-4293.

Burkina Faso: Eyewitness Account of the Revolution. Slideshow and discussion. Speaker: Ernest Harsch, staff writer for *Militant*, recently returned from three weeks in Burkina. Translation to Spanish. Fri., April 17. Preforum dinner, 6:30 p.m.; forum, 7:30 p.m. 79 Leonard St. Donation: dinner, \$3; forum, \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum/Foro Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (212) 226-8445.

TEXAS

Dallas

Pentagon Republic. Video on Honduras.

Speaker: Susan Zarate, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., April 4, 7:30 p.m. 336 W Jefferson. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (214) 934-5195.

UTAH

Salt Lake City

Politics of U.S. Immigration Policy. Panel discussion with Bill Anderson, attorney and member of Concerned Citizens for Immigration Rights and Justice; Salem Aljuni, November 29 Coalition for Palestine; Susie Beck, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., April 4, 7:30 p.m. 767 S State St., 3rd floor. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (801) 355-1124.

WASHINGTON

Seattle

Iran-Contragate and the U.S. Government Crisis. Speaker: Fred Halstead, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., April 3, 7:30 p.m. Husky Union Bldg., room 204MN, University of Washington. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Young Socialist Alliance and SWP. For more information call (206) 723-5330.

Southern Africa freedom struggle topic of U.S. socialist's tour of Australia

BY RON POULSEN

SYDNEY, Australia — A firsthand report on the freedom struggle in southern Africa was the topic of several talks by U.S. Socialist Workers Party leader Sam Manuel on a visit here in January.

The tour followed Manuel's trip as a *Militant* reporter to southern Africa, where he reported on the Eighth Summit Conference of the Movement of Nonaligned Countries held in Zimbabwe and on the situation in Angola 11 years after that country won independence.

After attending the national conference of the Socialist Action League (New Zealand section of the Fourth International), Manuel crossed the Tasman Sea to speak in Australia as a guest of the Socialist League (SL), supporters of the Fourth International in Australia.

In the Blue Mountains, west of Sydney, about 20 people, mainly from the Australian Labour Party (ALP), heard Manuel speak on U.S. politics and the Angolan revolution. The ALP supporters and guests were particularly interested in his estimation of the "contragate" crisis in Washington.

In Sydney, Manuel was also a guest speaker at a Marxist Summer School, sponsored by the Communist Party of Australia. Manuel told the 50 people gathered, "The Nonaligned movement conference was not just another meeting of governments. It is a very important component of the fight against apartheid. Our task — from Australia to the United States — is to act upon the appeal of the Nonaligned movement to redouble our efforts to build the international movement against apartheid."

Manuel's presentation was preceded by a talk by Eddie Funde of the African National Congress (ANC) Information Office, based in Sydney.

Manuel also spoke to 20 people at a forum arranged by the SL. It focused on the history of the U.S. Black movement and the latest developments in U.S. unions.

At the Latin American Cultural Centre in Brisbane, Manuel spoke on the role played by revolutionary Cuba in the anti-apartheid struggle. He received an enthusiastic response from those gathered, many of whom were refugees and immigrants from Latin America.

Manuel told the audience, "The freedom struggle in southern Africa is related to the fight against U.S. aggression in Central America. The defeat of the racist South African invasion of Angola, with the aid of Cuban internationalist fighters, not only advances the struggle against apartheid but also the fight against imperialist aggression against the people of Nicaragua, El Salvador, and all of Central America."

Manuel then traveled to Boggabilla, where he interviewed some Aboriginal youths who had resisted racist attacks in the neighboring, mainly white town of Goondiwindi.

On his return to Sydney, he was a featured speaker at a national gathering of the Socialist League. This was the first national educational and discussion meeting of the SL, which was formed by supporters of the Fourth International in April 1986.

Three main reports were discussed — on the ruling-class offensive and the state of the labor movement in Australia, on war and revolution in Central America, and on the next steps in building the Socialist League. Talks were also given on the Spanish Civil War and on the history of Australian imperialism.

A highlight of the conference was an international solidarity panel of guest speakers. Oscar Cortez of the Committee in Solidarity with El Salvador spoke on the current stage of the struggle there, while Vla-

WEST VIRGINIA

Elkins

U.S. Constitution — Relevance of First Amendment to Contemporary Political Issues. A debate. Speakers: William Stanmyer, director of Lincoln Center for Legal Studies, Arlington, Virginia; Doug Jenness, coeditor, *Militant* newspaper. Moderators: professors Turner and De-Rosa. Thurs., April 9, 7 p.m. Davis and Elkins College Chapel. For more information call (304) 636-1900.

From Montgomery to Selma. Speaker: Fred Halstead. Sat., April 4, 4 p.m. 5517 Rainier Ave. S. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: YSA and SWP. For more information call (206) 723-5330.

WEST VIRGINIA

Charleston

AIDS and the AIDS Scare. Speaker: Eric Schuyler, Socialist Workers Party; others. Sun., April 5, 7 p.m. 116 McFarland St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (304) 345-3040.

From Pathfinder Press

Apartheid's Great Land Theft: The Struggle for the Right to Farm in South Africa by Ernest Harsch.

Tells the story of the fight over land, which has been at the center of the struggle between South Africa's white rulers and its subjugated Black majority.

This pamphlet is an important tool to help build the movement to break all U.S. ties with the apartheid regime.

It is available at the Pathfinder Bookstore nearest you (see directory on page 12) or from Pathfinder Press, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. 56 pp., \$1.25. Please include \$.75 for handling.

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TEXAS: Austin: YSA, c/o Mike Rose, 7409

Berkman Dr. Zip: 78752. Tel: (512) 452-3923. **Dallas:** SWP, YSA, 336 W. Jefferson. Zip: 75208. Tel: (214) 943-5195. **Houston:** SWP, YSA, 4806 Alameda. Zip: 77004. Tel: (713) 522-8054.

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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.

Left of Adolf — According to columnist Jack Anderson, when Reagan was first elected in 1980, assistants compiled a secret hit list of 26 "leftists" to be purged from



Harry Ring

the CIA. Listees included Frank Carlucci, now national security adviser to the prez.

They do care about your rights — "TENANTS RIGHTS — When you have a client who wants to sell his/her rights — call

us ... cash advances, highest prices." — Ad in New York *Law Journal*.

P.S. — The above item was submitted by a prison inmate, who, no doubt, would consider selling his tenant rights.

Ecumenical — Jerry Collins, the dog track operator who chipped in \$1.3 million to postpone Oral Roberts' departure, also bought a circus a while back and donated it to Florida State University.

He does want to go, but later — "It was hardly a gain for the evangelical Gospel ... to put the prospect of going to heaven in the category of a calamity." —

Theologian Carl Henry on Oral Roberts' life-and-death fund appeal.

P.S. — Then there's the one about the ultradevout chap who got directly through to God. "I've got good news for you, and bad news," said God. "The good news is you're going to Heaven." "Oh, and the bad?" "You're leaving to-night."

Might even have a nice lawn — In New York, Staten Island Borough President Ralph Lamberti struck a deal with Mayor Koch to cut back on a slated shelter for the homeless there and, instead, build a 4,000-inmate jail. "A jail is preferable to a shelter because it's self-contained," Lamberti said. "It doesn't spill over into the community."

Check it out — From Neiman-Marcus, an up-to-the-minute coordinate. Cotton cardigan (\$460), silk blouse (\$320), linen pants (\$260), patent leather belt (\$140). Total — if you have to ask — \$1,180. Plus \$14.70 UPS.

Call my broker — We laughed, in a recent column, about Brooklyn yuppies paying \$32,000 for a slot in a parking garage condo. But at a similar one in Boston's plush Beacon Hill area, spaces that sold for \$7,500 in 1979 now command a reported \$110,000.

Drop this on the foreman's desk — A catalog offers the Stressless Executive Chair. Richwood and leather. Cordless phone set in one arm. Control for built-in

stereo in other. Tilts back for that afternoon snooze. \$2,995.

The silver lining — Cash America, a Texas pawnshop chain, is doing nicely with its first public stock offering. While holding on to its traditional spots in poor neighborhoods, the chain is branching out to shopping malls to reach the middle-class folk hit by the dive in the Texas economy.

Fashion tip — "Kids have a lot of money to spend; and if they don't want to wait 18 months for that look, they don't have to. We're lucky that a store like Dayton's exists in Minneapolis." — Chris Daniels, Dayton's director of men's and boy's trend merchandising, on the \$55 "destroyed denim" jeans with holes.

Peltier fights for new trial in gov't frame-up

BY ERLING SANNES

BISMARCK, N.D. — For 10 years, Leonard Peltier has fought for a new trial. An activist in the American Indian Movement (AIM), he is now serving two life sentences, having been framed up for the 1975 deaths of two FBI agents.

The agents were killed during a government attack on Indians at the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. An Indian rights activist was also killed.

Recently, Peltier filed for reconsideration of his appeal for a new trial by the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals in St. Louis.

Last December, the appeals court had conceded that the main evidence used to convict Peltier was invalid and that the government prosecutors knew this and concealed it from the jury. But the court ruled that Peltier must continue doing life anyway.

"We find that the prosecution withheld evidence from the defense favorable to Peltier," said the appeals court in its Dec. 30, 1986, ruling.

The evidence showed that a gun Peltier was alleged to have carried on the day of the shoot-out could not have been the weapon that caused the deaths.

The evidence established that the rifle recovered by the government "contains a different firing pin" than the rifle used to fire the shell casing recovered at the scene of the shooting.

The Eighth Circuit Court panel acknowledged the government's statement that the casing was "perhaps the most important piece of evidence in the case."

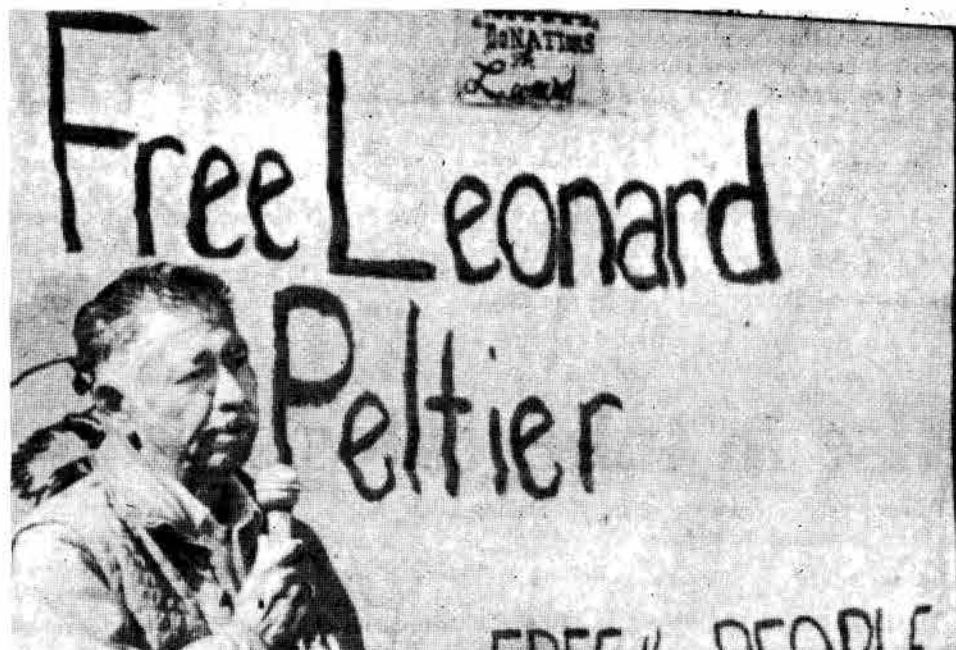
But the judges claimed they were not "convinced" that "the evidence withheld by the prosecution is material in the sense that its non-disclosure undermines confidence in the outcome of the trial."

As far back as 1984, Federal Judge Paul Benson, who presided at Peltier's trial, acknowledged that the government had suppressed the key ballistics evidence. But, he said, "This did not adversely affect the outcome of the trial."

"They're saying that the government did dirty tricks, but they're not going to do anything about it," declared William Kunstler, Peltier's attorney. He said the appeal, if not upheld by the circuit court, would be taken to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Legal briefs seeking a new trial for Peltier have been filed by more than 50 members of the U.S. House of Representatives and by the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers and the California Attorneys for Criminal Justice. Members of the Canadian parliament have described Peltier's case as "clearly government abuse ... suppression of evidence and falsehood."

Many letters from citizens of the Soviet Union have demanded a new trial for Peltier. And Amnesty International has pointed to Peltier's case as an example of misconduct by the FBI and other government spy agencies in criminal trials.



Leo Peltier, father of imprisoned Indian rights fighter Leonard Peltier, addresses supporters in 1984 in Bismarck, North Dakota.

—10 AND 25 YEARS AGO—

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE
April 8, 1977

The one-two punch was labor's "most painful Congressional defeat since the AFL and CIO merged 22 years ago," said *Newsweek*. First, Congress voted down the common-site picketing bill, a top priority of AFL-CIO political strategists. The next day, the Carter White House spurned the federation's proposal for a \$3.00-an-hour minimum wage.

"This is a bitter disappointment to everyone who looked to this administration for economic justice for the poor," said AFL-CIO President George Meany.

Last year the AFL-CIO spent millions of dollars hustling votes for Carter and falsely promoting him as the hope for "economic justice" for all working people. Meany must have expected more for the money.

For the future, the union tops promise to try harder at the same game. Robert George, head of the AFL-CIO Building & Construction Trades Department, thanked the members of Congress who voted for the common-site bill. "We shall try to increase their number by reasoned discussion and political action," he declared.

The defeats are publicly blamed on inadequate lobbying efforts by the unions. AFL-CIO officials willingly shoulder the responsibility and excuse their Democratic friends. "We made a bad tactical mistake," a top Meany aide told *Newsweek*. "We spent all our time working on the Senate, thinking that's where the big fight would be." This is superficial and misleading.

The Democrats and Republicans rejected labor's demands for one basic reason: This is a new era of worldwide capitalist economic crisis, and the employing class is determined to make working people bear the burden.

The wealthy ruling minority wants wages curbed, union rights restricted, and

social services cut back. This is a long-term drive and it is implemented through both of the big-business parties.

The common-site picketing bill was a measure to aid craft-union bureaucrats, not workers. But its defeat signals that on vital issues such as organizing the nonunion South, creating jobs, and improving the quality of life, labor will get no help from the Democrats.

THE MILITANT

Published in the interests of the Working People
April 9, 1962 Price 10c

The United States is supposed to have freedom of the press. That means no harassment or persecution of editors or writers because of the political views they hold or put in print. Yet Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy has invoked the McCarran Act against the newspaper *The Worker*, the magazines *Political Affairs* and *Mainstream*, and the youth publication *New Horizons*, on charges that these organs express the political ideas of the Communist Party.

In the United States political parties are supposed to have the right to solicit support for their ideas and programs without harassment or persecution from the government. Yet the McCarran and Smith Acts together virtually outlaw the Communist Party. In addition, the Kennedy administration last month took the completely unprecedented step of suing the Communist Party and its officials for huge sums in back taxes on the contention that a party falling under the Communist Control Act is taxable.

Unless halted or reversed, precedents being established against the Communist Party will be used in the future, as their designers intend, against other publications and political parties.

Leader of Revolutionary Workers Party of Mexico dies

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

Juan José González, a leader of the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT) of Mexico, died of a heart attack on February 15. González, also known as Álvaro Lain, was 35 years old.

Originally from Colombia, González joined the Mexican party in 1973. He had been a member of the PRT Central Committee since 1984 and of its Political Committee since 1985.

González took part in the 1985 World Congress of the Fourth International as one of the delegates of the PRT, the Mexican section of the FI.

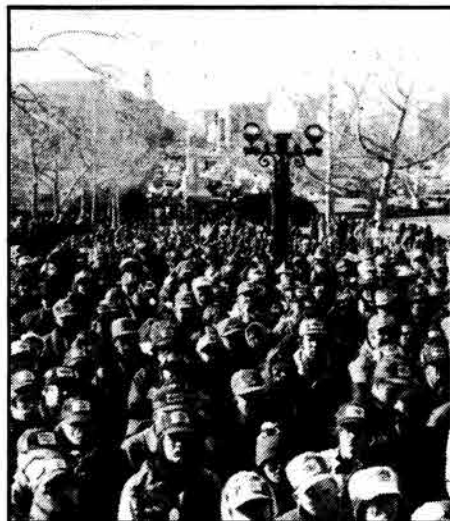
González played a leading role in the PRT's work in solidarity with the Nicaraguan revolution and against U.S. intervention in Central America. He was the editor of the bimonthly magazine *Panorama*, published in Mexico City, which focuses on Central America and the Caribbean. As a journalist, he traveled to Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Panama.

In November of last year, González went to Nicaragua to participate in the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the founding of the Sandinista National Liberation Front.

Marxism and the Working Farmer

An Education for Socialists bulletin. Includes "American Agriculture and the Working Farmer" by Doug Jenness, documents and speeches by Frederick Engels, V.I. Lenin, and Fidel Castro. 62 pp., \$3.50

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



Stop the book-banners

In a setback for ultrarightists seeking to impose censorship, a federal appeals court ruled March 27 that Alabama public schools may resume using 44 textbooks while a lower court decision is being appealed.

The books had been banned from the schools by federal Judge W. Brevard Hand on March 4. They included home economics, history, and social studies texts.

John Buchanan, head of a group opposed to such bans, accurately summed up the meaning of Hand's action: "This is judicial book burning, and nothing less than that."

The attack in Alabama is one of a series of moves aimed at barring students and others from access to books the rightists disagree with. Four months before the Alabama ruling, a court in Tennessee permitted parents to withdraw children from public school reading classes because the texts did not reflect their religious views. In some areas, rightist outfits are seeking to have books removed from library shelves on similar grounds.

Judge Hand's ruling upheld a suit brought by individuals describing themselves as fundamentalist Christians. They claimed that the textbooks preached a "religion" of "secular humanism" in violation of the First Amendment to the Constitution, which requires separation of church and state.

The ruling was greeted with enthusiasm by Robert Skolrood, executive director of the ultraright National Legal Foundation launched by television evangelist and Republican presidential contender Marion (Pat) Robertson. "Humanism is out of the closet, for the first time," cheered Skolrood.

The rightists' legal claim is as phony as they come. Various humanist ideas have been put forward by people of many views — religious and nonreligious — from ancient Greece down to the present. But the claim that there is a "secular humanist" religion is nothing more than a pretext for suppressing any works that fail to advocate the views of the rightists. The target is the First Amendment rights to speak and write without censorship.

Judge Hand's ruling made that perfectly clear. He denounced the textbooks for omitting "religious aspects to significant American events" and warned that reading the books might "affect a person's ability to develop religious beliefs."

Hand's claim to be defending religious freedom is brazen hypocrisy. He is the author of a 1983 ruling — overturned on appeal — that the Constitution "does not prohibit the state from establishing a religion." He warned that "a member of a religious minority will have to develop a thicker skin if state establishment offends him."

When reactionaries object to the secular character of the U.S. public school system and attempt to twist this into an establishment of a nonexistent secular "religion," their quarrel is really with the U.S. Constitution, and in particular the First Amendment. That amendment requires separation of church and state, bars imposing any religious ideas and observances on the people, and guarantees freedom of religious belief or nonbelief to all.

The job of the public school system is to educate children and youth about the world we live in. This requires full freedom to read and discuss. The latest attempts to impose censorship are an obstacle to this and need to be firmly driven back.

Rise in tuberculosis, homelessness

Tuberculosis — once the country's leading killer — has been in decline for decades.

But no longer.

The incidence of tuberculosis is now on the rise, and the spread of homelessness among the country's working people is a major cause.

There were 22,575 new cases of tuberculosis in the United States last year, up from 22,201 in 1985. In New York City, the number of cases began rising in 1982. That year, 1,594 instances were reported. In 1985, there were 1,843.

The disease is spreading most rapidly among those deprived of a place to live. The American Lung Association reports that clinics and shelters for the homeless across the country are finding rates of tuberculosis 150 to 300 times the national average.

In New York City the number of new cases among the homeless rose from 65 in 1982 to 150 in 1985. The disease is being spread in the inadequate and poorly heated shelters that have been set up for some of the homeless by the government and private agencies.

So far, top U.S. health officials seem prepared to take the increase in stride. "There has always been a propensity for the disease among the poor," said Dr. Dixie Snider, who heads the tuberculosis division at the Federal Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta.

More cases are in the offing. Last winter, which was sometimes particularly bitter, the number of people without a place to live jumped 20 percent in the United States, according to a survey by the Partnership for the Homeless, a church-related body that operates the largest private U.S. shelter program.

The study found that families with children now account for 35 percent of those deprived of homes.

The total of homeless people in the United States is now estimated at 3 million. There are at least 60,000 in New York City; 20,000 in Baltimore; 15,000 in Philadelphia; 25,000 in Houston; 14,000 in Dallas; 4,500 in Phoenix; 10,000 in San Francisco; and 50,000 in Los Angeles.

Armories, vacant buildings, churches, and other facilities are being put to use as temporary sleeping quarters and soup kitchens in a growing number of cities. Few provide more than one meal a day. The aid given by the federal and local governments is stingy, grudging, and inadequate.

The report of the Partnership for the Homeless cited the Reagan administration's cuts in social services as "an

active and distinct cause of homelessness in and of itself."

Cuts in social services have made it harder for many working people to make ends meet.

The tandem rise of tuberculosis and homelessness is an indication of growing social decay. It is part of the price that workers and farmers are paying for the decade-long offensive against us by the employing class. This offensive aims at resolving economic difficulties that beset U.S. capitalism by slashing the living standards of working people in order to increase big-business profits.

The rise of homelessness marks a transfer of wealth from the workers and farmers to the superrich. It is a consequence of jobs eliminated and wages cut in order to jack up profit rates; of soaring rents and the transformation of apartments formerly occupied by workers into high-rent cooperatives and condominiums; of foreclosures by loan-sharking banks on the land of farmers and their families.

The rise of homelessness and tuberculosis is part of the price of gutting social services to provide more dollars for arms and for tax giveaways to the billionaires. When hospitals are shut down; when already inadequate social security payments are held below the increase in the cost of living; when slashes in welfare payments make it impossible for families to meet their most minimal needs; and when public housing construction is virtually ended — the results contribute to millions sleeping in streets and shelters in unhealthy conditions.

After a widely publicized "sleep-out" organized by the Community for Creative Non-Violence, in which members of Congress and Hollywood celebrities participated, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Urgent Relief for the Homeless Act. The bill allocates up to \$500 million for emergency shelters, health care, and other assistance to the homeless this year. The Reagan administration is backing a \$70 million package.

Homeless working people are entitled to massive and immediate relief. But these tight-fisted plans are not adequate for the job. Nor do they take a single step toward resolving the causes of the rising numbers of working people deprived of a place to live.

A massive program of low-cost public housing and the guarantee of free medical care for all are among the first steps needed to deal decisively with the problem of housing and deteriorating health care. There is more than enough money in the \$240 billion war budget to pay the cost. Certainly, these should be the top priorities of a government that claims to represent "all the people."

Marking the 200th anniversary of U.S. Constitution

BY DOUG JENNESS

This year marks the 200th anniversary of the convention that drafted the U.S. Constitution and submitted it to the first 13 states for ratification.

Often there's something very routine, and even banal, about commemorating important events on their 10th,

LEARNING ABOUT SOCIALISM

50th, 100th, etc. anniversaries, as if there is something inherently significant about numbers divisible by 10. And it's certain that much that is routine and banal will be said about the Constitution during this year's celebrations.

But interestingly enough, this anniversary happens to occur at an appropriate time to discuss the meaning of the Constitution and the stance working people should take toward it.

For one thing, we're in the midst of a debate over whether government officials and bodies are obligated to abide by the laws of the land, including the constitutionally guaranteed democratic rights of the American people.

The Iran-contra affair, in particular, has highlighted the White House's insistence that it has the right to operate outside the law. This scandal has shown tens of millions that even though Congress, for a time, had outlawed funds to the Nicaraguan contras, the Reagan administration pressed ahead with secret and illegal means to finance this mercenary army.

At the same time, the Reagan administration is making it abundantly clear that, in its view, federal police agencies should not be restricted by the Bill of Rights.

On March 6 the Justice Department, headed by Attorney General Edwin Meese, filed an affidavit arguing that federal Judge Thomas Griesa should allow a wide range of police agencies to use millions of files the FBI has on the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance and tens of thousands of individuals deemed to be associated with these groups.

In justifying its demand, the Justice Department contends that "the vital interest of self-preservation of this Nation's form of government . . . outweighs individual rights."

In August 1986 Judge Griesa ruled that the FBI's 40-year investigation of the SWP violated the party's First Amendment rights to free assembly and speech and its Fourth Amendment protection from unauthorized searches. He declared that the SWP is entitled to an injunction against government use of all records obtained illegally or developed from illegally obtained information.

The Justice Department wants Judge Griesa to rule that cops have prerogatives that stand above citizens' constitutional rights. This is of a piece with Meese's barnstorming campaign against the Bill of Rights in the last several years. (See article on front page.)

The most notable thing about the U.S. Constitution is that mass pressure forced the drafters to include the Bill of Rights as the first 10 amendments. This codified into law citizen rights that stand higher than the policies or practices of any presidential administration, legislative bodies, or police agencies.

The First Amendment explicitly states that Congress cannot pass legislation abridging freedom of religious expression, speech, the press, and assembly.

The people's right to be secure from unreasonable searches and seizure is also guaranteed. Speedy and public trials by jury and protection from excessive bail, fines, and cruel and unusual punishment are assured.

Since these rights were adopted, the American people have continually had to fight to defend them, to insist that they not become hollow promises.

Moreover, through struggles, the scope of these rights has been significantly broadened. This has occurred in two ways.

First has been the continuing fight to get more layers of the population — Blacks, women, youth — to be considered citizens, to be brought under full protection of the law.

Secondly, more arenas of activity and behavior have become protected under the Bill of Rights. For example, struggles of working people have forced the courts to expand the right of privacy. More and more activities engaged in by adults (which do not interfere with the rights of others) are now legally barred from government interference and meddling.

Simply because these democratic rights have been won and are codified in the Constitution and in court rulings doesn't mean that working people's rights are safe or are not violated. But they do represent hard-fought conquests that have become part of what working people consider to be their rights. The fact that they are institutionalized in law provides a weapon in our fight to defend ourselves from never-ending attacks by the government and the employers.

Next week, we'll take up how the Bill of Rights was won.

Toledo Jeep workers discuss Chrysler buyout of AMC

BY JOE CALLAHAN

TOLEDO, Ohio — In early March, Chrysler Corp. announced that it is buying American Motors Corp. The deal needs formal approval from the boards of directors

UNION TALK

of both companies and from Renault, which owns 46 percent of AMC.

Capitalist spokespeople and the news media are saying it is a good deal for everyone involved — including AMC workers.

This line has also been echoed by United Auto Workers officials. A statement signed by UAW President Owen Bieber and Vice-president Marc Stepp said, "We believe Chrysler's purchase of AMC is a logical and sound step for all concerned."

Danny Wilson, president of UAW Local 12 at AMC's Jeep Assembly plant here, said the purchase "would be a marriage made in heaven."

Chrysler is being hailed as a model for U.S. industry. In 1979 the company declared bankruptcy. By the mid-1980s, it was showing huge profits. Lee Iacocca, Chrysler's board chairman, is put forth as a "hero" for saving the company.

AMC, on the other hand, lost \$91 million last year. Many Jeep workers have been influenced by the idea that they will be better off working for a more profitable company. Others are more skeptical. One worker said Chrysler will try to eliminate holiday pay and impose mandatory overtime. (The Jeep plant is the only auto assembly plant in the United States that does not have mandatory forced overtime.)

Most Jeep workers understandably take a dim view of AMC management. Local 12 carried out job actions in 1985 to protest AMC's refusal to pay the millions of dollars in deferred wages that auto workers were supposed to receive at that time. They had been deferred as part of takebacks imposed in 1982.

At the end of 1985 the company began laying off workers. AMC then put in effect a seniority scheme that pitted Toledo workers against union members laid off from AMC plants in Wisconsin. This led to bitter divisions in the union.

The company soon wanted new concessions and demanded that we reopen the contract. Management threatened to begin phasing out the plant in mid-1986 if its demands were not met. The union refused to budge and the deadline passed uneventfully.

More recently AMC has again been threatening to move Jeep production to Kenosha, Wisconsin, while telling workers there that they too will lose their jobs if concessions aren't granted.

It's true that Chrysler will have a harder time pleading poverty than AMC. But a Chrysler buyout is not going to bring relief from the attacks. After getting billions of dollars in federal and state money in 1980 to stay afloat, Chrysler closed 21 plants and laid off 70,000 workers.

The company was able to force through substantial takebacks. This included attacks on wages and reductions in job classifications. Chrysler's victory in imposing concessions became a model for employers across the country. These attacks are continuing even though Chrysler, the third largest U.S. auto maker, is now reporting substantial profits.

An argument made by U.S. Attorney General Edwin Meese and other supporters of the buyout is that AMC will now be owned by a U.S. company instead of by Re-



Many local governments have been rolling out the red carpet for Chrysler, claiming conditions for workers will improve. But Chrysler buyout of AMC will do nothing to slow attack on workers' wages and working conditions.

nault, which is owned by the French government. But the problem isn't French owners. Renault, like Chrysler, is trying to drive down wages and increase production as a way of maximizing profits.

AMC workers in the U.S. and Canada need to be prepared to fight to defend our interests. That means we have to reject the notion, "What's good for the company is good for the union."

Joe Callahan is a member of UAW Local 12 at the Jeep plant.

LETTERS

Marcus Garvey

I'm a regular reader of your newspaper and find it real inspiring and up to date.

However, I never came across anything on Marcus Garvey. Don't forget we all came from the same place, fighting the same struggle, and heading in the same direction — Africa!

And Marcus is the forerunner of "Back to Africa."

A prisoner
Attica, New York

Terminally ill

As we are aware, there are pressing problems in the world today, most of which I have thought were created by capitalist greed. There is a dangerously growing population, a pollution problem, the nuclear weaponry problem, the chemical weaponry problem, the chemical weaponry waste problem, and the disappearing rain forest problem, to mention only a few.

Each of these problems by itself threatens the existence of the Earth as we know it. Put them together and it looks like the Earth is terminally ill. Socialism cannot work unless there is human existence.

I have recently been told that the Nicaraguan government has been taking down its rain forests with all the force it can. I would really love to know why they are taking this action if, in fact, they are.

Furthermore, I would love to see articles that address the socialist party's views on these problems.

Leann Lamb
Lubbock, Texas

Some differences

I have some differences with things Doug Jenness has written on the churches and on Andrei Sakharov. (If Sakharov is a capitalist mouthpiece, why does he, unlike Scharansky or Solzhenitsyn, continue living in the Soviet Union? It seems clear that if Sakharov had wanted to sell out to the bourgeoisie he could have done so long ago and been well rewarded.)

On the whole, though, Jenness and the rest of the *Militant* staff turn out necessary and important articles on the struggles of workers and antiwar activists. The information on Nicaragua is indispen-

sable. Here's my renewal sub.
F.G.

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Our best ally

Youth suicides, now having reached the shocking level of 5,000 lives per year and the second leading cause of deaths among youths, are the latest manifestation of the decay and degeneration of our social system.

In a very real sense, the Bergenfield Four, whether they thought beyond the compulsion to end their suffering once and for all, died for our sins. The sin of excluding young people from participation in the solution of the evils that face us all, but most of all face those who must endure the future. The sin of unemployment and dead-end jobs, discrimination, and the ever-accelerating arms race and threat of using them again in war. The sin of polluting the environment.

The youth are our best ally in the resolution of these vital problems. We must open the door to them to participate in the solution of our common problems as the only sure way to end the problem of suicide — not only for youth, but for society as well.

Howard Mayhew
Whiting, New Jersey

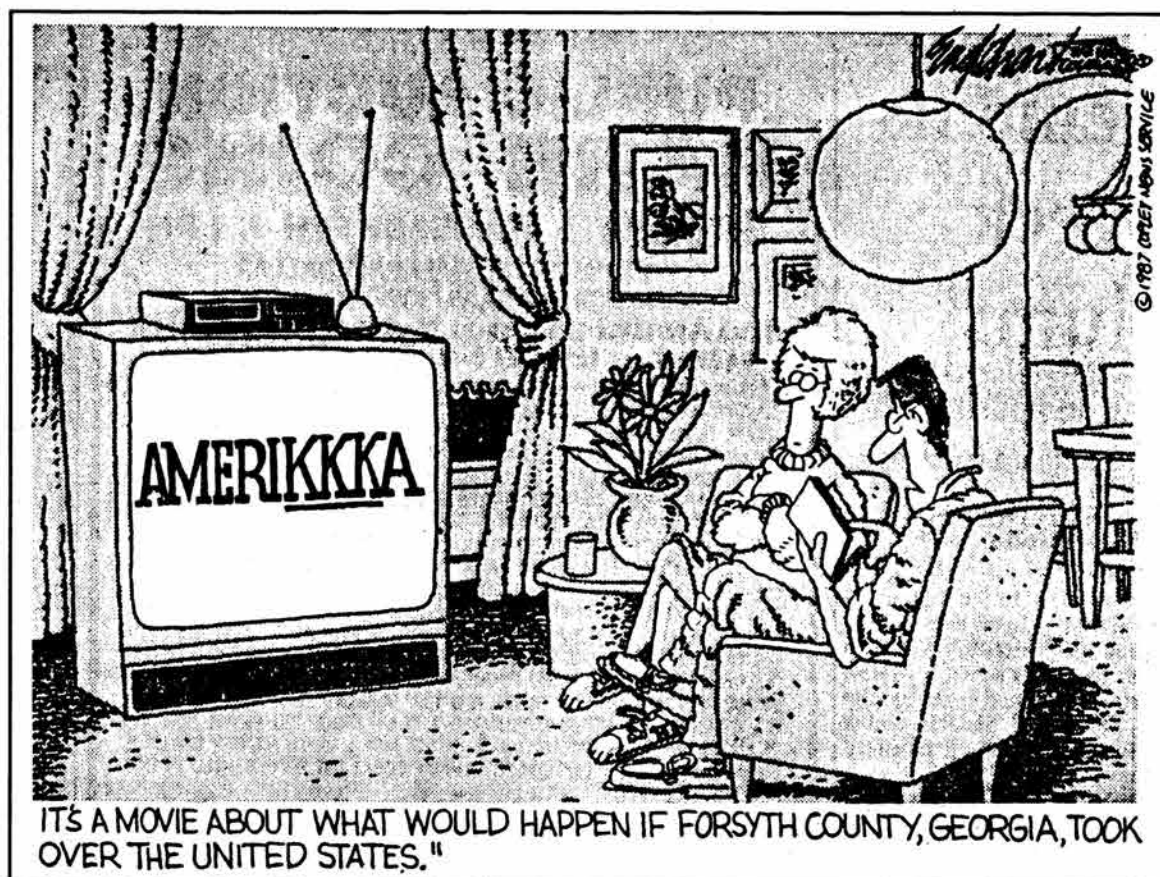
Jon Brower

We would like to donate \$100 to the Socialist Publications Fund in memory of Jon Brower. Jon, 31, died March 4 from complications of AIDS. Jon had read and enjoyed the *Militant* and various Pathfinder publications during the last three years of his life.

In January 1986 Jon was inspired by his reading to help in defending a *Militant* Labor Forum on abortion rights. He was glad to be one of the people who helped eject from the forum a right-winger with a known record of arrests and violent attacks against women's rights.

As his illness progressed, he attempted to further public education around AIDS by appearing on news programs and in a videotape on AIDS made by the Cascade AIDS Project to help train medical personnel.

Deborah Higdon
Maurice Higdon
Portland, Oregon



IT'S A MOVIE ABOUT WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF FORSYTH COUNTY, GEORGIA, TOOK OVER THE UNITED STATES."

Black-lung victims

According to the coal bosses' media hacks, the strike-happy United Mine Workers has spawned a generation of black-lung freeloaders that corporate America can no longer afford.

A short article in the *Charleston Gazette* reminded me that a serious threat is concealed behind the bosses' blatant lies. The article points out that Westmoreland Coal Co. is suing retired miner Jennings Dawson, 67, for \$14,386 in benefits he and his wife Edith received over a 30-month period.

The couples' monthly checks of \$457.40 must be repayed, a benefits review board ruled, because Dawson had not presented sufficient evidence of total disability.

"Insufficient evidence" slows up the benefits to many black-lung victims. Their eligibility is endlessly questioned in the courtroom, where slow-motion legalism prevails over human needs. Many retired miners die before receiving news of their eligibility.

"If I get through this without having a nervous breakdown I'll be lucky," said Edith Dawson, 64. "I don't have it [the \$14,000] so I don't know where I'm going to get it. And I don't have the money to

hire a lawyer to fight it."

The thing of it is that Jennings Dawson worked in underground coal mines from 1936 to 1976. After 40 years in the mines, you don't have to present "sufficient evidence" of black lung, because you have it, and everyone knows it. Only those whose minds are twisted by profit greed would ask for "sufficient evidence."

As long as robbing people like the Dawsons is the number one concern of coal operators like Westmoreland, defending the health and safety of miners must be a number one concern of all working people.

David Salner
Charleston, West Virginia

'Amerika'

In just one hour of watching the 14-hour miniseries *Amerika* one can easily discern the method used and the objective sought. Scaring people and entertaining them constitute the main method of persuasion used.

The goal is to build up a blind hatred against the Soviet Union, reinforce the idea of an imminent Soviet invasion, and create and indoctrinate an ignorant, zealous, and fanatic generation fed with siege mentality and ready for an

eventual fascist mobilization.

The show came in a specific international context where the USSR has been observing a unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing for more than a year and making spectacular proposals to eliminate nuclear weapons by the year 2000, plus many other signs of good faith to improve peaceful relations of coexistence with the West. *Amerika* attempts to blow up all these serious efforts for peace and détente, and demonstrates clearly that the United States is not sincere about peace.

O.M.
Athens, Ohio

A thousand words

I'd like to see more pictures in the *Militant* — better than a thousand words.

S.S.
New Kensington, Pennsylvania

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

Farm workers fight wage cuts

Mass picketing halts strikebreaking at Pyramid Orchards in Wash. state

BY MATT HERRESHOFF

WAPATO, Wash. — Two thousand farm workers joined the picket line at Pyramid Orchards near here on March 21. The mass picket defeated an attempt by wealthy apple growers in the Yakima Valley to break a strike of 60 farm workers against Pyramid.

The workers, members of the United Farm Workers of Washington State (UFWWS), have been striking to win a union contract since February 10. The fight began when Pyramid arbitrarily cut wages for tree pruners from \$2.50 per tree to \$1.75. Most workers couldn't earn minimum wage at that rate.

Strikebreaking move fails

On March 21 more than 100 growers from orchards throughout the Yakima Valley mobilized to cross the picket line at Pyramid. Their aim was to finish the pruning within a few days.

The growers tried to force their own workers to help them break the strike. They had planned to mobilize 300 growers and 900 farm workers as scabs.

Workers were threatened with firings if they didn't help the growers' strikebreaking effort. Growers also threatened to withhold documentation that many farm workers need to qualify for amnesty under the new immigration law.

Despite these threats, only eight farm workers joined the growers in crossing the picket line. And five of them immediately came back out. They told pickets they had been lied to by their bosses, who said there was no strike.

Many farm workers, whose bosses had ordered them to scab, joined the picket line instead. They jeered, clapped, and chanted when the bosses attempted to prune a few trees. The growers were so demoralized that one-third of them left by 10:00 a.m., and one-half had left by noon.

The Pyramid strike is being watched

closely by farm workers throughout the state. Many were inspired by the victory on the March 21 picket line.

"This day will be remembered by farm workers throughout the valley for many, many years," UFWWS President Tomas Villanueva told the *Militant*.

More than 225,000 farm workers labor in the apple, cherry, and peach orchards, hops and asparagus fields, and vineyards of Washington state, which are concentrated in the Yakima Valley. "If we win this one, everybody else is going to come down," Villanueva said.

The conditions faced by workers at Pyramid are similar to those of most farm workers in the state. Strikers told the *Militant* that Pyramid has only one outhouse in its orchard here and has no running water for washing or drinking. Workers have no job security or seniority rights and can be hired or fired at the grower's whim.

"Over the past six or seven years, farmers have been cutting the wages of farm workers" throughout the region, Villanueva reported. Tree pruners used to be among the more highly paid farm workers, earning as much as \$80 a day. Now, most average \$30 a day. The average wage for apple pickers has dropped from \$7.50 a bin to \$6.50. And the same for other crops.

Asparagus workers

Asparagus workers suffer from some of the worst conditions and lowest pay. More than 5,000 farm workers will cut asparagus in the Yakima Valley, and many more in other parts of the state, when the season reaches its peak in late April and May. Workers and union activists are planning for a strike against the growers in the asparagus fields this spring. The strike at Pyramid is helping lay the basis for this.

Support from farm workers has been a key to waging this battle, Villanueva told the *Militant*. Farm workers from throughout the Yakima Valley have walked the



Militant/Matt Herreshoff

Picket line in Yakima Valley blocked attempt by Pyramid Orchards to break strike. "Someone has to start winning. Why not us?" said one worker.

picket line, brought food to the strikers, and contributed \$4,800 of the \$8,000 that has been raised to finance the strike.

Many have joined the union. The UFWWS, formed in September 1986, has now grown to 800 members. Two hundred have joined in the last month. Each day at the picket line, several more farm workers join the union. Between 15 and 20 sign up at every weekly union meeting. Union members pay a \$5 initiation fee and \$5 a

month for dues.

On the picket line, farm worker Manuel Cortez expressed the sentiment of many others: "Someone has to start winning. Why not us?"

The UFWWS has received support from unionists across the state and seeks more support to help continue this struggle. Contributions and messages should be sent to: UFWWS, P.O. Box 899, Granger, Wash. 98932.

Striking Wis. meat-packers build April 12 rally

BY SANDI SHERMAN

CUDAHY, Wis. — An April 12 march and rally to support striking meat-packers at Patrick Cudahy, Inc. is building big, according to representatives of United Food and Commercial Workers union (UFCW) Local P-40.

Leaflets publicizing the April 12 events are being made available to unions in Milwaukee, Racine, and Madison. Participants will assemble at 10:00 a.m. at Cudahy Senior High Field House for a march to the Cudahy plant. After the

march, a rally featuring Jesse Jackson will be held back at the field house. The union is expecting several thousand to attend.

During their four-month strike, the Cudahy workers have won broad support from other unions and from the general public. More than \$130,000 has been contributed to Local P-40 so far, along with food and clothing.

Dozens of area unionists continue to join the picket lines. Mark Rosenbaum, Local P-40 president, told reporters that the union has sent representatives to labor meetings throughout the state to win support for a boycott of Cudahy products. Rosenbaum said plans are under way to begin organizing in Chicago.

"In all the strikes I've seen in my years, I've never seen one with more of a sympathetic ear in the community than this one," Richard Presser, business agent for District Council 10 of the International Association of Machinists told the *Milwaukee Journal*.

The strikers' morale was boosted March 24 when the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) announced it was filing an unfair labor practice complaint against the company. The NLRB says Cudahy is bargaining in bad faith and attempting to break the union.

In addition, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration is currently investigating safety conditions at the plant. After the company resumed operations with scabs, Cudahy Fire Department ambulance crews made 13 runs to the plant in a two-month period. This compares to 20 runs in all of 1986.

On the picket lines, the strikers have welcomed these developments. Many have worked in a number of Midwest packing plants and can testify to the unsafe working conditions in the industry.

The industrywide nature of the meat-packing struggle was underscored when Iowa Beef Processors (IBP) set up shop at

the Holiday Inn in nearby Kenosha. IBP has been running radio ads in Milwaukee and Kenosha offering applicants \$6-an-hour jobs to scab on the strike at its Dakota City, Nebraska, plant.

P-40 members responded by picketing the Kenosha Holiday Inn, encouraging people not to scab.

New whitewash ruling in racist killing by N.Y. transit cops

BY HARRY RING

NEW YORK — In a new whitewash, the Metropolitan Transit Authority has refused to press departmental charges against 10 transit cops involved in the killing of Michael Stewart. An 11th cop will face perjury charges.

A Black youth, Stewart was beaten and stomped by the 11 cops in 1983 after being arrested for writing graffiti on a subway wall. The cops said he had tried to escape.

After working him over, they hog-tied Stewart, threw him in the back of a van and took him to a hospital. He arrived there in a coma and died 13 days later.

The Transit Authority did not even investigate the case.

But, with public anger building, six cops were tried in 1985 in the killing.

Despite the testimony of half a dozen witnesses who saw the cops beating and kicking Stewart, the six were acquitted.

To dampen the furor this created, Mayor

Edward Koch called on the Transit Authority to conduct a further investigation.

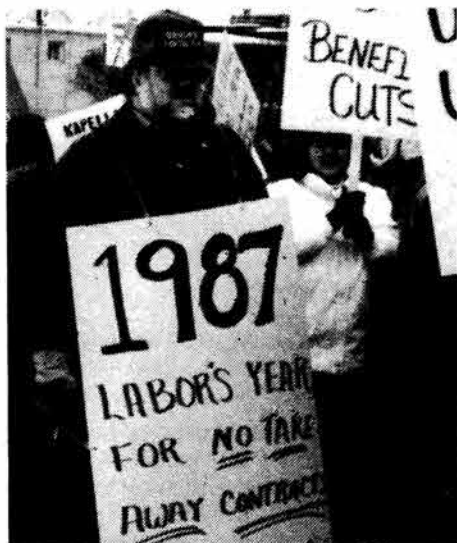
A retired judge was hired to study the case. He found excessive force had been used against Stewart, that one cop had undoubtedly lied when he testified he saw Stewart breathing en route to the hospital, and that the transit police director had failed to initiate a proper investigation.

But, the judge concluded, there wasn't enough evidence to do anything, except maybe press the one perjury charge.

It was essentially this finding that was approved by a majority vote of the Transit Authority board March 27.

Meanwhile, John Kostick, the cop facing the perjury charge, has applied for a \$24,000-a-year disability pension on grounds that the various legal proceedings have crippled him emotionally.

A multimillion-dollar damage suit filed against the city by Michael Stewart's family is pending.



Militant/Sandi Sherman

Meat-packers protest Cudahy's use of scabs to break their strike. United Food and Commercial Workers Local P-40 has won growing support.