

Mexico elections reveal depth of economic crisis

BY FRED FELDMAN

The political tensions set off by the outcome of the July 6 elections in Mexico have highlighted the polarization taking place in that country under the impact of an economic depression and skyrocketing inflation.

The government, headed by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), failed to release all but a few of the presidential returns July 7. By July 10, the government still had not issued final election returns. Computer breakdowns were cited as the reason for the failure.

By July 12, the government was claiming to have counted 80 percent of the vote. The official figures showed Carlos Salinas de Gortari, the PRI candidate, getting 53.6 percent of the vote. Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, candidate of the National Democratic Front, a bloc of nationalist and left-wing parties, was being accorded 26.1 percent, and Manuel Clouthier of the right-wing National Action Party (PAN) was recorded at 16 percent.

Salinas was handpicked as the ruling party's candidate by President Miguel de la Madrid. The PRI has governed Mexico since the party was created in 1929.

Despite the absence of official returns, Salinas and the PRI claimed victory soon after the polls closed. On July 10, a PRI spokesperson predicted that Salinas would be credited with 50 percent of the vote, carrying 27 of the 31 states. Unnamed PRI officials were quoted in the July 9 *Washington Post* as conceding that Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas was ahead in four states, and in Mexico City.

The PRI spokesperson claimed the ruling party would win about 255 of the 300 seats in the Chamber of Deputies and between 58 and 60 of the 64 seats in the Senate.

It is widely believed that the PRI used the delay in publishing the vote count to assure itself of the predicted majorities or better in the legislature, as well as to bring Salinas' vote at least up to the predicted level.

At the same time, Cárdenas declared himself the winner.

On July 9 Cárdenas claimed that a Salinas victory through election fraud would be "the technical equivalent of a coup d'état" and called for "popular mobilization" to prevent it.

Stating that his count was based on "reliable information from inside the government," Cárdenas released partial results. These showed Cárdenas ahead with 39 percent of the vote, Salinas with 33 percent, and Clouthier with 25 percent.

On July 7, Cárdenas' supporters had re-



Incoming president Carlos Salinas de Gortari (inset) helped impose austerity plan, aimed at keeping up payments on massive foreign debt, that has meant growing poverty for millions like these Mexico City children.

ported that he was ahead in at least 12 states, and in Mexico City.

An estimated 50,000 people led by Clouthier marched in Mexico City July 10. The PAN leader blasted "the most vulgar vote fraud in Mexican history" and announced a campaign of "peaceful civil resistance." His followers blocked two border crossings into the United States and

several highways in the state of Chihuahua.

Rosario Ibarra de Piedra, nominee of the Revolutionary Workers Party, was the fourth candidate in the race.

In the wake of widespread protests against alleged vote-stealing in state elections in 1985 and 1986, Salinas had promised an accurate ballot count this year.

Tension over the issue mounted after the

Continued on Page 17

Marroquín hearing: first test of socialist suit victory

BY MARGARET JAYKO

The first test of the August 1986 federal court ruling upholding the constitutional rights of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance occurred on July 6 at the U.S. consulate in Toronto, Canada.

That was the date Héctor Marroquín, a Mexican-born worker who is a member of the national committee of the SWP, attended a hearing with officials from the U.S. State Department on his application for a permanent residence visa — or "green card" — based on his marriage to a U.S. citizen. Washington has stonewalled for five years on issuing Marroquín his green card.

Marroquín has been fighting for the right to live and work in the United States, free from government efforts to deport him, since 1977. The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and State Department have made clear throughout this 11-year-long battle that it is Marroquín's communist views and political activities — especially his membership in the SWP — that lie behind the campaign against him.

This political discrimination was at the heart of the State Department officials' main line of questioning at Marroquín's July 6 hearing. The consulate officials spent much of their several-hour interview with Marroquín trying to get him to say that because he is a member of the SWP, he is excludable on the grounds that he is one of those "aliens who are, or at any time have been, anarchists, or members of or affiliated with any Communist or other to-

Continued on Page 2

Facts on airliner contradict Pentagon

BY GEORGE KAPLAN

As the facts punched more holes in the Reagan administration's effort to justify the July 3 downing of an Iranian airliner over the Persian Gulf, the White House announced July 11 that it would offer compensation to the families of the 290 passengers who were killed.

In announcing the compensation plan, White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater reaffirmed Reagan's stand that firing missiles at the civilian flight was a "justifiable defensive action."

On July 12 U.S. forces launched their seventh attack on Iranian forces or installations in the gulf. Two small Iranian boats reportedly came under U.S. fire in the incident.

The clash followed the Pentagon's July 7 announcement that there would be no change in the "rules of engagement" that allow U.S. ships in the gulf region to fire on ships and planes that they deem "hostile," whether or not U.S. forces have been fired on.

Navy officers confirmed July 12 that U.S. ships in the gulf were not being required to monitor the air traffic control channel, on which airline pilots communicate with control towers. Doing so on July 3 would have revealed that the "suspect aircraft" appearing on the radar of the USS *Vincennes* was actually Iran Air Flight 655 out of the Iranian port of Bandar Abbas. This is a regularly scheduled hop across the gulf to Dubai in the United Arab Emirates.

Pentagon officials have declined to say whether the *Vincennes* was monitoring the channel when the order was given to destroy the aircraft.

The growing body of facts about the downing increasingly contradict the version of events that Adm. William Crowe, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, put forward at a July 3 news conference. Crowe sought to bolster the assertions by the *Vincennes'* captain, Will Rogers III, that the airliner appeared on the ship's radar as an Iranian F-14 moving in for a possible attack.

The evidence now indicates that Rogers

and his immediate superiors were aware that their target might be a civilian airliner.

"Military officials said Captain Rogers was uncertain about the identity of the target and was concerned that it might be a civilian airliner," reported the July 11 *New York Times*.

"When the plane was 20 miles from the ship, Captain Rogers consulted with the theater commander who was aboard another ship in the gulf. The captain was authorized to give one more warning and then fire on the aircraft."

The warning, however, was sent on a civilian frequency which airline pilots are not required to keep open during short flights like the one to Dubai. No attempt was made to contact the ship on the air traffic control channel, as the *Vincennes* is equipped to do.

"Navy officials said," the *Times* continued, "that officers on the ship remained concerned that the ship was a civilian jet. They began thumbing through an airline schedule to see if there were any regularly scheduled flights expected to leave Bandar Abbas at that hour."

"Captain Rogers did not find Flight 655."

Later, the Pentagon would claim that there was no such scheduled flight. But Flight 655 was a regularly scheduled, three-times-a-week flight. On July 3 it was the only scheduled flight over the Persian Gulf out of Bandar Abbas. It was listed in the *Official International Airline Guide*.

It has now been revealed that Rogers

Continued on Page 8

N.Y. socialists open drive to put Warren, Mickells on ballot

BY SAM MANUEL

NEW YORK — The Socialist Workers Party election campaign headquarters in lower Manhattan was bustling with people July 12, the first day that petitioning could legally begin. Campaign supporters have launched a three-week effort to collect 40,000 signatures on petitions to place SWP candidates James Warren, for president; Kathleen Mickells for vice-president; and James Harris, for U.S. Senator on the ballot. The state requires 20,000. Preparations were still being made, as campaigners hung banners, stuffed literature packets, and assembled petition boards.

Both Pathfinder Books and the Militant Labor Forum, which share a building with

the campaign, are taking steps to gear into supporting the campaign effort. Petitions for the socialist candidates were prominently displayed in the bookstore. A volunteer was assembling pamphlets and books for literature tables to be used by team members.

Pathfinder has recently published a new pamphlet that contains a proposal adopted by the SWP national committee entitled, "An Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis." Socialist campaigners in New York are aiming to sell 2,000 copies of the pamphlet during the drive.

The Militant Labor Forum has set aside the next few weeks for public presentations

Continued on Page 5

Lessons from selling to Montreal garment workers

BY SUSAN BERMAN

MONTREAL — Every week here, six distributors of *Socialist Voice*, *Lutte Ouvrière*, the *Militant*, and *Perspectiva Mundial* sell outside two high-rises on Chabanel Street. The buildings, about two blocks apart, house dozens of garment shops, many organized by the

French-speaking Haitians, as well as a significant number of English-speaking Blacks from both the Caribbean and Africa. There are also workers from El Salvador, the Philippines, Vietnam, Italy, Iran, and other countries.

Our team, which has been out every week since September, uses

Haitian workers were particularly interested in what our papers said about Haiti and Cuba.

In January when the Canadian Supreme Court struck down the antiabortion law, it provoked lively sales and discussions at one of the plants.

But we've also had whole months when selling one or two papers was a challenge. We still distributed leaflets for antiracist demonstrations, solidarity actions with Nicaragua, abortion rights meetings, and weekly forums sponsored by supporters of the newspapers.

The ups and downs in our sales provoked a discussion in our team. Should we sell at different buildings? Since these buildings house both unionized and nonunion shops, is it really worth us continuing with these sales?

These questions have best been answered through our own experiences. In the last five months, we've sold 41 copies of *Socialist Voice*, 50 of *Lutte Ouvrière*, 5 of *Perspectiva Mundial* and 6 of the *Militant*.

We also sold three subscriptions. One to a young Namibian who walked into the plant wearing an African National Congress cap. A young Haitian worker bought a subscription to *Lutte Ouvrière*. He stopped to talk about how the Cubans made a revolution and what lessons could be drawn for Haiti.

The following week he bought a French-language copy of *Socialism and Man* by Che Guevara. We've also sold other pamphlets.

Most recently, we sold a *Perspectiva Mundial* subscription to a young Salvadoran worker. There are about four or five workers who

buy the paper regularly.

But our team's questions were best answered during one of the lulls in our sales. A young Filipino worker from an unorganized shop, who had bought *Socialist Voice* several times, showed up at a forum sponsored by the paper. Even though we had never had any long discussions with him, he decided to check out the forum on Cuba. He's now a member of the Young Socialists.

This drove home to us that we sometimes have a larger impact than we know. It also made us realize the importance of trying to get to know the few workers who buy our papers on a regular basis. And we saw that the sales on Chabanel put us in touch with a layer of workers — some in the ILGWU and some not — who are interested in revolutionary ideas.

SELLING OUR PRESS AT THE PLANT GATE

International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. About half the unionized garment workers in Montreal are members of the ILGWU.

When the buses unload on Chabanel in the morning there are many Québécois workers. But there are also many Blacks —

both French and English in selling. One thing we've learned is that the response to our papers is uneven.

For instance, our sales on Chabanel began around the time of the first scheduled elections in Haiti. At first, we sold as many as 25 papers each week. Many of the

Marroquín hearing: first test of SWP suit victory

Continued from front page

talitarian party . . . or who have advocated or taught, either by personal utterance, or by means of any written or printed matter . . . (1) opposition to organized government, (2) the overthrow of government by force and violence . . . doctrines of world communism, or the establishment of a totalitarian dictatorship in the United States. . . .

This question is based on a now-suspended section of the McCarran-Walter Act that allows the government to deny a visa based on a person's ideas.

Marroquín insisted that this description is not applicable to him, because he is a member of a legal party, one that is not proscribed under INS or State Department guidelines.

The consulate officials were finally forced to back off and informed Marroquín that there was no political barrier to granting him a green card.

Claudia Slovinsky, Marroquín's attorney, told his supporters who were gathered outside the consulate, "What the consul was looking for was an admission by a member of the Socialist Workers Party that membership in that party is membership in a proscribed organization. This could make it easier in the future to deny an immigrant visa to other members of the SWP or similar organizations. We walked out of that interview with a concession that this question was not an obstacle. So I think in that way it is an enormous victory."

Fruit of lawsuit against FBI

This new victory in Marroquín's case is a direct result of the favorable ruling in the SWP's suit against the FBI. Filed in 1973,

the SWP and YSA charged the FBI and other government agencies with decades of spying, harassment, and disruption against the socialists.

In August 1986, federal Judge Thomas Griesa ruled in favor of the plaintiffs, in a decision that marked a significant advance for constitutional rights. The court found that "the FBI's disruption activities, surreptitious entries and use of informants" constituted "violations of the constitutional rights of the SWP and lacked legislative or regulatory authority."

Judge Griesa wrote, "Over the course of approximately 30 years," when the FBI "investigated" the SWP, "there is no indication that any informant ever observed any violation of federal law or gave information leading to a single arrest for any federal law violation."

The court ruling confirmed that the political program and activity of the SWP and its members and supporters are not illegal. Rather they are constitutionally protected and cannot be the basis for spying, burglaries, and infiltration with cop informers.

In addition, the court ruled that the government must pay the SWP and YSA \$264,000 in damages, and that illegally obtained materials now in the files of the FBI and other government agencies cannot be used any longer.

The ruling made no distinction between members of the SWP and YSA who are citizens and those who are not, thus giving immigrant working people who are political activists a new and important tool with which to defend themselves.

In his ruling, Judge Griesa included a section titled "Immigration Matters."

"In 1956 the Immigration and Naturalization Service placed the SWP on a list of organizations deemed to be proscribed under the statutes. The INS found that the SWP advocated world communism and the overthrow of the Government by force or violence," Judge Griesa wrote.

In 1966, the INS removed the SWP from the proscribed list. "The INS made a finding that evidence was not available to establish that the SWP advocates the overthrow of the Government by force or violence," wrote Judge Griesa.

During the 1981 trial in the SWP suit, the INS announced that it was considering adding the SWP to its proscribed list once again. "However, no action has been taken, and the SWP has not been restored to the list of proscribed organizations," wrote Judge Griesa. "The court has no reason to believe that the INS is furtively waiting for the decision in this case before announcing a restoration of the SWP's proscription."

If Marroquín had said yes to the question on his application trying to brand him excludable because of his SWP membership, it would have meant that a leader of the SWP conceded that membership in the party makes you ineligible to receive a green card. This would have undermined the victory won in the SWP case.

Important test

Marroquín's case is the first concrete test of the effectiveness of the new tool for political rights that the ruling in the SWP case provides. And it has shown its worth.

Marroquín is a prominent national spokesperson for a party that has been on every government political lookout list

since the SWP was founded in 1938. He has been touring the United States speaking out in defense of Mark Curtis, an SWP member and antiwar activist from Des Moines, Iowa, who is currently facing frame-up charges of rape and burglary because of his political activities. Marroquín plans to devote considerable time between now and September 7, Curtis' scheduled trial date, participating in the fight to end this frame-up.

The State Department had to concede the legality of Marroquín's activities and couldn't reject his application for permanent residency on political grounds.

The next step in the fight to win a green card for Marroquín is to obtain from the INS a waiver required under a recently passed section of the Immigration and Nationality Act that says those who tried to enter the United States fraudulently in the past are excludable in the future. Because Marroquín was convicted and served three months in jail in 1977 for entering the United States from Mexico without proper documents — when he was fleeing death threats for his political activities — he is now required to obtain a waiver from the INS in order to get a visa.

The Héctor Marroquín Defense Committee, building on the momentum of this latest victory, has launched an international protest campaign, asking individuals and organizations to send letters to the INS, demanding that the waiver be issued and Marroquín granted his green card now.

Messages can be sent to Alan Nelson at the INS, Washington, D.C. 20536. Copies can be sent, along with donations, to the Héctor Marroquín Defense Committee, Box 761 Church Street Station, New York, N.Y. 10007; (212) 691-3270.

The Militant tells the truth — Subscribe today!

"By featuring articles on the progressive opposition movement in the Philippines, the *Militant* has been instrumental in exposing the true character of President Aquino's democratic facade."

—Greg Castilla

co-coordinator, Filipino Association for Community Education, Seattle.

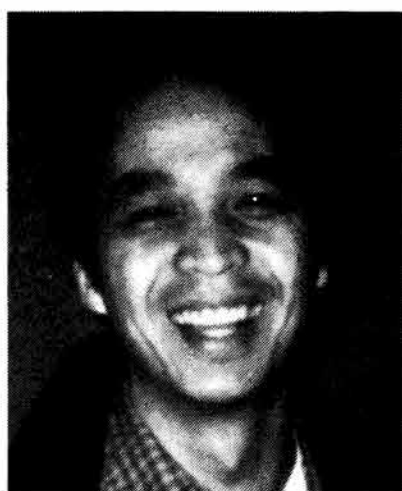
Enclosed is

- ☐ \$4.00 for 12 weeks, new readers
- ☐ \$9.00 for 12 weeks, renewals
- ☐ \$17.00 for six months
- ☐ \$30.00 for one year ☐ \$55.00 for two years
- ☐ For \$3.50 additional, send *New International* issue No. 6 with my six-month or longer *Militant* subscription.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone _____ Union/School/Organization _____

Send to THE MILITANT, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014

SPECIAL
OFFER



The Militant

Closing news date: July 13, 1988

Coeditors: MARGARET JAYKO and DOUG JENNESS

Circulation Director: NORTON SANDLER

Nicaragua Bureau Director: LARRY SEIGLE

Business Manager: JIM WHITE

Editorial Staff: Susan Apstein, Fred Feldman, Arthur Hughes, Cindy Jaquith, Susan LaMont, Sam Manuel, Harvey McArthur (Nicaragua), Harry Ring, Judy White (Nicaragua).

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. Nicaragua Bureau, Apartado 2222, Managua. Telephone 24845.

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 \$30, drawn on a U.S. bank, to above address. By first-class (airmail), send \$65. Britain, Ireland, Continental Europe, Africa: £22 for one year, £12 for six months, or £6 for three-month renewal. Send 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.

Prosecutor rebuked in bid to speed up trial of Mark Curtis

BY STU SINGER

DES MOINES, Iowa, July 12 — A new attack by the Polk County prosecutor against Mark Curtis was defeated this afternoon.

Curtis is a political activist who was arrested, beaten, and framed up by the Des Moines cops on March 4, a few hours after leaving a meeting to protest the arrest of 17 Latino immigrant coworkers at the Swift/Monfort packinghouse here. He is accused of trying to rape a 15-year-old woman.

His trial had been scheduled to begin July 6. But in a June 30 hearing, Judge Anthony Critelli granted a motion by Curtis' attorney, Mark Pennington, to move the trial back to September 7.

Today Assistant County Attorney Catherine Thune brought a motion before District Court Judge Luther Glanton urging him to "accelerate" into August the rape and burglary trial.

Thune works under the direction of Polk County Attorney James Smith, an elected official considered a possible Democratic Party candidate for governor in 1990. The prosecution tried to convince Judge Glanton to overrule Critelli and set the trial date in August. It also tried to disrupt the defense lawyers' investigation of the facts surrounding Curtis' arrest.

Smith's office issued a subpoena for one of the defense investigators to appear in court. The prosecutor also tried to subpoena the legal files being assembled by Curtis' attorneys.

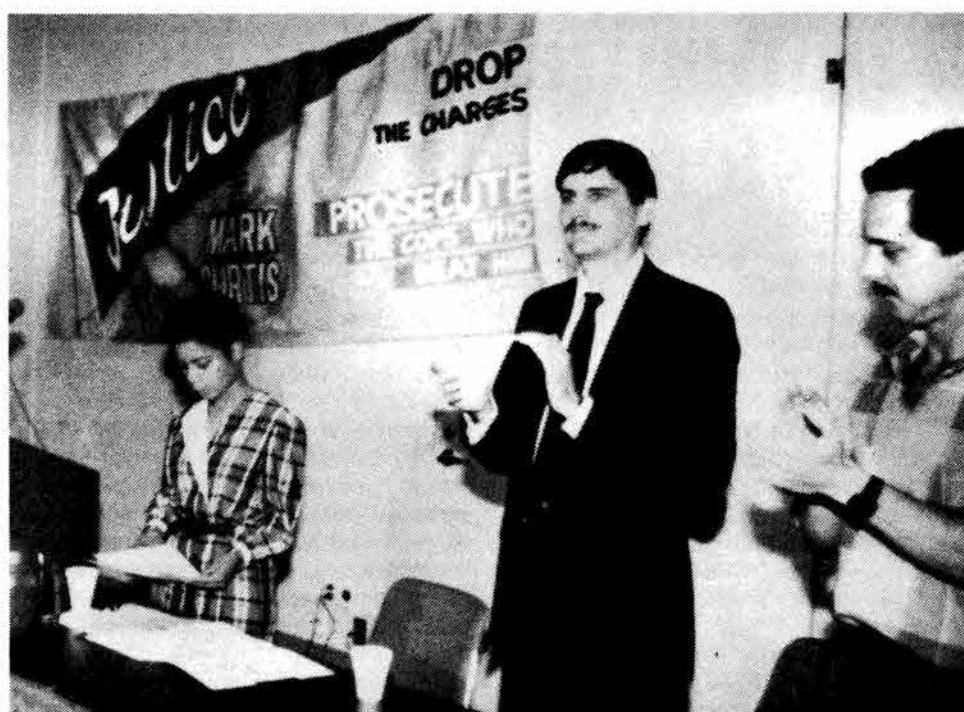
The first witness Thune called at the hearing was Marty Anderson, director of Victims Services, a county agency that counsels victims of sexual assaults.

Anderson, has been involved in this case since the early stages, trying to convince people in Des Moines and elsewhere that Curtis is guilty.

Anderson, and others wearing "take back the night" T-shirts, attended the international defense rally for Curtis at the Des Moines Convention Center July 3.

When they saw the powerful support for Curtis as the rally opened, the group departed. Thune asked Anderson if she had attended the rally. Then she asked how the crowd reacted to the announcement that the trial date was moved to September. "People stood up and clapped and cheered," Anderson responded.

The second witness was Demetria Morris, the 15-year-old Black high school student Curtis is accused of trying to rape. Her testimony was limited to stating that she is disturbed about the case and wants to get it over with.



Curtis (center) at July 3 rally in Des Moines. Prosecutor also failed in attempt to subpoena investigator for Curtis' attorneys.

She claimed that she saw Curtis drive by her recently when she was entering a record store. She said that when she saw Curtis, it made it her feel sick. She also said Curtis swerved his car over to the wrong side of the street.

The defense did not present any witnesses. But Curtis told reporters afterwards, "This incident never happened."

Morris testified that if the trial had taken place as scheduled July 6, she would have gone out of town in August as planned and would not have missed any school in Sep-

tember.

The third witness was Keith Morris, Demetria Morris' father. He said he would keep his children out of school for "one year, two years, three years," whatever the trial would take. He said the postponement has affected his personality. He also said he has five grown sons and he "constantly has to talk to them to let the judicial system work."

The prosecution made no comment about this thinly veiled threat of violence against Curtis and his supporters.

The prosecution also attempted to call the investigator working for Curtis' attorneys to the stand.

At this point, the judge quickly moved to quash the prosecutor's subpoena and uphold the September trial date.

As part of her final argument, Thune began reading to the judge from the July 4 *Des Moines Register* article on the Curtis defense committee rally. She pointed out that Curtis' supporters are quoted in the article as trying to raise another \$10,000 for the defense effort.

The judge asked Thune if it was the state or the defense that was paying the defense costs. Since the defense is paying its own costs, the judge did not have to say much more to stop this line of argument.

Spokespersons for the Curtis defense committee note that the court hearing indicates two new points that are important.

- Up until now the defense committee has urged people to send protest messages to police chief William Moulder, since it was cops under Moulder's command who framed Curtis up and severely beat him in the city jail.

Today's hearing showed that the frame-up is now also being carried forward by the prosecution. Polk County Attorney James Smith has the authority to recognize this case as a frame-up, drop the charges against Curtis, and prosecute the cops who beat him.

The Mark Curtis Defense Committee is urging that messages now be sent both to Smith and Moulder.

- The defense committee needs to raise a considerable amount of money. More than \$45,000 had been contributed by July 9, exceeding the goal set earlier based on a July 6 trial date. With the trial put off until September 7, at least another \$25,000 must be raised to continue the political campaign in Curtis' defense as well as meet ongoing legal expenses.

Iowa frame-up victim discusses his case with workers at Swift beef-packing plant

BY NORTON SANDLER

DES MOINES, Iowa — Upon entering Los Compadres, a popular restaurant and tavern a quarter mile down the road from the Swift/Monfort beef-packing plant, one of the first things you notice is a Mark Curtis Defense Committee leaflet posted on the bulletin board. Packinghouse workers explain that the leaflet has been there for weeks.

The cops claim they interrupted Curtis raping a 15-year-old Black woman after he forced his way into her house. If convicted on these frame-up charges, he will be sentenced to a mandatory 25-year jail term. Curtis also faces a misdemeanor trial on charges of "assaulting" the cops who beat him.

Many Swift workers stopping at Los Compadres July 8 to cash their paychecks and relax had seen local media coverage of a rally five days earlier in support of Curtis. Several stepped out of the check cashing line to shake hands with Curtis and wish him well.

Half a dozen others crowded around the booth where Curtis was sitting. Where had he been, they asked. How was the case going? When was it going to trial?

Curtis told them that he's been traveling around the country talking about his case. He said the support he has won in this country and internationally was a major factor in helping to force a postponement of the trial on the rape and burglary charges, from July 6 to September 7. The

second trial, scheduled for July 18, has also been pushed back and is now set for the first week of October.

This case is "political from beginning to end," Curtis explained, displaying a copy of the files the FBI kept on him because of his earlier activity in a Central America solidarity committee in Birmingham, Alabama.

United Food and Commercial Workers union member Mike Martinez said he often talked to Curtis as they worked on the kill floor at Swift.

In the days after the 17 immigrant workers were dragged off the line, handcuffed, and removed from the plant, Martinez said, there was a lot of excitement in the plant.

On March 4, several Latino workers walked off the line after Swift tried to prevent them from attending a meeting to protest the raid. The workers returned only when the company promised to schedule a second meeting for later in the day.

"When Mark told me he was going to go to the protest after work, I had a feeling someone was going to get in trouble," Martinez said. "The next Monday I told my wife that Mark got jumped by the cops — he didn't do what he is accused of. My wife said, 'Mike, you don't know him that well.' Now she says maybe I'm right."

Martinez talked about the union's contract with Swift, which expires in early August. Rumor has it that the company is demanding a four-year wage freeze. The unionist said he'll know better what the

situation is after a July 12 union meeting.

Others joined in the discussion. Because of harsh working conditions, numerous injuries, and low pay, the turnover rate is high at Swift. Martinez and others at the table weren't sure how many workers will support a strike.

Rafael, a Mexican-born worker, sat down and spoke to Curtis in Spanish. Later Rafael went from booth to booth collecting signatures from other Latino workers on a petition demanding that the charges against Curtis be dropped and that the cops who beat him be prosecuted. After 20 minutes he returned with a dozen signatures.

A woman sitting with a couple of Curtis' supporters at another table reported that materials on the case have been distributed at her church the past two Sundays.

In the days following the July 3 rally support for Curtis has continued to pour into Des Moines. The Campaign Group of Labour MPs — an organization representing 37 Labour Party members of the British Parliament and eight British representatives to the European Parliament — have sent a message to Des Moines police chief William Moulder protesting the frame-up.

"From the information given to us," the statement reads, "We are very concerned that the treatment of Mark Curtis by Des Moines, Iowa, police is politically motivated and the charges without foundation."

A letter protesting the frame-up has also been sent to Moulder by three dozen trade unionists in New Zealand. The signers include H.M. Brown, Southern Distribution Workers Union and president District Council Combined Trades Unions; R.J. Todd, district secretary of the New Zealand Engineers Union; and Graham Cook, secretary of the Auckland-Tomoana Freezing Workers Union.

Fifty-four members of the International Woodworkers of America-Canada and the Canadian Paperworkers Union in Vancouver, British Columbia, have sent a protest message to the Des Moines cops. Moulder has also received a protest petition signed by 13 activists in Australia.

On July 6, the Detroit City Council passed a resolution protesting the arrest and beating of Curtis. New U.S. endorsers for Curtis' fight for justice include Roger Allison, director of the Missouri Rural Life Crisis Center, and United Steelworkers of America Local 1440 in Pittsburgh, California. That local also sent in a \$126 check for Curtis' defense effort.

How you can help defend Mark Curtis

- Send messages to the Polk County prosecutor James Smith and police chief William Moulder demanding the charges against Curtis be dropped and that the cops who beat him be prosecuted. Write: James Smith, Polk County City Attorney, 408 Polk County Courthouse, 5th and Mulberry, Des Moines, Iowa 50309. And Chief of Police William Moulder, 25 E. 1st St., Des Moines, Iowa 50309.

- Funds are urgently needed. Though the Mark Curtis Defense Committee has gone over the \$45,000 fundraising goal set earlier, funds are needed to cover ongoing expenses.

The defense committee has just received a \$1,000 check from supporters

of Curtis in Birmingham, Alabama.

In Washington State a broad appeal for support and funds has been signed by Bill Johnson from the United Food and Commercial Workers union; Tomás Villanueva, president of the United Farm Workers of Washington State; Oscar Eason of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; John Gilbert from the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador; and unionists and political activists.

- Copies of the messages and contributions should be sent to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, P.O. Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311. Telephone (515) 246-1695.

Coming in our next issue . . .

'FBI On Trial'

Our next issue will reprint the introduction to the soon-to-be-published book by Pathfinder, *FBI on Trial*, which contains the text of the historic federal court decision in the suit brought by the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance against the FBI. Written by *Militant* editor Margaret Jayko, the introduction explains the significance of the victory for political rights.

Thousands of Miskitos return to Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast

BY HARVEY McARTHUR

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — "This year we are making a top priority the return of thousands of Miskitos from Honduras," reports Dorotea Wilson, a Sandinista leader who is Black and from the northern Atlantic Coast region of Nicaragua.

"More than 5,000 had already come back by the end of May, which is twice as many as we expected. We now have more than 26,000 Miskitos living along the Coco River." Some 10,000 of these have returned from the Tasba Pri resettlement camp in Nicaragua, and the rest have come back from Honduras. The many small Indian villages along the Coco, which forms the border between Nicaragua and Honduras, were completely abandoned in the early years of the contra war.

"This massive repatriation demonstrates the strong desire of the Miskitos to return to their home villages, and their growing confidence in the Nicaraguan government," Wilson noted in an interview here in late May.

Before the 1979 revolution, Wilson was a nun working in small mining towns on the Coast, where she collaborated with Sandinista guerrilla columns. After the overthrow of the Somoza dictatorship, she became a leader of the Sandinista National Liberation Front on the Coast and a member of the National Autonomy Commission. In 1984 she was elected to Nicaragua's National Assembly, representing the northern Atlantic Coast region.

The 115,000 inhabitants of the northern Atlantic region include most of Nicaragua's Miskito and Sumo Indians, as well as some Spanish-speaking mestizos and English-speaking Creole Blacks.

"Our Miskito brothers and sisters return from Honduras suffering from malnutrition, malaria, and respiratory diseases," Wilson said. "They need medical help as soon as they arrive here, and our facilities are seriously limited." In addition, virtually all the refugees are destitute.

The Nicaraguan government, with help from the United Nations and other international organizations, tries to supply each returning family with transportation to their home village, six months food, seeds to plant their first crop, and zinc sheeting and some lumber to build a shelter. The need is much greater than the resources available, however. Nicaragua has made an emergency appeal for more international aid for the Coast, Wilson reported.

Cease-fire on the Coast

Miskito contra leaders today have almost no armed forces left, Wilson said. Since 1985 more than 2,500 antigovernment Miskito troops have stopped fighting and returned to their communities under cease-fire agreements with Sandinista authorities.

A similar process has occurred with Sumo Indians who had taken up arms. Most have now returned to their homes in and around the mining towns of Bonanza, Siuna, and Rosita.

The government has sought to integrate

the former combatants into the region's defense forces, into farming and other productive work in their communities, and into the discussions on the autonomy process being developed by the Coast peoples.

Some 600 to 700 have kept their arms and are organized in the Indigenous Self-defense Militia in the area around the village of Yulu, according to Wilson. Yulu is about 10 miles northwest of Puerto Cabezas, the biggest town on the northern Atlantic Coast. Another 200 make up the Militia for the Defense of the National Frontier, which is based in communities along the Coco River.

The Sandinista People's Army supplies and coordinates operations with these militias, but does not station troops in the areas guarded by the Indian forces.

Other former combatants are now working the land or fishing. A few have found jobs in small sawmills or with the private truck drivers who provide transportation between communities. Still others have received scholarships to continue their studies.

Wilson stressed the significance of the regional celebration of the third anniversary of the initial cease-fire agreement, held in Yulu on May 17. The local Peace and Autonomy Commissions, which include former antigovernment fighters, took charge of organizing the event.

Several leaders of armed Indian groups that have recently joined the cease-fire spoke at the rally. "They told the crowd, 'We're here because of you, our mothers, our wives, the people of our communities,'" Wilson said. "These were their exact words: 'You were pressuring us, and without you we had no support. We were nothing. Now, we truly have stopped fighting. We want to work in peace.'"

"There has been a reconciliation and understanding with those who had taken up arms," Wilson explained. "They have shown they truly want to maintain peace, and have won more confidence from the people and the regional authorities."

Autonomous local government

Yulu "has had the most experience in local or communal self-government," Wilson said. "They are an example of what we have to do on a larger scale with the regional autonomous government." Under the Autonomy Law adopted by the Nicaraguan National Assembly in September 1987, the Coast peoples will elect regional governments with wide authority over education, health, culture, and some economic programs.

"In Yulu and each of its nearby communities, there are Peace and Autonomy Commissions made up of all sectors of the population," Wilson continued. "They include pastors, women, Miskito groups that joined the cease-fire, teachers, the health coordinator, the council of elders, and the person elected to coordinate with the regional government."

"These commissions administer the health and education programs, the community's transportation service, and com-

munity projects like the small sawmill Yulu wants to build.

"They elect their coordinators in assemblies. A typical meeting takes place on a Sunday, in the village church, where the pastor gives the commission coordinator a period of time for the assembly."

Indian women in leadership

There are hundreds of Peace and Autonomy Commissions in communities throughout the region, Wilson said. "They are a particular form of organization that arose out of the indigenous communities to promote the repatriation, cease-fire, and peace talks, and to develop and implement the Autonomy Law."

She said that three-quarters of the members of the Peace and Autonomy Commissions are women. "They are women of the communities, strong women, fighters, women who have been leading the repatriation and cease-fire processes."

Why are Indian women playing such a prominent political role on the Coast?

"I think it is something deeply rooted in our culture," Wilson said. "The Coast women are strong, and have played a fundamental role in the history, customs, and traditions of the people. The men have generally let the women take on political tasks. It's a very special aspect of these indigenous communities."

"Furthermore," she added, "the war and the aggression has made us tougher, made us demand more. The men went off to war, and the women stayed in charge of the home and production."

Women's movement

Wilson and other Coast women have organized the North Atlantic Region Women's Movement. This year, as part of the cease-fire anniversary celebrations, they held a four-day conference with 200 women from throughout the region. Their newly elected executive committee includes Miskito, Sumo, Creole, and mestizo women.

"And the coordinator will become a member of the national executive council of the Association of Nicaraguan Women (AMNLAE)," Wilson reported. "For the first time, the AMNLAE leadership will include a *compañera* from the Atlantic Coast."

Besides working for the cease-fire and repatriation of refugees, this movement has helped organize women in local defense forces.

"We have more than 150 women involved in antiaircraft defense," Wilson said. "They are the women from the mining towns of Bonanza, Siuna, and Rosita who drove off the contra plane that attacked last December. And we have a company of women in Puerto Cabezas as well, including Sumos, Miskitos, Creoles, and mestizos."

"Of course, there is opposition to women joining the defense," Wilson said. "There are many women who are stopped by their husbands. There are *machista* attitudes. This is another battleground for the women's movement: to really fight for all the demands, for all the rights of women."

Fighting discrimination

One of the big challenges facing supporters of autonomy is the legacy of racial discrimination instilled by centuries of colonial and capitalist domination of the region. This includes racist prejudices among mestizos of the Pacific Coast against the peoples of the Atlantic Coast, as well as divisions among the different Atlantic Coast peoples themselves.

"This is one of the things that we have to keep on fighting to eradicate," Wilson explained. "Look at the history that we inherited: the Miskitos were on top of the Sumos, who were the most scorned, the most discriminated against. And the Blacks, who were the middle class on the Atlantic Coast, were above everyone else. They had the best jobs, the most responsibility."

"We are working to eradicate ethnocentrism, discrimination, and parochialism, but it's not easy. It takes education and training. We have to be aware of this, because there are still those who support



Militant/Harvey McArthur
Sandinista leader Dorotea Wilson is a member of Nicaragua's National Assembly, representing the Atlantic Coast region.

these attitudes. We feel this especially when we go to the Pacific Coast. Our society still carries this weakness, this backwardness."

The adoption of the Autonomy Law was an important step in challenging these prejudices, Wilson noted. She also pointed to the political impact of the Indian militias. "When we see indigenous militias guarding the country along with mestizo compañeros from the Pacific Coast, then I think we're advancing."

"This Autonomy Law transcends the borders of Nicaragua, and reaches out to all of Latin America and the world," Wilson said. "It reflects our demands as ethnic groups, as a discriminated, doubly exploited sector of Nicaragua. It is a revolutionary project within a revolutionary process."

"The Indians of Latin America and the rest of the world can identify with Nicaraguan autonomy. It is truly the hope for the indigenous peoples of Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Bolivia, Canada, and of the United States itself," she concluded.

Antiwar activists picket Oliver North in West Virginia

BY JIM ALTENBERG

CHARLESTON, W. Va. — Opponents of U.S. intervention in Central America greeted Oliver North with spirited protests June 27 when he came here to speak at Republican Party fund-raisers.

Outside a \$1,000-a-plate reception for North at the Marriott Hotel, 40 people lined the sidewalk with signs demanding U.S. reconstruction aid for Nicaragua, allowing the Veterans Peace Convoy to take its contributions to that country, and for the jailing of North for his involvement in the Iran-contra arms deal.

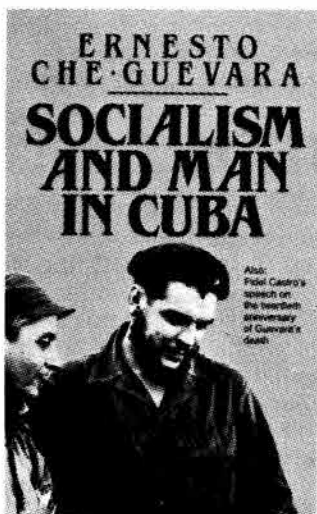
Later, the demonstration moved to the Charleston Civic Center, where North was to speak on "Commitment, Family, and Country." Activists from across West Virginia joined in, swelling the protest to 80.

Thirty to 40 right wingers also showed up, waving U.S. flags and shouting pro-war, pro-contra, and anticommunist slogans. They sought to disrupt the protest against North by trying to start arguments and shouting matches with the demonstrators. Their efforts were unsuccessful, and their numbers dwindled.

Matt Munro of the Young Socialist Alliance and Ric MacDowell of West Virginia Quest for Peace addressed the pickets. They urged support for the campaign to fill a trailer from West Virginia with aid for Nicaragua, and pressure on Washington to provide reconstruction assistance.

North, whose contra operations fattened his own bank account, now tells his story for \$25,000 a throw.

Che Guevara's Socialism and Man in Cuba



Pathfinder/Pacific and Asia has reissued Ernesto Che Guevara's well-known article on the first years of the Cuban revolution. This 48-page pamphlet in English or Spanish also includes Cuban President Fidel Castro's 1987 speech marking the 20th anniversary of Che's death.

Available for \$1.95 from Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Specify English or Spanish pamphlet. Please include 75¢ for postage and handling. Or from Pathfinder/Pacific and Asia, P.O. Box 37, Leichhardt, Sydney NSW 2040, Australia • Pathfinder, 47 The Cut, London SE1 8LL, England.

SWP launches drive for ballot spots in three states, D.C.

BY SAM MANUEL

This month supporters of the Socialist Workers 1988 campaign launched petitioning efforts to place the party's presidential ticket on the ballot in New York, South Dakota, Washington, D.C., and Minnesota. The SWP is running James Warren for U.S. president and Kathleen Mickells for vice-president.

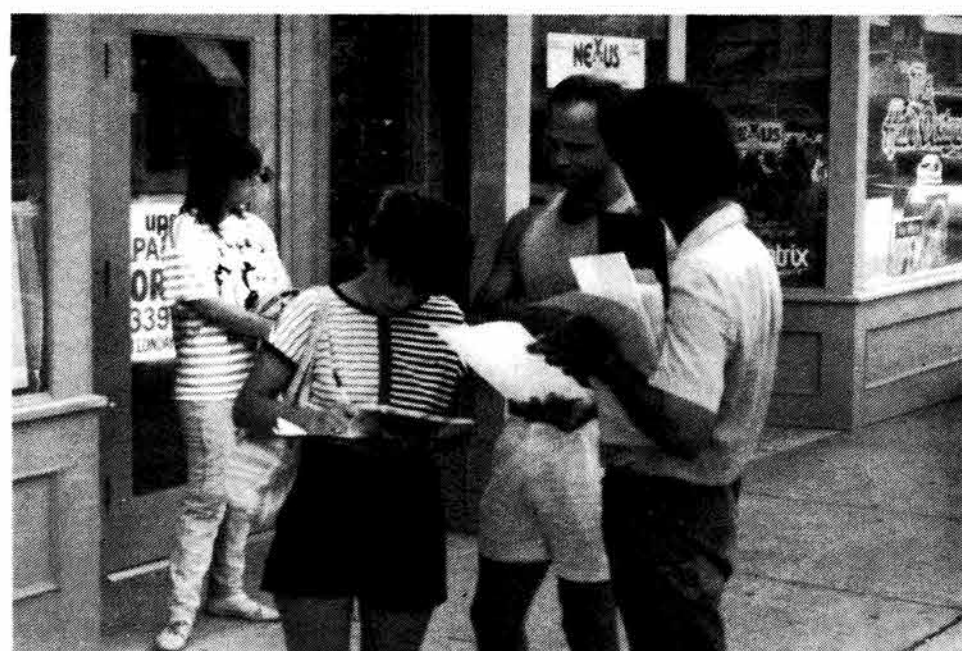
The socialist campaign is seeking to get ballot status in 18 states and Washington, D.C. So far, the Warren-Mickells ticket has been certified on the ballot in New Jersey and Utah, and petitioning has been completed in Ohio, Nebraska, Iowa, and Alabama. A state convention has been scheduled in Seattle for July 23 to meet the requirements in Washington State.

As campaign supporters gather signatures and talk to thousands of working people, they also sell single copies and sub-

scriptions to the *Militant*, the Spanish-language magazine *Perspectiva Mundial*, and the Marxist journal *New Internationalist*. On July 9 campaigners also began selling the new Pathfinder pamphlet that carries the Socialist Workers Party National Committee's proposed "Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis." Campaigners report that the initial response to this program has been excellent, and has served to spur many political discussions.

Despite 100-degree temperatures, campaign supporters in Washington, D.C., gathered more than 750 signatures in the first few days of petitioning. This puts the drive to get 5,000 signatures, nearly twice the requirement of 2,700, off to a good start. Petitioners are also campaigning for Gail Skidmore, SWP candidate for Washington, D.C.'s at-large city council seat.

On July 9 campaigners in Alabama



Militant/Steve Marshall

Campaign supporter collecting signatures to place socialist presidential candidate James Warren and vice-presidential candidate Kathleen Mickells on Nebraska ballot.

celebrated completing a successful effort to collect 9,000 signatures to get on the November ballot — 4,000 signatures more than that state requires. During the final week of the drive, campaign supporters went on an all-out effort to make the goal by sending out daily teams to eight different cities and around Birmingham.

One team traveled to Mobile where members of the United Paperworkers International Union have been locked out by International Paper Co. for more than a year. At the Scott paper mill 20 single copies and two subscriptions to the *Militant* were sold.

At Alabama A&M University in Huntsville 100 signatures were collected. Another 160 signatures were gathered at Alabama State University in Montgomery. Over the course of the three week drive, 27 subscriptions and 592 single copies of the *Militant* were sold.

Campaign supporters in Nebraska also celebrated completion of their petitioning effort on July 9 after collecting 3,700 signatures. The state's requirement for getting on the ballot is 2,500. The SWP in Nebraska is also running Diane Shur, a steelworker, for U.S. Senate.

One team of petitioners got 35 signatures at the Hormel packinghouse in Freemont. Others signed up workers at a packinghouse and a steel shop in Omaha. The socialists also campaigned in Dakota City and Weeping Water and at the University of Nebraska campuses in Lincoln and Omaha.

Campaigners sold 15 *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* subscriptions and nine copies of the action program pamphlet.

Socialist campaigners in Ohio turned in

11,000 signatures to state officials on June 23, 6,000 more than is needed, to place the socialist presidential candidates on the ballot in that state. At a well-attended press conference that same day David Marshall, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Senate, appealed to supporters of democratic rights to send messages backing Warren and Mickells' right to appear on the ballot. At least a dozen Ohio newspapers carried coverage of the news conference, including papers in Coshocton, Canton, Marietta, and Athens.

An effort to place five socialist candidates on the ballot in Minnesota is near completion. In addition to Warren and Mickells, the SWP in Minnesota is running Natasha Terlexis and Craig Honts for congress and Wendy Lyons for U.S. Senate.

Substantial amounts of money have been raised and spent to make these efforts possible. More funds are urgently needed to help sustain the campaign. A national drive to raise \$50,000 ends on July 23. With 10 days left in the fund drive, \$30,947 has been sent in. A big push is needed to complete the fund effort.

In some areas organized supporters of the election campaign have already met, and in the case of Salt Lake City, gone over their fund goals. Areas that have already made their goals are considering plans to send in even more.

This story is based on reports from Steve Marshall in Omaha, Nebraska; Susie Winsten in Washington, D.C.; Angel Lariscy in Birmingham, Alabama; Margi Husk in Cleveland; and Natasha Terlexis in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

New York socialists aim to get 40,000 signatures

Continued from front page

and discussions on the proposals of the socialist campaign for how working people can begin to organize a united fight for their interests.

About a dozen members of the Young Socialist Alliance had just returned from a few hours of petitioning in Manhattan's garment district when this reporter arrived at the campaign headquarters. They had collected nearly 200 signatures. The first day out, they said, had been an opportunity to experiment with where to go, how to present the campaign, and to work out any last-minute bugs.

Manhattan's garment district is the largest in the country. A big part of the work force — mostly Black, Latino, and women workers — remains unorganized. A substantial number of immigrant workers also work in the industry.

One team member reported that one of the biggest challenges was getting people to stop. "A lot of people just don't want to hear about elections," he said. He said he would begin by showing them the *Militant* or *Perspectiva Mundial*. Many times passersby would be interested in a pamphlet by Malcolm X or Fidel Castro.

"Once people realized that this campaign is not just asking for a vote but is part of a discussion on how we, working people, can organize to fight for control of our destiny, then they would sign," he explained.

At another table a number of people crowded around to talk about the socialist campaign. As the discussion died down, one worker, who had mostly listened, stepped forward and asked if he could help. He took a petition board and within a few

minutes returned with it full and asked for another.

A worker from St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands bought a copy of the *Militant* and said he would like to come to the July 16 campaign rally where Mickells will be the featured speaker. Another from Haiti bought a subscription to the *Militant*.

Volunteers and funds are urgently needed. If you would like to help get the socialist candidates on the ballot, come by the campaign headquarters at 79 Leonard street or call (212) 941-1174.

New York

Socialist Workers campaign events

The Crisis Facing Working People: A Program to Fight Back. Speakers: Kathleen Mickells, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. vice-president; James Harris, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate. Sat., July 16. Reception, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7 p.m. Donation: \$5.

Hear Socialist Workers Party Presidential Candidate James Warren. Sat., July 23, 7:30 p.m., party to follow. Donation: \$3.

Rally to Celebrate Winding Up of Petitioning Drive to Get Socialist Workers Candidates on Ballot. Sat., July 30, 7:30 p.m., party to follow. Donation: \$3.

All events at 79 Leonard St., Manhattan. Sponsor: New York Socialist Workers 1988 Campaign Committee. For more information call (212) 219-3679.

Anti-Sandinistas stage provocation

Continued from back page

ment his destabilization plan." Arce warned that "the plan included a strategy to penetrate the teachers' union" by supporting "demands of the teachers that were just but could not now be met. Some teachers who are members of right-wing parties are proposing strikes," Arce said. "These teachers do not suffer material difficulties, because they are paid in dollars by parties financed by the U.S. embassy."

Arce called on "everyone to be on the alert" because the CIA is working "throughout the country trying to present the image of discontent" with the government. The July 10 demonstration in Nandaime was planned as "part of the agitational work of the Yankee embassy," he said.

Víctor Tirado, like Arce a member of the Sandinista National Directorate, also took up this issue at a July 9 assembly of health-care workers. The "Melton Plan aims at provoking strikes and work stoppages at the nation's factories that have problems in obtaining raw materials or difficulties in selling their products," he told the workers.

The July 10 Nandaime march was "sponsored by the U.S. embassy," Tirado said. "If they want street fighting, that's what they'll get," he added, referring to anti-Sandinista marches planned in several cities. "The Melton Plan will fail to destroy the revolution," Tirado stated, "because of the political consciousness that has been acquired by the people."

Your help is needed . . .

1988 Socialist Workers Party \$50,000 campaign fund drive

May 21 – July 23

Supporters of the socialist ticket in 32 cities have set goals to make the fund a success. Below are the figures for each area.

	Goal	Collected
Atlanta	1,450	850
Austin, Minn.	500	500
Baltimore	1,150	590
Birmingham, Ala.	950	284
Boston	1,750	250
Charleston, W.V.	1,000	365
Chicago	2,200	973
Cleveland	1,150	550
Des Moines, Iowa	750	690
Detroit	1,350	1,265
Greensboro, N.C.	800	395
Houston	1,150	930
Kansas City	750	790
Los Angeles	3,250	2,519
Miami	1,450	295
Milwaukee	950	445
Morgantown, W.V.	1,150	1,070
New York	7,000	3,779
Newark, N.J.	3,000	1,985
Oakland, Calif.	1,700	854
Omaha, Neb.	1,100	860
Philadelphia	1,650	667
Phoenix	1,150	360
Pittsburgh	1,600	175

	Goal	Collected
Portland, Ore.	900	600
Price, Utah	600	410
Salt Lake City	800	1,048
San Francisco	2,000	1,555
Seattle	1,250	985
St. Louis	1,600	1,600
Twin Cities, Minn.	1,900	1,900
Washington, D.C.	1,750	390
Other	—	1,018
Total	50,000	30,947

To make a contribution, please fill out the coupon below, and mail to Socialist Workers 1988 National Campaign Committee, 79 Leonard St., New York, N.Y. 10013.

Enclosed is a check or money order for: \$200 \$100 \$50 \$10 other

☐ I endorse the Warren-Mickells ticket.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

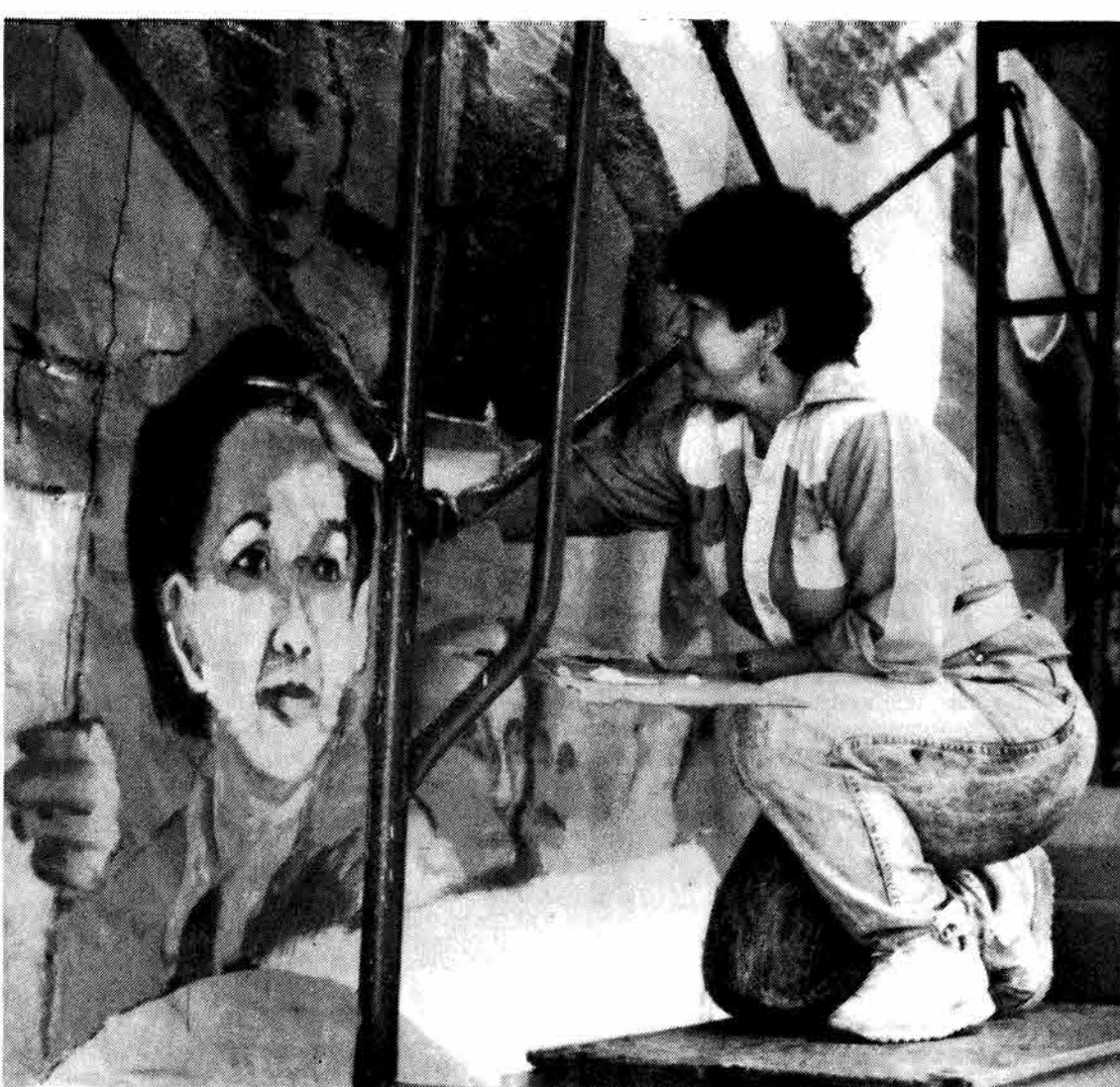
Phone _____

School/Organization _____

This ad has been paid for by the Socialist Workers 1988 National Campaign Committee, 79 Leonard St., New York, N.Y. 10013.



Bob Cantrick



Selva Nebbia

Pathfinder mural: a work in progress

The photographs on this page are examples of how the painting of the mural on the south wall of the Pathfinder Building in New York City is advancing. Work began last fall, and has picked up steadily through the spring and summer.

Artists from Iran, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Canada, and other countries are contributing their talents to the six-story mural, which depicts the role of the Pathfinder publishing house in getting out the ideas and experiences of revolutionary leaders, past and present, around the world.

The centerpiece of the completed mural will be a painting of a huge printing press being run by two press operators. Coming from the press are sheets of paper bearing portraits of revolutionary leaders whose writings and speeches are published by Pathfinder, including Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, V.I. Lenin and other leaders of the Communist International, Malcolm X, Nelson Mandela, Carlos Fonseca, Che Guevara, and Fidel Castro.

Around the press are scenes depicting struggling workers and farmers of the world. Included in these scenes are many smaller portraits of individual working-class leaders and victims of repression.

Going clockwise, from bottom left: scaffolding along

wall on which artists work; Marcos Byrd's portrait of Emiliano Zapata, peasant leader of Mexican revolution that began in 1910; Iranian artist Nickzad Nodjoumi paints portrait of Sattar Khan, a leader of 1905-11 revolution in Iran against monarchy and foreign domination; Lydia Serrano, a Salvadoran-born artist living in Canada, paints portrait of Commandante Ana María, murdered leader of liberation struggle in El Salvador; portrait of Mother Jones, organizer of Appalachian coal miners and other U.S. workers in late 19th and first decades of 20th century, painted by muralist Eva Cockcroft, executive director of Artmakers; and Nicaraguan artist Arnoldo Guillén beside his portrait of Augusto César Sandino, leader of guerrilla struggle against U.S. military occupation of Nicaragua in 1920s and 30s.

The mural was designed by Mike Alewitz, who also directs work on the project.

The Pathfinder Mural Project is now seeking to raise \$30,000 to finance completion of the project, including legal fight against harassment by city authorities.

To make a contribution or obtain more information about Pathfinder Mural Project, fill out coupon below.

Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution of ☐ \$1,000; ☐ \$500; ☐ \$100; ☐ \$50; ☐ \$25. Other amount \$ _____. Make checks payable to the Anchor Foundation.

☐ I would like more information about the mural project.

Name _____

Organization/title _____

Street _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Send to: Pathfinder Mural Project, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Phone: (212) 741-0690.



Selva Nebbia



Selva Nebbia



Selva Nebbia



Holbrook Mahn

Oklahomans camp out to protest chemical dumping by oil giant

BY STEVE MARSHALL

OKLAHOMA CITY, Okla. — The state capitol here lies in the shadow of five tall, pumping oil wells.

"There it is, for everybody to see," Barbara Arnold said. "Oil companies rule in Oklahoma."

Arnold is a teacher and co-chair of Ponca City Toxic Concerned Citizens, a group of 200 families whose fight against the Conoco oil company has raised another symbol on the capitol grounds.

In the first week of May, 50 Ponca City residents pitched a campsite on the capitol lawn and hung their banners around a 25-foot Indian tepee. Now they rotate shifts, keeping a dozen or so in camp around the clock.

Conoco's oil refinery, they say, is poisoning their town and ruining their lives. They want the state government to stop it and pay for their relocation.

The refinery sits on a slope 22 feet above Ponca City's south side, a working-class community of whites, Blacks, Ponca Indians, and Chicanos.

Conoco calls itself "Ponca City's best neighbor." Each year it spews 34,000 tons of chemical waste onto the south side.

The Ponca City campers have photographs for visitors. Some show basements filled with oily sludge, creeks that catch on fire, or dead animals sprawled in the park. Others record "the day of the foam," when a filthy blanket of chemical snow covered parts of the south side.

Dizziness, headaches, watery eyes, and rashes torment children and adults alike. People die of cancer — from 1970 to 1979, say the campers, Ponca City led the nation in leukemia cases.

Conoco and government officials deny

these ills come from the refinery. They suggest other causes: local soil, dead leaves, leaking gas stoves, juniper berries, and wild imaginations.

Among the capitol campers are Cherry and Sylvester Alexander, who live in Ponca City's Black community. Sylvester is retired; he served 20 years in the army and then worked in a funeral home. Cherry is a health-care provider.

"You work most of your young life," Cherry explained, "trying to pay for a place to live. And you get to where you might have a roof over your head, when you get real old."

"And then here comes something that threatens your home," she said. "You're too old to start over again. So what do you do?"

Cherry answered her own question: "You fight."

Dana LeRoy, a Ponca Indian, said the tepee is a symbol of his people's fight for justice. One ancestor helped force the government to recognize the Poncas; another protested racism by participating in the 1963 March on Washington; and his mother sued the Ponca City cops who beat her up.

"The Poncas had water wells there for 80 years," LeRoy said. "Now they're poisoned. Reagan preaches about human rights in the Soviet Union. What about here?"

Conoco and the local water board have proposed remedial pumping stations to clean up one area of the south side — the area where most whites live. This attempt to divide Toxic Concerned Citizens was denounced by the capitol campers as "pure discrimination." The antitoxic group in-



Militant/Steve Marshall

Ponca City Toxic Concerned Citizens at campsite outside Oklahoma capitol building. They say Conoco's chemical wastes are poisoning their community.

cludes Ponca City residents of all races.

"You read about other people's problems," Barbara Arnold said. "And you think, 'those poor people.' Well, we're all one victim — until we band together."

Most of the 600 workers at the Conoco refinery are members of Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers Local 5-857. Having worked without a contract since March 10, they rejected Conoco's proposals for man-

datory, company-doctor physicals and a four-way division of their bargaining unit.

Conoco has threatened to close the refinery if environmental demands get too loud. Some workers are with the company, a union official said, while others side with Toxic Concerned Citizens. The local has not taken a position.

The "Best neighbor" T-shirts, however, are not seen too often around the refinery.

Desegregation of Boston housing project begins

BY MARK EMANATION

BOSTON — Two Black women moved their families and belongings into a South Boston housing project July 11. They were the first Black families allowed by city officials to move into the project in a decade.

"I have this inner feeling that it's going to be fine," said Bessie Payne, one of the women. "We're going to stick it out."

City officials circulated a letter to all residents of the project warning that anyone caught harassing the families would be evicted immediately and charged with criminal misconduct.

The two women and their families were placed on the Boston Housing Authority's emergency waiting list after being evicted from apartments in Mattapan, a predominantly Black neighborhood here.

A Black woman who moved into McCormack 10 years ago was driven out when a friend's car was firebombed. Since then, city officials now admit, the Boston Housing Authority has barred Blacks from living in the development. The BHA claimed that the city could not protect Blacks who moved into the project from racist violence.

The 50-year-old McCormack complex is the oldest federal housing project in the country. It includes 1,015 households, estimated currently at 75 percent white and 25 percent non-Black minorities.

After receiving hundreds of complaints, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) ruled last October that Blacks have been systematically discriminated against in the distribution of housing at McCormack and Old Colony, another South Boston project where no Blacks have been allowed to live.

Mayor Raymond Flynn initially denounced the ruling, but later promised to begin moving Blacks into the projects. In May, the city government and HUD signed an agreement committing the city government to end discrimination. Under the accord, the city must give priority to providing housing for those individuals who are shown to have been discriminated against in the past.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights have filed suit in federal court to demand that the housing authority be required to actively integrate the projects, as well as redress individual acts of past discrimination.

City officials now concede that up to 1,000 families were deliberately excluded.

More than 10,000 families, mostly Blacks, Latinos, and other minorities, are on waiting lists for public housing. None has been built for 13 years. The Boston Housing Authority actively recruited white families for openings, even though there were hundreds of Black, Hispanic, or other minority families on waiting lists.

Amey Murphy, a Black mother of two, was 28th on the waiting list when a BHA official asked her, during a phone conversation, what her race was. When she answered, the official said, "We put you on the wrong waiting list." She was immediately dropped to number 517.

Residents of the project are divided on integration. Some who favor going along with the integration plan say that they fear to speak out publicly.

One woman, who had lived at the project for seven years, was quoted by the July 2 *New York Times* as saying, "I think it will go fairly well. . . . I say good luck to the Black families. They deserve it."

An initial step was taken May 22 to mobilize opposition to the threat of violence against Black families that move into the projects. About 600 Blacks, whites, Asians, and Latinos gathered at a South Boston church to demand desegregation of public housing.

Some 200 opponents of integration jeered and heckled those who went inside.

Barbara Mellon, a lifelong South Boston resident, was the target of particular abuse from the outnumbered hecklers. She told the meeting: "This service shows unity among the people of Boston. The day will come when people will welcome each other as neighbors. Then the city of Boston will be a better place to live."

Missouri auto workers walk out as heat in plant kills one

BY JIM GARRISON

FENTON, Mo. — Thousands of auto workers stopped production at two Chrysler Corp. assembly plants here in a series of walkouts in late June. The workers were protesting the intolerable conditions in the plants during a heat wave that caused temperatures inside to rise well above 100 degrees. One worker died, and scores of others became ill before the workers' actions forced the company to back down on overtime demands and make other relief provisions.

The protests began Tuesday, June 21 in the paint shop of Plant 1, where the temperature reached 115 degrees. Company officials intended to run the line as usual, with nine hours of production and no additional relief time or other measures. The paint-shop workers walked out of the plant an hour and a half after start-up, and the rest of the workers followed soon after.

Bertha Saxton, who works in the Plant 1 paint shop, described the conditions. "It's so hot, it's like you're smothering — like you're inside an oven. Your skin is like someone poured baby oil on you." The paint shop has about six ovens which bake paint on the cars, making the heat even more unbearable.

Another worker, Joe McGinnis, described how roof vents in the plant have been welded shut and large wall fans removed because of the company's concern that dust would damage the paint jobs. "They have plenty of ventilation, but they won't open it up because of the dust," he said. "It's better to kill a worker than have a little dust in the paint or find a new system that will work. That's their attitude."

The next day, Willie Benton, a 54-year-old worker on second shift, collapsed in the paint shop. He died an hour later. As word of his death spread through Plant 1, the workers organized a second walkout. Later that evening, the workers from Plant 2 emptied their plant in a matter of minutes.

The 5,000 workers at the two plants,

which are near St. Louis, are members of the United Auto Workers union. Each plant operates two nine-hour production shifts daily, including two out of every three Saturdays. Workers at Plant 2 have been on nine-hour shifts for four years.

Day shift workers at Plant 1 staged a walkout June 23.

When second-shift workers returned to the plant that afternoon, many expressed pride in the discipline and near-unanimity of the walkout the night before. When someone questioned whether the walkout had been "union sanctioned," one worker in the body shop responded, "When we all walk out like that together that makes it a union action. We are the union."

Then the company announced that nine hours of overtime were being scheduled for Saturday.

On Friday evening, when no significant steps had been taken to improve conditions and workers continued to fall sick from the heat, the UAW members at both plants again walked out.

By Saturday, the scheduled nine-hour shift was cut to four hours, and the regular weekday shift was cut back to eight hours, starting Monday, June 27.

In addition, the federal Occupational Health and Safety Administration announced an investigation of conditions at both plants.

Many workers felt they had won a victory through their protests. Some of the workers with more seniority said they hadn't seen anything like it for years. "You know they wanted to work us 10 hours after that first walkout," one worker said, "but we showed them we weren't going to stand for it." A younger worker commented, "We have people in their 50s working on the line here who just can't make it in this heat. We have a certain responsibility to them."

Jim Garrison is a member of UAW Local 110, and works in the body shop of Plant 2 in Fenton.

By Malcolm X

By Any Means Necessary	\$7.95
Malcolm X on Afro-American History	\$4.95
Malcolm X Talks to Young People	\$0.75
Two Speeches by Malcolm X	\$2.00
Malcolm X Speaks	\$8.95
Autobiography of Malcolm X	\$3.95

Available from Pathfinder bookstores listed on page 16 or by mail from Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Include 75 cents for postage and handling.

'Crisis exacts heavy toll on life of our people'

Beginning this week the *Militant* will be running a series of columns by Don Rojas. In 1982 and 1983, Rojas was the press secretary and personal aide to Maurice Bishop, the late prime minister of Grenada. Bishop was murdered and the revolutionary government he led overthrown in an October 1983 coup.

Rojas is a member of the Coordinating Committee of the Anti-Imperialist Organizations of the Caribbean and Central America. He currently lives in Havana, Cuba, as the representative of the Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement of Grenada.

There is little disagreement that the entire Caribbean is in the midst of a chronic and multidimensional crisis.



CARIB NOTES Don Rojas

One that exacts an increasingly heavy toll on the material and spiritual life of our people.

Fundamentally, it is a crisis of imperialist domination, of neocolonialism, of persistent underdevelopment, and backwardness. It is simultaneously a crisis of Caribbean society's material base and of its superstructure.

It is a specific regional expression of the general crisis of the world capitalist system in the epoch of imperialism, a crisis which began in October 1917 with the triumph of the Russian revolution. It has intensified as the great global contradictions between capitalism and socialism on the one hand, and between capitalism and the anticolonial movements on the other, have developed throughout the 20th century.

The impact of this complex crisis on the life of the Caribbean masses is nothing short of devastating. And all objective indications point to a worsening as the world capitalist system goes deeper into turmoil in the wake of the Oct. 19, 1987, stock market crash.

All the major quality-of-life indices — such as levels of hunger, malnutrition, and illiteracy — have been steadily declining in recent years, while the less-easily measured indicators of mass social psychology — such

as levels of alienation, demoralization, and hopelessness — are all rising throughout the Caribbean region.

At society's base are elements such as the regional economy's vulnerability to the vicissitudes of the global economy and to the handmaidens of international finance capital (the transnational corporations, International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank); its underdeveloped forces of production; and its exploitative relations of production, which retard the development of productive forces. These all act in combination to provide material conditions for low levels of economic growth. They also serve to create low levels of capital accumulation, high rates of unemployment, steady migration of people from rural to urban areas and from countries to metropolises, and rising foreign debt leading to the net export of capital to the imperial centers.

Where there has been economic growth it has not been accompanied by economic development. We cannot even feed ourselves from our own resources in the Caribbean. All of these intertwined phenomena mean that the standards of living of our people are on the slide.

At society's superstructure, determined in great part by conditions at the base, the crisis manifests itself politically in the transparency of independence, in the neocolonial role of the state apparatus, in the absence of credibility and legitimacy in political institutions and political leadership, in the lack of democracy for the majority despite the democratic pretensions of governing officials, and in the widespread abuse of human rights, particularly in countries such as Haiti, Guyana, the Dominican Republic, and Jamaica.

Socially the crisis is eroding accepted moral and ethical standards. Violent crime is on the rise, drug abuse and juvenile delinquency are spreading, and prostitution has grown perceptibly in the last five years.

The fragile intellectual and cultural sovereignty of the region is being undermined by tourism that compromises the dignity of our people and by the instruments of U.S. cultural imperialism (the mass media, evangelical crusades, etc.), thus resulting in a stagnation and distortion of patriotism, national consciousness, working-class consciousness, and intellectual life generally.

This aggressive cultural penetration is designed to erode national and regional identity; to foster an overall spiritual and psychological dependency on the center of the empire; to encourage the collective internalization of North American lifestyles, cultural values, and consump-

tion patterns; and ultimately to create a mass mental tranquilization against militant resistance to continuous domination and exploitation.

This generalized crisis is protracted. It assumed a new dimension when neocolonialism, as a more sophisticated means of imperialist domination, was thrust on the peoples of the Caribbean with "formal" political independence in the 1960s and 1970s. Ever since the collapse of the Grenada revolution as a regional alternative to neocolonialism, and with the introduction of the more aggressive policies of the administration, the crisis has been gathering momentum.

But a sharpening and multiplication of its underlying political and economic contradictions in the second half of the 1980s have given it a new urgency. As we approach the end of this turbulent decade, this crisis is commanding the attention of a broad spectrum of regional and international forces, and making the quest for social and economic justice in our region more and more difficult.

Understanding and analyzing the complexities and contradictions of the crisis and then devising combative strategies and joint action plans to struggle for its resolution in the 1990s and beyond, is an imperative need of the regional left, defined broadly as the revolutionary, progressive, democratic, and patriotic anti-imperialist forces.

During the course of the next several weeks, I will attempt in this column to situate the Caribbean within the broader historical context of the world capitalist crisis and of the difficulties facing U.S. imperialism in particular. I will offer a panoramic view of our region's political economy in the 1980s with concrete evaluations of industry, agriculture, tourism, and other vital economic sectors. Here an attempt will be made to show how proimperialist economic strategies have further underdeveloped the region in the 1980s. I will also examine the current moves toward political unity of the Eastern Caribbean within the context of the crisis, then proceed to critically evaluate the two most proimperialist models of development to emerge in the 1980s: Seaga's Jamaica and Blaize's Grenada.

Finally, some thoughts will be offered for how to get out of this quicksand in which the Caribbean is now mired and strategies will be proposed for a genuinely independent, self-reliant, and dignified social and economic development and overall progress for the masses of the Caribbean region.

How U.S. armada aids Iraqi rulers in war on Iran

BY SAMAD SHARIF

The shooting down of 290 passengers on an Iranian Airbus by the ultramodern and formidable U.S. Navy warship *Vincennes*, and the Reagan administration's attempts to cover up the facts are not an aberration. They are part of Washington's shoot-to-destroy policy in the Persian Gulf. This policy aims to weaken and isolate the Iranian government, and force it to negotiate an end to the eight-year war between Iraq and Iran on terms favorable to the Iraqi regime.

Since May 1987, when the U.S. government announced that it was placing 11 Kuwaiti tankers under its flag and military protection, and beefing up its armada in the gulf, the Pentagon has carried out one provocation after another. It has enlisted the support of its European allies and has sought pretexts to hit Iran's military and economic installations.

One example of Washington's provocative conduct in the gulf occurred on the morning of April 18, when U.S. warships destroyed two major Iranian oil platforms, Sassan and Sirri. The Pentagon claimed this action was in retaliation for Iranian mine attacks against the U.S. frigate *Samuel B. Roberts* four days before. It also asserted that a few hours after the oil platforms were destroyed the Iranian forces mounted a series of attacks on the U.S.

warships. According to this account the officers on these ships responded in "self-defense" and ordered strikes against six Iranian naval vessels. The result was the destruction of a significant portion of Iran's regular navy.

The Pentagon's claim that the Iranian government was responsible for planting the mine that damaged the U.S. frigate on April 14 was challenged even in U.S. ruling circles. Rep. Les Aspin, chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, wrote a column in the *Washington Post* on April 22, answering the question "Was it a mistake to retaliate?" in the affirmative. He stated that "the weight of logical analysis holds that the authorities in Tehran did not order those mines dropped in the Gulf."

The London weekly, *Middle East Economic Digest*, reported that one of the Iranian ships sunk by the U.S. Navy on April 18 was a French-made *Combattante* missile boat. "The initial American version of the encounter," the article explained, "said the Iranian ship fired a Harpoon missile which missed — in turn being hit and destroyed by several U.S. missiles. Later U.S. news reports spoke of the two sides firing missiles or 'engaging' simultaneously. Some observers in Washington say the Iranians may not have fired at all." Yet the ship was sunk.

In another case the same day, U.S. journalists on board a U.S. warship reported that when the Iranian frigate *Sahand* was detected coming out of Bandar (port) Abbas, an order was issued to "get it." *Sahand* was then attacked with missiles fired from a nearby warship and a plane from the U.S. nuclear-powered aircraft carrier *Enterprise*. The *Sahand* may have sunk.

Later the U.S. government claimed that *Sahand* was attacked because it had fired at the U.S. aircraft from the *Enterprise*. Less than two hours later, the Iranian frigate *Sabalan* was damaged by a single missile in similar circumstances.

Every one of these attacks by U.S. forces occurred one day after Iraqi forces launched an attack to recapture the Fao Peninsula that juts into the Persian Gulf near the Iran-Iraq border. This territory had

been taken by Iranian military forces in February of 1986 during a major offensive. Iraqi forces attacking Fao also received logistical support from Kuwait and staged part of the attack from Kuwait's Bubiyan Island, which adjoins Fao.

On April 18 Iraqi forces recaptured Fao Peninsula. Both the U.S. and Iraqi governments declared that they were unaware of each other's plan to attack Iranian forces.

On April 30 Washington extended its police powers in the gulf as President Reagan ordered the U.S. Navy to "protect neutral ships" from Iranian forces. A May 3 *Washington Post* editorial said the substance of this "neutrality" policy is that tankers sailing to Iran won't be protected, while ships carrying Iraq's cargoes will. The Pentagon, however, continues to claim that its policy is "neutral."

On May 14 Iraqi planes flew 750 miles one way in the Persian Gulf to bomb Iran's Larak island oil terminal in the Strait of

Hormuz. Fire was set to five tankers, including two of the world's largest. At least 16 crew members were reported missing, as were an untold number of oil workers in Larak.

An Iranian air force officer told radio Tehran that as the Iraqi planes approached their targets the "U.S. fleet began carrying out electronic warfare against our planes," jamming Iranian systems for nine minutes.

The Iraqi victory in Fao, which signaled a major setback for Iran, was followed by the Iraqi forces recapturing the Majnoon Islands and Shalamache on the southern front near Basra.

With support from Washington's 30-ship armada, in the guise of protecting "neutral shipping" in the Persian Gulf, Iraqi President Saddam Hussein has gone on the offensive for the first time since 1982 when his forces were driven out of Iran. The Iraqi government launched the war against Iran in 1980.

Facts versus Pentagon on Flight 655

Continued from front page

knew that the *John H. Sides*, a nearby U.S. warship, had recorded the airliner in level flight and not descending in an attack pattern, as the *Vincennes* radar was said to have shown.

The Pentagon retreated from Crowe's July 3 claim that the plane did not identify itself as a commercial flight. (Officials also conceded that Crowe's claim that the airliner was operating outside its assigned corridor was false.)

Defense Department officials concede that the plane's transponder — used to send identifying signals to radar — had been sending signals in "Mode 3," a standard identification channel used by civilian planes.

Pentagon spokesman Dan Howard claimed, however, that the airliner was sending out a second signal used only by military planes.

However, the *John H. Sides*, which received the civilian signal sent by the Air-

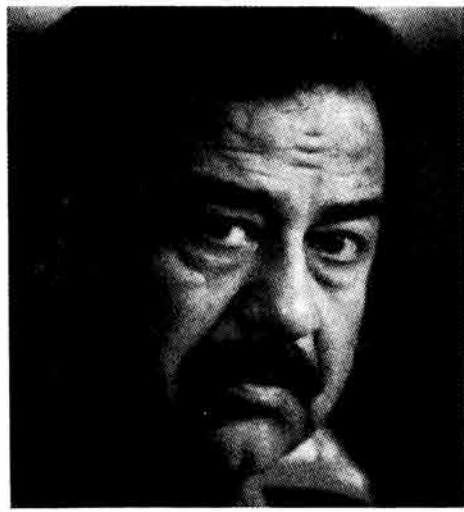
bus, did not receive the alleged military signal.

On many, if not all, A300 Airbus planes, the pilot can manually transmit a signal that reproduces on sophisticated radar screens — like those of the *Vincennes* — as a detailed blip. Next to the blip on the radar screen will be the plane's airline, flight number, and altitude.

When asked whether the Iranian Airbus had reproduced the flight number I655 on the *Vincennes* radar screen, a Pentagon official stated, "We just don't know."

Brig. Gen. Mansour Satary, commander of Iran's air force, offered July 7 to provide U.S. investigators with material evidence that he said would disprove Washington's defense of the shootdown. Satary said the signal transmitted by the aircraft was not simply on "Mode 3," as the Pentagon admitted, but "Mode 3 Alpha."

"When you receive on code three alpha, it is a commercial airliner, nothing else," he said.



Iraqi President Saddam Hussein began war by invading Iran in 1980.

Africa's struggle against foreign debt

BY SUSAN LaMONT

In no region of the planet does the crushing burden of foreign debt weigh as heavily on the shoulders of workers, farmers, and other toilers as it does on the continent of Africa.

At the end of 1987, the countries of Africa, whose total population is 601 million, owed the governments and banks of France, Britain, the United States, Canada, and other imperialist countries \$228 billion. That year alone, Africa's 54 countries paid out \$27 billion in debt service.

The resolution of the African Trade Union Conference on the Foreign Debt, reprinted in this *International Socialist Review*, describes the impact this burden is having on the peoples of Africa, as increasing billions of dollars are sucked out of the continent and sent to the imperialist centers.

Economic, political, social, and cultural progress is not only being slowed, it is being reversed. With millions of toilers already living on the knife's edge of existence, the scourges of famine, illiteracy, disease, poverty, and environmental destruction are becoming worse. Increasingly, resources needed to provide basic food, housing, employment, health care, education, and economic development are siphoned off to pay the ever-expanding debt.

The weight of the foreign debt, the unionists explain, is undermining the very independence that most African countries won through the mighty anticolonial struggles that followed World War II.

Unequal terms of trade

For the countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, the debt burden — which stands at \$1.2 trillion — is part of the system of imperialist superexploitation and domination that plunders their resources and robs them of the fruits of their labor.

The debt itself has mushroomed in the 1980s, a result of the accelerating economic crisis building up in the world capitalist system.

In addition to the weight of the foreign debt, these countries are victims of unequal terms of trade imposed by the ruling families of the imperialist countries.

Since the 1981-82 recession, the prices Third World countries receive for the agricultural commodities and other raw materials they export have been in a nosedive.

For many African countries, export crops such as coffee, cotton, cocoa, sugar, tea, and tobacco, are principal sources of income. But between 1982 and 1986, prices for Africa's non-oil exports were cut in half, and now stand at the lowest level in real terms since the 1930s.

It currently takes 40 percent of the continent's export earnings to pay the interest payments alone on Africa's \$228 billion debt.

For oil-exporting countries in Africa, the world decline in oil prices means their situation has worsened too. Nigeria — the continent's most populous country with 112 million people — earned \$25 billion from oil in 1980. This year, it expects to earn \$6 billion. At the same time, the interest payments on its foreign debt of \$27 billion will also come to \$6 billion.

For Nigerians, per capita income in the past four years has dropped from \$800 to \$375 a year.

While African countries receive less and less for the products they export, the prices they must pay for necessary imported manufactured goods, machinery, and food are skyrocketing. In 1986 alone, they rose 20 percent.

Since 1980, the buying power of Africa's export earnings has plummeted by nearly one-third.

'Debt-distressed countries'

The economic crisis in 22 African countries is so severe that the World Bank classifies them as "debt-distressed." (The World Bank is an imperialist-dominated banking institution, nominally under the jurisdiction of the United Nations, which lends Third World countries money for road construction, electric power development, water supply lines, and other infrastructural projects.)

These countries are Benin, Comoros, Equatorial Guinea, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, São



Young woman fighter with Frelimo, revolutionary guerrilla army that led Mozambique's struggle for independence against Portugal to victory in 1975. African trade unionists are demanding that continent's \$228 billion debt be canceled. They call on popular masses and their organizations to participate in resolving debt crisis, to open road to genuine development. In addition to debt and overall economic crisis, Mozambique has been crippled by long war waged against it by South African-backed rightist army, Renamo.

Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zaire, and Zambia.

The \$45 billion debt burden of these countries averages 108 percent of their gross national product. Their per capita economic output has dropped from \$324 a year in 1980 to \$270 in 1986. During the same period, the amount these countries earned through exports fell by 50 percent.

French plan

The African trade union conference on the debt is one reflection of the rising opposition among Africa's toilers to the continued pillage of their human and natural resources by the imperialist ruling families, and their determination to press for real solutions to the crisis — beginning with a call for canceling the debt.

Other Organization of African Unity and UN conferences have been held on the African debt in the past several years as the crisis has grown more acute.

There is also fear by the imperialist banks and governments that debtor countries will begin defaulting on their loans, thereby precipitating a breakdown in the international banking system.

Both factors have led to increased attention by some imperialist governments and banking institutions to the African debt.

The World Bank recently decided to increase by 500 percent — from \$100 million to \$500 million — the amount it sets aside to cover unpaid loans in countries throughout the world. Eight countries, including three in Africa, are now more than six months in arrears on their payments to the bank.

On June 8, President François Mitterrand announced that the French government was canceling one-third of the debt owed to it by 20 sub-Saharan Africa countries. This amounts to \$170 million. (The gross national product of France in 1983 was \$569 billion.)

Mitterrand recommended that other imperialist countries take similar steps. He also suggested that remaining debts be rescheduled, allowing a longer period for repayment at lower interest rates.

The same day, the West German government also announced a plan to cancel \$50.3 million of the debts of several African countries.

According to the June 9 *Wall Street Journal*, "The United States opened the door to these and other proposals when it decided last week that it would no longer oppose interest-rate relief or debt forgiveness by other governments in the case of the poorest states. . . . Treasury Secretary James Baker announced that while the United States itself wouldn't grant any debt relief, it wouldn't oppose other countries doing so for the poorest debtors."

Toronto summit

A few weeks later, the heads of state of the countries known as the Group of Seven — the United States, Japan, West Germany, Britain, France, Italy, and Canada — held an "economic summit meeting" in Toronto.

One of the topics they discussed was the situation of the "debt-distressed" African countries. An agreement to allow some of the poorest countries more time to repay their debts was the only step taken with regard to the Third World debt.

In order to qualify for even this limited debt adjustment, countries would have to agree to austerity programs supervised by the imperialist countries.

(The per capita gross national products of the Group of Seven countries is \$10,000 to \$20,000 per year. The per capita GNPs for the African countries affected by the Toronto proposal is \$450 a year or less.)

Austerity programs

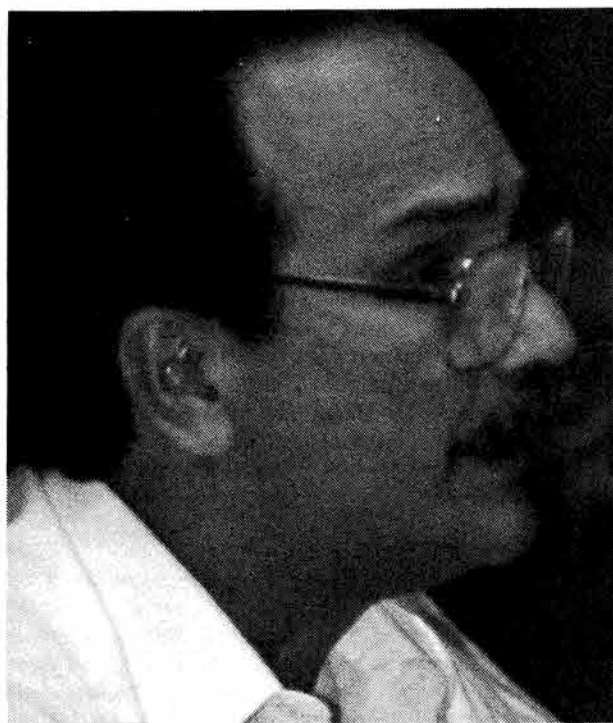
Under pressure from the banks and governments of the capitalist economic powers, nearly 30 African countries have already been forced during the 1980s to adopt austerity measures in order to qualify for ongoing financial assistance.

This approach is now dubbed the "Baker Plan." Put forward by U.S. Treasury Secretary James Baker at an International Monetary Fund (IMF) meeting in 1985, the

Continued on ISR/5

'Panama's only sin is refusing to ben

Speech by Nils Castro, int'l relations secretary of Revolutionary Democratic



Nils Castro

Militant/Judy White

The following speech was presented by Nils Castro to the Third Assembly of the Anti-Imperialist Organizations of the Caribbean and Central America, which met in Panama City, Panama, June 20-22. Castro is the secretary for international relations of the Revolutionary Democratic Party of Panama.

The Anti-Imperialist Organizations is a broad political association that was born out of the mass upsurge that brought revolutionary governments to power in Nicaragua and Grenada in 1979. It now counts among its members 41 political parties and groups from 26 countries in Central America and the Caribbean.

The translation of Castro's speech from Spanish is by the Militant.

Located at the southeasternmost end of Central America, Panama was one of the countries liberated by Simón Bolívar.¹ Culturally and ethnically, it extends the Colombian-Venezuelan border, and it is also a Caribbean nation. It's Caribbean because of its varied, historic ties to the Antilles.

The location and shape of Panama's territory makes its geographic position the main natural resource of the country — it is an isthmus that links the two continents of America and is at the very center of the hemisphere and of the Caribbean. Thanks to this, shipping transit between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, as well as other forms of international communication and trade, are possible.

Exploited rationally and peacefully, this asset should provide resources to finance the full development of the country's other productive capacities. But it hasn't been able to. For centuries, Panama's geographic advantage has been subject to the control of successive colonial and imperialist powers, hardly leaving even marginal benefits for Panama, and creating structural distortions in the country's economy.

The most irritating of these experiences has been and remains the hegemony of the United States, which has carried out numerous armed interventions since the beginning of the 19th century and which currently militarily occupies the central part of the country.

National struggles to repel U.S. excesses and to recover the territorial and moral integrity of Panama have been at the center of its history. We have fought to win complete independence and to exercise real sovereignty over the nation's main natural resource, as well as control over our country's development. We Panamanians have the right to determine this.

The 1977 canal treaties were a result of this history; of the tragic and heroic events of January 1964²; and of the complex and prolonged negotiations led by Gen. Omar Torrijos during the 1970s. These negotiations were back-

ed by mobilizations of the Panamanian people and international solidarity. Even though these treaties, which are now in force, are far from satisfying all the just demands of the Panamanian people, they represent important progress toward achieving our national objectives.

In accordance with the treaties, civilian administration of the canal became binational, with an increasing Panamanian share of control. The canal is to be turned over to Panama completely by the year 2000. Responsibility for its protection and defense is to rest increasingly with the Panamanian armed forces, while the U.S. military presence is to begin decreasing, so that the last foreign soldier leaves the country by the end of the century.

The treaties clearly establish that for the time being, U.S. forces remain in Panama exclusively to provide protection and defense. This has to be carried out in coordination with the Panamanian armed forces. And U.S. forces cannot be utilized for any other purpose.

Since the signing and ratification of the treaties, Panama has scrupulously carried them out, and the United States has systematically violated them. The U.S. Congress unilaterally passed the so-called Murphy Law, or Law 96-70,³ which it uses to haggle over and deny Panama a big part of the benefits and rights that belong to us as part of the administration and profits of the canal.

With respect to the military, the United States has created and maintains two structures in Panama that violate the pact:

The 193rd Brigade of its southern army tries to justify its presence on the basis of protection and defense of the canal. But its forces are much greater than what's required for this.

Even worse is the Southern Command, which is an enormous complex dedicated to military control, espionage, and intervention against all the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. Neither the existence nor activities of the Southern Command are authorized by the treaties, or by Panama's laws or government. Both the Panamanian parliament and government have repeatedly demanded their removal, denouncing them before the world's principal international forums.

These two foreign military structures have nothing to do with protecting the canal. The canal's security is guaranteed by its neutrality, as well as its efficiency in the service of the peaceful navigation and commerce of the nations of the world. It's also guaranteed by the good will of the Panamanian people, who make it possible for the canal to operate and who voluntarily refrain from interrupting its functioning.

No enemies

Neither Panama nor the canal have enemies, or reasons to have them. The only thing that's threatening the security of the waterway is the unwanted presence of the military forces and installations of a foreign power that is constantly involved in conflicts and rivalries in other parts of the world.

It's absurd both from a military and economic point of view to station installations and large numbers of troops on the banks of the canal. This restricts its functioning and prevents the area from being used for more productive activities.

The canal has no nearby potential aggressors and would be vulnerable only if faced with a missile attack from outside the region. Anybody who wants to defend the canal against this hypothetical possibility, doesn't need to do it from inside Panama. Inside our territory, the Panamanian forces are sufficient to defend the installations of the waterway against any attack.

This is precisely why the Panamanian Defense Force exists — to guarantee Panama's neutrality and the security not only of the canal but of all the country's resources. Our armed forces do this for the benefit of the international community and without threatening the sovereignty or security of third parties.

One reason for the existence of the Panamanian armed forces is to eliminate the legacy of colonialism and neocolonialism, and guarantee the integrity and self-determination of the country. This is in keeping with the clause in the treaties stating that for U.S. troops to withdraw, Panama must have sufficient armed forces to replace them.

It's for this reason also that the current administration in Washington has concentrated its attacks against the

Panamanian military and against officers who follow the Torrijos approach. In the 10 years since the signing and ratification of the treaties, the strategic goals of the United States in the region have changed decisively. For them it's no longer merely a question of controlling the canal. They want to control the entire subcontinent. To do this, they must completely eliminate three obstacles.

First, change the terms of the Canal Treaties to broaden the authority of the U.S. military presence and to prolong it beyond this century.

Second, eliminate Torrijismo as a political current and restore an oligarchic government that will agree to and administer new canal accords.

Finally, under the guise of "professionalism," eliminate the national, popular character of the young Panamanian armed forces. That is to say, break its commitment to the people and turn it into the kind of repressive force necessary to impose the objectives I referred to, against the national will.

Central American strategy

Going against the grain of the real historic, ethnic, cultural, economic, and political characteristics of the country, U.S. government administrations have insisted on subsuming Panama in their Central American strategy. Contrary to this picture, however, during the last decade Panama has played a leadership role in the Contadora initiative,⁴ and previous initiatives — but not as part of the subregional conflicts.

Nevertheless, with typical U.S. arrogance, in December 1985 Vice-admiral John Poindexter — then chief of the U.S. National Security Council — made the following demands:

The Panamanian government must break with the Contadora negotiations. It must provide logistical and training facilities for the Nicaraguan contras. And it must assign special units of its armed forces to initiate acts of aggression against Nicaragua. When Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega firmly refused, he was warned he would have to face the consequences.

Economic reprisals against Panama were initiated the following January with the cancellation of assistance that had been agreed to through the AID [Agency for International Development]. The campaign of defamation against Noriega and other Panamanian leaders began in March, through Col. Oliver North's "leaking" to the press "secret" National Security Council documents, as the U.S. press itself revealed. The campaign has not let up since its inception, systematically pursuing its objective of isolating Panama.

This attack is not only directed against the Contadora Group. (Although the U.S. government put pressure simultaneously on others of its members, particularly Mexico.) Significantly, during that same time, Gen. John Galvin, then chief of the Southern Command and current commander of NATO's troops, made Panama an offer. He proposed turning over civilian administration of the canal to the country by 1990 (10 years ahead of schedule) if Panama would allow U.S. military bases to remain in

4. A peace plan for Central America proposed by the Contadora Group, which was made up of the governments of Colombia, Mexico, Panama, and Venezuela. It was named after the Panamanian island where it first met in January 1983.



1. Simón Bolívar (1783-1830) was the most prominent leader of the armed rebellion that helped win independence from Spain for much of Latin America.

2. On Jan. 9, 1964, more than 20 Panamanians died and about 500 were injured when Canal Zone police and U.S. troops fired on a demonstration of thousands of unarmed Panamanians demanding the right to fly the Panamanian flag in the Canal Zone.

3. In September 1979 the U.S. Congress passed Law 96-70 sponsored in the House by Rep. John Murphy of New York. It "implemented" the Panama Canal treaties, but in fact contained a number of provisions that violated Panama's sovereignty over its territory.

d its knees'

Party of Panama

the country for 15 more years (until the year 2015).

There's nothing naive about the United States' conception of who should own the canal. On one hand it recognizes that the waterway has been more efficient, secure, and profitable since Panamanians began sharing in its administration. On the other hand, the essence of its conception is the following:

It proposes the "nationalization" of the canal. But as part of this "nationalization" Panama would agree to privatize the canal — in other words, turn it over to transnational corporations dominated by U.S. capital. This not only serves to dilute Panamanian demands, but also to discourage Latin American, Japanese, and European participation in the creation of new alternatives for the canal.

U.S. propaganda campaign

The decision to try to break Panamanian nationalism has been skillfully executed on several different levels. The U.S. government has carried out a campaign directed at the U.S. public and at Latin America and the world — aimed at discrediting General Noriega and other leaders. It has accused them of a variety of crimes, such as drug trafficking, and has tried to make it appear as though a bloody dictatorship rules Panama. (It's necessary to prepare U.S. public opinion even for military intervention — one that would be much more costly than the invasion of Grenada.)

Throughout this long campaign the United States has used to the utmost its unquestionable control over means of communication in most parts of the world. It temporarily succeeded in its efforts to neutralize international solidarity with Panama, and paralyze a Latin American response to flagrant aggression against a fellow country.

At the same time, in addition to the psychological damage it inflicted with this type of aggression, the U.S. government was determined to fashion a united front of right-wing political parties within Panama. When this failed to bring results, it organized a broad front headed by business and oligarchic sectors that succeeded in winning over numerous middle-class associations and civic organizations. This front had the support of the church hierarchy, most of the foreign banks, and the political parties I mentioned.

Destabilization of Panama

Through this the U.S. government temporarily succeeded in destabilizing the political and economic life of the country. It initiated a process of social subversion that was supposed to lead within a short period of time to the setting up of a de facto government and the final breaking up of Torrijismo and the Defense Forces. The aim of the U.S. propaganda and disinformation campaign outside the country was to cover up the neocolonialist nature of this movement, making it appear as though the movement's aims were "democratic."

At the same time, intense pressure was put on members of the oligarchy — both those who were pro-U.S., as well as vacillating members of the government alliance. Officials of the armed forces who were less consistently patriotic were also pressured. All of this was done to break their resistance psychologically and intimidate them into surrendering. This led to the betrayal of ex-colonel Díaz and ex-president [Eric Arturo] Delvalle, neither of whom have any political significance of their own, as well as a group of officers.

However, far from weakening the popular, patriotic movement, these moves helped purify and strengthen it. It opened the door to the establishment of a constitutional government with a patriotic character and a much broader social base.

On top of everything else, in its arrogance, ignorance, and desperation, the U.S. government carried out a brutal economic aggression against Panama, along with military threats. It has severely damaged the Panamanian economy, especially the Panamanian people.

People's resistance

However the imperialist plan didn't foresee the strong resistance of the Panamanian people. Nor that the imperialist actions themselves would become the best indictment of the real neocolonialist character of the internal subversion.

This has led to the dismemberment of the social and political front of the U.S. opposition, which has been branded irrevocably for its role as peons of U.S. errors. And the prolonged patriotic resistance has finally opened up the eyes of Latin America and the world. The resistance is increasingly harder to explain within the United States as well.



The Miraflores Locks on the Panama Canal

Militant/Mary-Alice Waters

The temporary success achieved by the opposition has opened up some space for a more self-critical evaluation of errors made by the Panamanian government over the last several years.

The government formed an electoral alliance with sectors of the oligarchy in 1984. It subsequently adopted a policy of concessions toward the International Monetary Fund. It allowed productive sectors of the economy to be decapitalized in the name of servicing the foreign debt and speculative finance capital, turning the country into a net exporter of capital. It allowed the basic forms of popular organization and participation of Torrijismo to become weak. It maintained a government that was clearly unpopular, in the name of a respect for formal democracy and to avoid incurring Washington's disfavor. These were errors that of necessity alienated important sections of the middle class and demobilized popular support.

These are the errors that the people demanded be rectified when the technocratic, pro-IMF government of Arditio Barletta fell and which the ineffective, cowardly Delvalle government could not and would not carry out. The patriotic government of Solis Palma is now undertaking the rectification of these errors, under the most difficult circumstances, and regaining popular support.

Panama has reiterated its decision to continue and deepen the process of democratization. But it is not willing to denigrate democracy, reducing it to a mere succession of electoral matches in which the oligarchs take their turn in the government according to what pleases Washington. The cornerstone of real democracy is respect for popular, national sovereignty and the real exercise of national self-determination.

There can be no democracy under conditions of foreign tutelage or interference, or by being forced to im-

itate foreign models. There can be no democracy without effective democratization of the economic, social, and cultural structures of the country, with the people's participation.

A matter of principle

There can be no democracy if it's left to U.S. consuls to decide who can and can't be president of Panama, or what positions Panamanian civilian or military officials can hold or whether they can remain in the country. This is a matter of principle and is not negotiable.

In Panama we have witnessed and are witnessing what will probably be the U.S. method of destabilization and control for the whole region in the coming years. Panama has been and continues to be an arena for experimentation with new forms of psychological warfare and neocolonial domination that are already being tested in other parts of Latin America and the Caribbean.

It's not only a matter of moral imperative that a small Latin American country, whose only sin is refusing to bend its knees, is being subjected to the brutal and blatant aggression of a great power. It is also a question of political imperative because the methods being used to make Panama submit are obviously intended for more general use.

What's at stake is the sovereignty, self-determination, and dignity of all our nations and peoples. At stake is the right of the Latin American and Caribbean peoples to decide on their own forms of democracy, to determine their own future according to their own interests. Our future — that of all of us — will be determined by whether we have the right to popular, national liberation or remain under neocolonial slavery. That's why we say to certain governments that are too docile, too timid, too complacent: Do not ask for whom the bells toll in Panama, they toll for you.

New International
A Magazine of Marxist Politics and Theory

The Second Assassination of Maurice Bishop
BY STEVE CLARK

Land, Labor, and the Canadian Revolution
BY MICHEL DUCLOS

The 50-Year Domestic Contra Operation
BY LARRY SEIGLE

Cuba: A Historic Moment
TWO SPEECHES BY FIDEL CASTRO

New International
a magazine of Marxist politics and theory

"Cuba: A Historic Moment"

Two speeches by
Fidel Castro

In addresses to 1986 Cuban Communist Party Congress, Castro called for mobilizing working people to solve economic and social problems, and for infusing leadership with more Blacks, mestizos, women, and young workers.

Please send me this issue

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Zip _____

Clip and mail \$6.50 to New International, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014.

African trade unionists: Cancel debt!

The following declaration was adopted Dec. 10, 1987, by the African Trade Union Conference on the Foreign Debt held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It was printed in the March 24, 1988, issue of *Le Peuple*, published by the General Confederation of Labor (CGT) in France. The translation from French is by the *Militant*.

Representatives of 26 African trade union federations met in Addis Ababa Dec. 8-10, 1987, at the African Trade Union Conference on the Foreign Debt.

The conference was jointly sponsored by the World Trade Union Federation, the Organization of African Trade Union Unity, and the unions of Ethiopia.

Also present were representatives of the Western Africa Workers Organization, Central Africa Workers Organization, Organization of African Unity, African Economic Commission, International Labor Organization, and African Development Bank.

The decision to hold such a conference was based on the extreme gravity of the problem of the foreign debt. In Africa, it is urgently necessary to initiate immediate action on all levels — national, regional, and international — to solve the problem and reverse its catastrophic consequences for the continent and its people.

The conference was held shortly after the third extraordinary session of the Assembly of African Heads of State and Government. It took due note of that meeting's declaration, common position, and conclusions.

The conference was itself an expression of firm commitment to the principle that the people themselves must participate in solving society's fundamental economic and social problems. This principle — adopted by the United Nations and its institutions — was reaffirmed by the African governments.

The experience of many years has taught Africa and African workers that genuine economic and social development cannot be attained without the full participation of workers and the involvement of the popular masses and their organizations — primarily the trade unions.

Participation of workers is road forward

Accordingly, the conference stressed that the problem of Africa's foreign debt cannot be resolved without the participation of the workers and their unions — the producers of the continent's wealth. This is the only road forward to the genuine overall development that is needed.

Participants in the conference were motivated by a profound desire to make a serious contribution to the search for solutions on a national, regional, and international level. That is why they stressed that such efforts must be based on all dimensions and aspects of the problem, including its social consequences.

In this context, the conference participants expressed deep concern over the astounding increase in Africa's foreign debt, which reached \$228 billion in 1987 and continues to grow rapidly. They also expressed concern over the colossal sums the continent is paying in debt service. According to estimates by the International Monetary Fund, Africa's interest payments totaled \$27 billion in 1987.

The conference drew attention to the fact that the burden of the foreign debt has slowed down the continent's progress on all fronts — economic, political, social, and cultural. It has also worsened all evils already endemic — including poverty, famine, illness, illiteracy, and underdevelopment.

These scourges are gradually undermining the independence African countries won with such great difficulty. They threaten the modest but important economic and social advances won by the African masses through long years of hard struggle and strenuous work.

Enormous resources that are needed to provide food, health care, education, and overall development are instead being diverted to pay back and pay interest on the foreign debt.

Africa today is in the incredible situation of being forced to take new loans to pay the interest on old ones. In place of importing the capital required by its level of development and its needs, Africa has become a net exporter of capital.

Toilers are primary victims

The conference stressed that workers and the toiling masses in general were the primary victims of this crisis. The burden of the foreign debt and interest payments has and will continue to affect employment, unemployment, wages, prices, cost of living, education, health care, trade union rights, democratic rights, and all other aspects of workers' lives.

The conference also called attention to the main beneficiaries of Africa's foreign debt. They are the same forces and interests that have exploited and pillaged the continent and its peoples for years — the transnational corporations and the governments that act in their name. They call for remedies and mechanisms to confront the problem. In reality, however, they seek only to reinforce their hold on the continent so they can continue to drain its economies.

The conference drew attention to the fact that the debt constitutes a genuine obstacle to development of the countries of Africa and to the lives of their peoples. The impoverishment of Africa and its people has resulted in reduced buying power and reduced capacity to import goods. This in turn has a direct impact on employment and the possibilities of employment in other countries. Thus the continued worsening of the debt also has direct

and indirect consequences for the toiling masses in other countries.

In this context, the conference pointed out that the proposed solutions for the debt problem put forward by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank have been harmful to the interests of the African people.

The IMF and the World Bank have become agents of the transnationals. Their policies seek to maintain the present unjust international division of labor. Their programs and solutions undermine the development strategies adopted by the United Nations and supported by the African governments.

Echoing the sentiments of the workers and toiling masses of Africa, the conference rejected programs of stabilization and structural adjustment as failing to correspond to the interests of the people.

The conference pointed out that certain African governments shared responsibility for the present tragic situation. Factors that have contributed to the present crisis include years of inadequate development policy, excessive dependence on foreign capital, imitation of the former colonists' development models, an almost total lack of interest in rural areas, poor economic management, and large-scale corruption.

Priority to needs of masses

The conference was of the opinion that such policies should be radically changed, and that a development strategy based on peoples' needs should be adopted. Such an approach would give priority to the basic needs of the masses, use local resources, and encourage local technology. It would also promote African economic integration so as to benefit the continent's people.

The conference drew the attention of the people and governments of Africa to the importance of unity in political and economic action. It stressed the need for a collective approach involving all African countries. This is the only way the problem of the foreign debt can be solved in a way that advances the genuine development and well-being of African society as a whole.

At the same time, the conference pointed to the dangerous consequences of a country-by-country or case-by-case approach to the problem. Such an approach, it said, seeks only to reinforce the position of the transnational banks and the governments that act in their name.

The conference demanded that Africa's foreign debt be canceled. It suggested that creditors simply write it off as financial assistance in their profit-and-loss statements. Otherwise, it should be collectively repudiated.

Any honest examination of Africa's foreign debt reveals that the debt, or at least its great majority, has already been repaid.

In fact, if an analysis is made of all the factors — the figures currently claimed for the debt, the outflow of real resources in the form of interest payments, inflated interest rates and, in certain cases, debts that have never been confirmed — it can be seen that debt has already been more than repaid.

The conference urged all African governments, institutions, and mass organizations to unite their forces to demand cancellation or collective repudiation of the debt. In this context, it noted the importance of the participation of all social layers in the struggle to cancel the foreign debt and counter the harmful consequences of the debt crisis. Renewed efforts must be made to mobilize the African people, inform them correctly, and ensure their right to participate in the solution of society's vital problems.

Importance of joint action

The conference underscored the importance of joint political action and coordination between the African countries and the debtor countries of Asia and Latin America. Creation of a front of African debtor nations has been recommended by the Organization of African Unity. It should be accompanied by the formation of a front of all debtor nations in the Third World.

The conference addressed itself to workers and unions throughout the world, particularly in Latin America, Asia, and the developed capitalist countries. It called on them to unite their forces to fight the debt problem. It noted that the consequences of the debt affect the living standards, employment, and well-being of workers in all countries.

The conference stressed the fundamental importance of cooperation between developing countries and workers throughout the world. Such cooperation is essential in the struggle to establish a new international economic order and to solve the debt crisis.

The conference issued an appeal for international working-class solidarity on the debt problem. It urged all regional and international union organizations to work together to organize an international union conference on the foreign debt of the Third World countries.

Sankara: 'Foreign debt should not be paid'

In 1983, a popular democratic revolution took place in the West African country of Burkina Faso, and brought to power a new government, headed by Thomas Sankara.

This regime won broad support among the toilers of Burkina Faso, and was looked to as an example by many throughout Africa and the world. The National Council of the Revolution (CNR) initiated social programs in the interests of workers and peasants, and sought to organize and mobilize the masses in forging the future of their country.

The CNR was overthrown when Sankara and 12 of his aides were killed during an October 1987 military coup carried out by soldiers loyal to then minister of state and justice Capt. Blaise Compaoré.

While he was alive, Sankara called for canceling Africa's foreign debt and discussed the harmful effects of the debt burden on a number of occasions.

In 1985, speaking with a Swiss journalist, Sankara said, "As far as we were concerned we stated very clearly that the foreign debt should not be repaid. To repay it would be unjust. It would be like paying war reparations two times over. . . . We were coerced into running up very heavy debts, and the economic installations made possible by these loans have not always run smoothly. We entered into some rather weighty financial commitments — often suggested, proposed, and organized by the same people who loaned us the money."

"The pressure to pay the debt," Sankara continued, "doesn't come from the isolated usury of a single bank. It's done by an entire, organized system, so

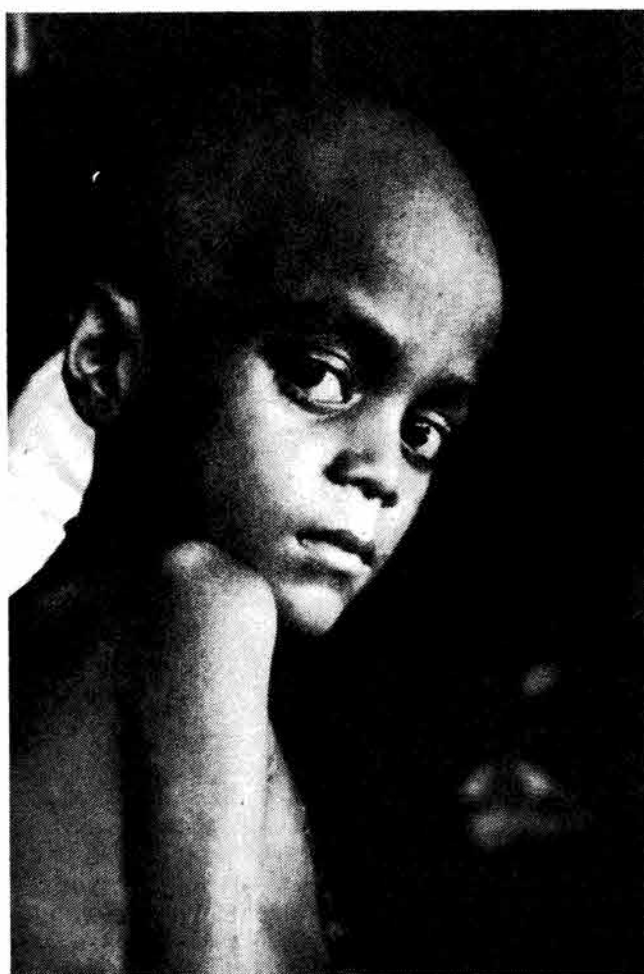
that in the event of nonpayment, they can detain your planes at an airport or refuse to send you spare parts that are absolutely indispensable. So deciding not to pay requires united-front action."

The following year, at the First International Tree and Forest Conference in Paris, Sankara spoke about how concern over the destruction of Burkina Faso's environment was a factor in the CNR's coming to power. He discussed the revolution's commitment to win the battle against the encroachment of the desert.

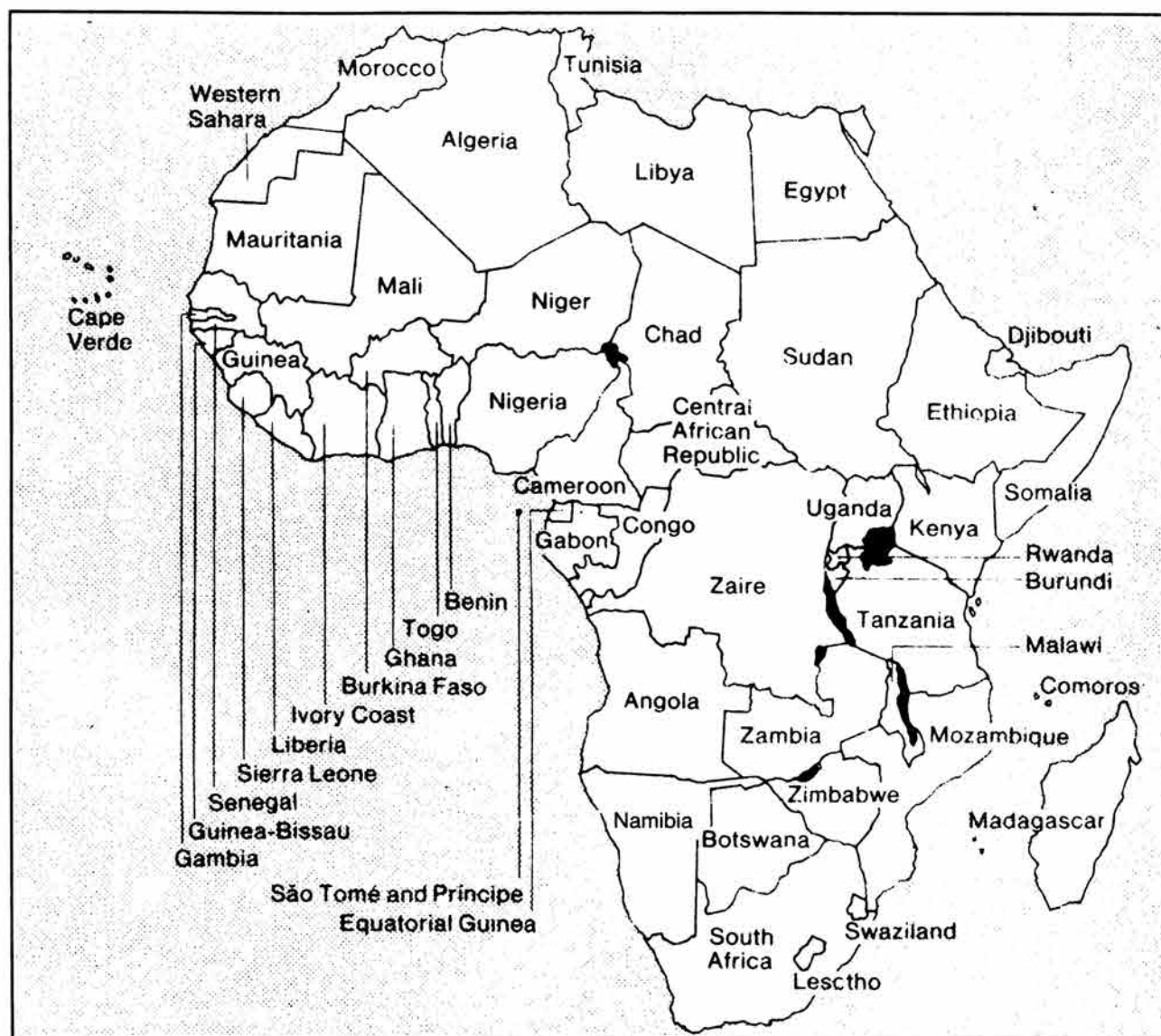
"This is the place," Sankara said, "to denounce the one-sided contracts and draconian conditions imposed by banks and other financial institutions that preclude our projects in this area. These prohibitive conditions bring on traumatizing indebtedness robbing us of all meaningful freedom of action."

"Neither fallacious Malthusian arguments — and I assert that Africa remains an underpopulated continent — nor those vacation resorts pompously and demagogically called 'reforestation operations' provide a solution. . . . That is why Burkina has proposed and continues to propose that at least 1 percent of the colossal sums of money sacrificed to the search for cohabitation with other planets be used by way of compensation to finance the fight to save our trees and life."

The quotes are excerpted from the forthcoming book Thomas Sankara Speaks: The Burkina Faso Revolution, 1983-87, Copyright © 1988, Pathfinder; reprinted by permission of the publisher.



To keep receiving funds from World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and other imperialist banks, some 30 African countries have been forced to institute austerity measures. Result is increased malnutrition, lower school enrollment, cuts in health care, more unemployment.



African peoples confront debt, unequal terms of trade, war

Continued from ISR/1

plan calls for bankers to continue lending money to the most heavily indebted countries only if they adopt austerity measures prescribed by the World Bank and IMF.

These plans are also called structural adjustments, or "market-oriented" and "Western-style" economic reforms, by their backers.

Coming on top of the already severe economic crisis, the austerity measures include currency devaluations; abolition of subsidies on food and other necessities; lower wages, longer hours, and speedup; sharp cuts in spending for health, education, and housing; and cuts in government staffs.

An international conference held in Khartoum, Sudan, in March found that increased malnutrition, ill health, and death; declining school enrollment; and rising unemployment were the result of these "reforms."

Madagascar, an island country of some 11 million people that lies off the coast of Africa in the Indian Ocean, is an example. Per capita income in that country is less than \$300 per year.

Over the past eight years, Madagascar has been forced to negotiate six austerity agreements. According to a report presented to the Khartoum conference, the result has been an increase in the rate of infant mortality and the percentage of severely malnourished children. Most people in the cities have a diet that is worse than the one they had five years ago. This has been accompanied by a serious deterioration in health care, including a steep increase in the price of essential drugs. Housing conditions have deteriorated, and primary school enrollment has fallen.

The response of the imperialist banking institutions has been to defend austerity measures as necessary.

Michel Camdessus, managing director of the IMF, told a mid-July UN meeting on Asian, African, and Latin American economic development held in Oslo, Norway, that the IMF did not have to justify its record of helping Third World countries. A dose of austerity, he said, is part of building more efficient economies.

Barber Conable, president of the World Bank, told the same gathering that alleviating poverty and protecting the environment were the bank's overriding concerns.

A few days before the Oslo meeting, the World Bank issued a study that calls on debtor countries to charge more for health, education, and other services in order to lower government deficits — the main cause of Third World countries' economic problems, according to the bank. Changes in tax structures — such as lowering taxes on dividends — were also urged.

The report stresses the need for Third World countries to reduce the size of governmental spending.

Africa's economic crisis is even worse for countries facing military aggression from South African and U.S.-

backed counterrevolutionaries.

Mozambique, which won independence from Portugal in 1975, has been forced to wage a 14-year war against Renamo, the rightist army backed by South Africa. At least 100,000 people have been killed in the last two years alone. Nearly 2 million have been made refugees inside and outside the country.

Hundreds of schools and health clinics have been destroyed or closed because of the war. Infant mortality is now the highest in the world. The prices of consumer goods have risen 500 percent in the last 18 months alone, and per capita annual income has dropped to \$95. Almost a quarter of Mozambique's 14 million people face starvation or severe malnutrition this year.

Zimbabwe, which also borders South Africa, has committed 12,000 troops at an annual cost of \$300 million to guard transport lines through Mozambique. Other states bordering or near South Africa face similar dislocation of scarce economic resources.

Angola must keep an army of 80,000 in order to battle UNITA, the U.S.- and Pretoria-backed rightist guerrilla organization. Last year alone, UNITA received \$15 million in military aid from Washington.

Environmental destruction is also taking its toll. As in other parts of the Third World, imperialist-sponsored "development" projects in Africa have caused disastrous

overplanting of land and overcutting of forests. This is responsible for the creeping Sahara that is devastating much previously arable cropland in northern Africa.

Senegal, Mali, Chad, and other countries bordering the Sahara desert are threatened with famine, due to the destruction of 20 to 30 percent of this year's food crops by locusts. Forestry projects designed to halt the advance of the Sahara are also being damaged by the locusts. Locust-control efforts have been hampered by the region's overall economic crisis.

In the face of the continent's economic catastrophe, the African trade union conference put forward the proposal that is increasingly being raised by working people throughout the Third World: cancel the debt. "It is suggested," the conference resolution said, "that creditors simply write it off as financial assistance in their profit-and-loss statements. Otherwise, it should be collectively repudiated."

"Any honest examination of Africa's foreign debt reveals that the debt, or at least its great majority, has already been repaid," the resolution stated.

It calls for a front of African debtor nations, to be accompanied by the formation of a front of all debtor nations in the Third World, to fight for canceling the debt. It stresses that the workers and their unions must be involved in solving the debt problem, and appeals for international working-class solidarity in face of the debt.

ACTION PROGRAM AVAILABLE IN PAMPHLET

Pathfinder has just published "An Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis" proposed by the Socialist Workers Party National Committee. With preface by James Warren, SWP candidate for U.S. president. Also includes "The Fight for a Shorter Workweek, Yesterday and Today" by Doug Jenness. Pamphlet will appear soon in Spanish.

ORDER YOUR BUNDLE NOW!

Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014.
\$1 each, with a 50 percent discount on orders of 10 or more. (Free for prisoners.)

Send ☐ 100 ☐ 50 ☐ 10

How many in English?

How many in Spanish?

Enclosed is \$

Name

Address

City

State Zip

Palestinians inside Israel's 'green line'

N.Y. paper describes conditions for Palestinian-Israeli citizens

BY HARRY RING

Last month *New York Newsday* featured a 10-part series on Israel and the Palestinians. Written by staff correspondents, the articles included useful information.

This was particularly true of one article in the series, which described the situation of Palestinians who live inside Israel's pre-1967 borders — the "green line" — and are officially classified as Israeli citizens.

Written by Timothy Phelps of *Newsday's* Middle East Bureau, the article stated:

"After 40 years, the 600,000 Arab citizens of Israel feel themselves to be second-class citizens, not fully trusted and not given the same economic benefits as its 3.6 million Jews.

"Though they were promised equality, ... there is no constitution, no law to turn this goal into reality."

There is, Phelps found, "a tremendous gap" between the living standards of Palestinians and Jews inside the "green line." Forty percent of the Palestinians live in poverty.

How did this come about? Principally, Phelps explains, by driving the Palestinians off their land.

Most Palestinian land was expropriated — without compensation — in the years immediately following the creation of Israel in 1948.

Much of the land belonged to the 550,000 Palestinians who fled or were driven from their homeland by force of arms. (The 550,000 is Phelps' figure. Others are higher.)

The 156,000 Palestinians who remained, Phelps added, also lost much of their land.

He pointed to a study of 18 Arab villages showing that 70 percent of the land owned by the villagers was lost to the Israelis.

In addition, many villages were simply eliminated. Of the 486 Palestinian villages that existed when Israel was founded, only 95 remain today.

Thousands of Palestinians lost their land through an "absent-present" law. This provided for the takeover of land from people who left their homes, even for a few days or weeks, often to seek shelter during the 1948 war between Israel and its Arab neighbors.

Large parcels of land were also taken from Muslim church bodies.

Other land was lost under a Catch-22 "untilled" farmland clause. The Israeli

army, which ruled the Palestinians under martial law until 1966, often denied them access to their land. Their farms were then declared "untilled" and confiscated.

Forced to become wage workers

"With the loss of their land," Phelps wrote, "the Israeli Arabs also lost their independence and traditional livelihood as farmers."

He continued: "Now Arab villages are, as one mayor put it, 'cities on wheels,' with the vast majority of men commuting every day to Israeli factories and construction sites. Others work for Israeli settlements on what was once their own land."

The use of land theft to transform farmers into commuting wage workers has also been applied in much the same way to the Palestinians in the Gaza and West Bank areas that Israel grabbed in 1967.

Inside the "green line," Palestinian towns and villages consistently get the short end of the stick.

The operating budget for Palestinian towns is proportionately one-quarter that of other communities. They get per capita half as much government funding and far less in developmental money.

Phelps cited a recent study, which found, "Most Arab settlements lack a sewage system, decent playgrounds, sports facilities, day-care centers, community centers, schools, psychological services, social workers, dental clinics, industry."

Far more Palestinians than Jews live in overcrowded, substandard housing. Phelps pointed to a study that says Palestinian housing conditions are due to "deliberate government policy" — a policy that denies adequate public housing or mortgage financing to Palestinian "citizens."

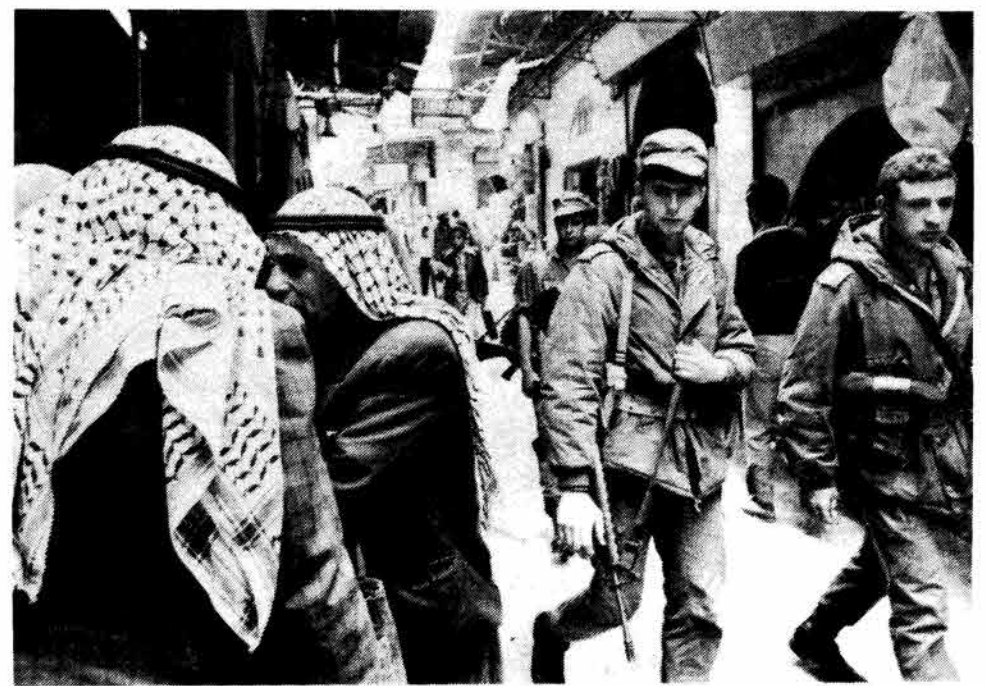
The same study found that the high school dropout rate for Palestinians is nearly 50 percent, mainly because many Palestinian towns and villages have no junior high or high school.

Arab communities have far fewer health facilities than Jewish ones. No new hospital has been built for Palestinians since 1948. One result of the denial of health care is that the Palestinian infant mortality rate is double the Jewish.

Cheated out of social benefits

A special swindle is used to cheat Palestinians of social benefits.

Military service is required for Jews, but



Israeli soldiers on patrol in East Jerusalem. Palestinians who are "Israeli citizens" are discriminated against in housing, employment, health care, and all other aspects of life.

not for Palestinians. "Citizens" though they be, Israel doesn't trust them with guns.

Meanwhile, important government benefits are tied to military service.

Those with military service — and their families — are entitled to cheaper housing and lower mortgage rates. They also qualify for higher government child support where needed. A Jewish family with five children can qualify for \$257 a month. For a comparable Arab family, it's \$135.

A family with military credit is entitled to a subsidized mortgage of \$45,000 as against a maximum \$30,500 for nonmilitary.

An Israeli who has not served in the military is eligible for this if a parent served.

In employment, preferential hiring favors those with military service.

Palestinian city dwellers have been victimized in many ways. Phelps described the city of Jaffa, once the "pride of Palestine." Annexed to Tel Aviv in 1950, Israeli

Jews now outnumber Palestinians in Jaffa three-to-one. Increasingly, the Arab sector is being reduced to a slum.

Tel Aviv officials have frozen construction in sections of the Arab quarter of Jaffa and demolished houses there. The aim is to build luxury housing, housing Palestinians can't afford.

A Tel Aviv official denies any discriminatory intent. "It is the general problem of redevelopment," he philosophized, "when you often move out the poor for the rich."

Phelps recounts a discussion he had with some Palestinian students. He said they all nodded in agreement when one young man declared, "I want all the Palestinian land."

He explained to Phelps that there is no difference between Israeli and West Bank Palestinians.

"We are all one people," the youth declared. "There is no difference. The State of Israel creates the difference. I am a citizen in name only. It was forced on me."

Banquet raises funds to open London Pathfinder bookstore

BY AILEAN O'CALLAGHAN

NOTTINGHAM, England — A big step forward was taken in the campaign to open a Pathfinder bookstore in London when workers in the East Midlands area gathered here last month for a fund-raising banquet. More than £440 (\$750) was contributed at the event. More than £1,000 has been raised so far from Nottingham-area supporters of the bookstore project.

Some 100 miners, engineers, rail workers, and garment workers ate a fine meal in a hall festooned with pictures of Che Guevara, Fidel Castro, Maurice Bishop, Thomas Sankara, and Nelson Mandela. Posters from revolutionary struggles in Nicaragua, Ireland, Burkina Faso, and other places also lined the walls.

National coordinator of the Pathfinder

Bookshop Fund, longtime communist fighter Connie Harris, explained the importance of the opening of a bookstore dedicated to getting out the truth about revolutionary struggles. She pointed to the international impact of the publication and distribution of *Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution*, a book put out by Pathfinder/Pacific and Asia.

Her theme that books are an indispensable weapon for working people was amplified by Panduleni Itula of the South West Africa People's Organisation, and by Howard Smith of the African National Congress of South Africa.

The final event of the evening was singing by the Staffordshire Women Against Pit Closures.

Miami protests slam Savimbi's visit

BY PAT HUNT

MIAMI — Some 300 people marched through downtown here June 25 in a Freedom Day Parade. The march commemorated the 1976 uprising against the South African apartheid regime by Black youth in Soweto; the declaration of June 25 as Nelson Mandela Day by the United Nations; and the anniversary of the Freedom Charter, the program of the democratic movement in South Africa.

The march and rally came on the heels of a visit to this city by Jonas Savimbi, head of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA). Savimbi's group is backed by the U.S. and South African governments, and is attempting to overthrow the majority-sup-

ported government of Angola.

Savimbi had come to the United States to appeal for more aid from Congress. UNITA has received \$30 million from Washington over the last two years.

The streets rang with spirited chants of "Free Mandela, jail Savimbi" and "Hey, hey, ho, ho, apartheid has got to go." The large number of Haitian participants in the march linked their struggle with the fight against apartheid. They chanted, "Haiti must be free, South Africa must be free."

On the evening before the march 30 people formed a picket line outside a local hotel where Savimbi was to speak. The protest was reported by several papers and local television stations.

Subscribe to 'Perspectiva Mundial'

Action Program to meet economic crisis

As a reader of the *Militant* you are familiar with our weekly coverage of the struggles of working people around the world.

If you can read or are studying Spanish, there is a complementary monthly magazine for you: *Perspectiva Mundial*. PM is a Spanish-language socialist magazine that carries many of the same articles you read in the *Militant*.

The July/August issue of PM features an "Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis." This document, adopted by the Socialist Workers Party National Committee, takes up the political consequences for working people of the October 1987 stock market crash.

Also featured, is an interview with Rafael "Fafa" Taveras, president of the Anti-Imperialist Organizations of the Caribbean and Central America and general secretary of the Socialist Bloc of the Dominican Republic.



Subscriptions: Introductory offer, \$3 for six months. \$9 for one year.

☐ Begin my sub with current issue.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Clip and mail to PM, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Australian inquiry probes deaths of Aboriginal youths

BY MEGAN MARTIN

SYDNEY, Australia — On June 19 an Aboriginal youth in custody at the Magill Youth Training Centre in Adelaide, South Australia, was found hanging in his room.

His death brings to 107 the number of cases before a government commission investigating the deaths of Aborigines in police and prison custody.

Justice James Muirhead, who heads the inquiry, said that on a comparative basis, the number of Aborigines who have died in custody since 1980 would be equivalent to 7,000 non-Aborigines. The actual number of non-Aboriginal deaths in custody during that period was 400.

The Royal Commission into Aboriginal deaths in custody was formed in 1986, as the government prepared to celebrate 200 years of white settlement. In the first eight months of 1987, Aboriginal deaths in custody were being reported at the rate of one every 14 days.

There are 160,000 Aboriginal Australians, with a history going back thousands of years. Since the arrival of the Europeans, the Aborigines have been the victims of extreme racial discrimination and oppression. In the past several years, their fight against racism has been gaining ground.

Death of John Pat

Aborigines have been campaigning for a government inquiry since the 1982 death of John Pat. The 16-year-old died from injuries suffered in a fight with five off-duty policemen in Roebourne, in a remote region of Western Australia.

Roebourne is an iron-ore mining town. The center of its social life is the Victoria Hotel, with two bars, traditionally segregated by race.

Police are almost constantly present in and around the Aboriginal bar. Yearly arrests of Aborigines for public drunkenness have approached 7,000 — nearly three arrests for every Aboriginal man, woman, and child in the town. By contrast, almost no arrests take place at the white bar despite periodic fights involving flying beer jugs, tables, and chairs.

On the night of Sept. 23, 1982, John Pat found himself in a fight outside the hotel with four policemen and an Aboriginal police aide. The fight developed into a general melee. According to witnesses, Pat was struck in the face by a policeman and his head hit hard on the roadway. He was then kicked in the head, dragged to a police van, kicked again, and thrown in. Along with three other Aborigines, Pat was taken to the police station where they were systematically beaten as they were taken from the van. One said his head was slammed repeatedly on the concrete until he passed out. Another was hospitalized a week for his injuries.

Pat was unable to give an account. He

was taken to the lockup and a little more than an hour later was dead.

An autopsy revealed a fractured skull, hemorrhage and swelling, brain damage, two broken ribs, and a torn aorta, the major blood vessel leading from the heart.

In February 1986 the five policemen were tried for manslaughter. An all-white jury found them not guilty.

Committee to Defend Black Rights

That sparked the formation of the Committee to Defend Black Rights. It soon began to take up the cases of other Aboriginal deaths in custody and to lobby for government action on the issue.

In 1986 the committee organized a national speaking tour that included relatives of victims.

There were also rallies and pickets to back the demand for a Royal Commission of inquiry into Black deaths in custody. These protests broke through the silence that had surrounded the issue.

Since its formation the Royal Commission has heard three cases, with one reopened to hear new evidence.

The death toll is now accepted as 107, and the commission has extended the deadline for its probe until the end of 1989.

One of the cases heard is that of Eddie Murray, 21, who was found hanging in a police cell in the town of Wee Waa in June 1981. Arrested on a charge of drunkenness, Murray was found less than an hour later hanging in his cell. The police claimed it was suicide.

Murray's family did not accept this. At a coroner's inquest, police had testified Murray was so drunk he "couldn't even scratch himself." Yet, according to these same police, he tore a strip off a prison blanket, threaded it through the ventilation window, tied two knots to fashion a noose, and hung himself.

The coroner returned an "open verdict": death at the hands of a person or persons unknown.

The Royal Commission also inquired into Murray's death. In a submission to the commission, the Committee to Defend Black Rights declared Murray was "either murdered or the victim of manslaughter."

Two other cases have been heard by the commission. One involved the prison death of an epileptic, with the strong suspicion that he was the victim of medical neglect.

'Suicide' of Kingsley Dixon

The other was the case of Kingsley Dixon who was found hanging in an Adelaide jail cell in July 1987. He was buried on his 20th birthday. The police claimed he committed suicide. His family's lawyer argued before the Royal Commission that he had been hanged by prison officials.

The hearing was marked by charges of



March in Sydney earlier this year to protest cop killings of Aborigines

intimidation of witnesses. Aboriginal prisoners went on strike, declaring they had been threatened with loss of privileges if they gave evidence in the inquiry into Dixon's death.

The hearing concluded in May and the final summations made when a man just released from prison came forward with new evidence. The case will be reopened.

Some Aboriginal organizations and families of victims have voiced concern that unless the issue of protection of wit-

nesses is adequately dealt with by the Royal Commission, its work will prove a whitewash.

Helen Corbett, chairperson of the Committee to Defend Black Rights, has said, "We fought for this Royal Commission. Now we are fighting to make it effective."

A judgement in the case of Eddie Murray is expected in the next weeks. Seven years after the death of their son, Arthur and Leila Murray are still waiting for justice.

—WORLD NEWS BRIEFS—

Mandela to get family visit on 70th birthday

The apartheid regime in South Africa has said that it will allow Nelson Mandela's family to see him for a six-hour visit on his 70th birthday. Mandela, a central leader of the African National Congress of South Africa, has been held in prison for 26 years. Support has continued to grow around the world demanding Mandela's release.

Pretoria has agreed that Mandela's entire family will be permitted to visit him from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on his birthday, July 18. Mandela has never been permitted a visit of this length with his wife, Winnie Mandela, since his imprisonment in 1962. They were granted their first contact (allowed to touch) visit in 1979. Mandela has never had the whole family with him at one time.

Mandela is allowed 30 visits each year from two people at a time — usually immediate family members. Pretoria officials have said the July 18 visit will not be counted as part of Mandela's annual quota.

Panama gov't gains growing recognition

In recent weeks, the governments of Japan, West Germany, Canada, Costa Rica, Colombia, and Argentina, among others, have instructed their ambassadors to Panama to resume official contacts with the Panamanian government. The moves by these governments represent another blow to Washington's efforts to isolate and bring down the Panamanian government.

Several of these countries recalled their ambassadors and threatened to break relations with Panama after that country's National Assembly dismissed then president Eric Arturo Delvalle. Some countries, including Argentina, had officially announced at the time that they would follow Washington in continuing to recognize Delvalle as president.

But Delvalle canceled a planned trip to Central America at the end of June because no country in the region would receive him as an acting head of state. Delvalle was removed as president after he attempted to dismiss Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega as chief of the Panama Defense Forces. Noriega has been the

central target of the Reagan administration's campaign against Panama.

On February 5 two U.S. grand juries handed down indictments of several Panamanian government officials, including Noriega, for drug trafficking.

Panamanian government leaders have explained they have been targeted by Washington because Panama has refused to back U.S. efforts to overthrow the government of Nicaragua. They have also said that Washington is attempting to torpedo agreements that would put the Panama Canal under Panamanian control at the end of 1999.

Sankara's wife, former minister leave Burkina

Mariam Sankara — wife of the slain revolutionary and president of Burkina Faso, Thomas Sankara — has been given permission to leave the country. Sankara and her two sons Auguste and Philippe departed for Gabon on June 21.

President Sankara and 12 of his aides were killed during an Oct. 15, 1987, military coup carried out by soldiers loyal to then minister of state and justice Capt. Blaise Compaoré. The Sankara-led government came to power through a popular democratic revolution and enjoyed widespread support within the population.

Since last year's coup, the Sankara family has been the target of slander, surveillance, and searches of its home and office. In February immigration authorities issued orders prohibiting the Sankara family from leaving the country.

But Mariam Sankara had refused to leave the country until the body of her husband and those killed along with him were given a decent burial. They had been dumped in a shallow and unkept grave following the coup. On May 18 military engineers completed a white-washed concrete memorial stone covering the graves of Sankara and his comrades-in-arms.

Authorities in Ouagadougou, the capital, have also said that Valère Somé, former minister of higher education in Sankara's government, left the country secretly at the beginning of June. Somé was among more than a dozen former officials and military officers in the Sankara government who were arrested last December, interrogated, and reportedly beaten.

Detroit unionists back farm workers

BY KATHIE FITZGERALD

DETROIT — Over the last few months, scores of Detroit unionists have come to the aid of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) in its efforts to organize farm workers in Michigan and Ohio. Through the "Labor Solidarity and Union Hall Project," supporters in Detroit have arranged for FLOC President Baldemar Velasquez and other FLOC leaders to speak to union membership meetings throughout the city.

The project, initiated by the Michigan Farmworker Ministry Coalition, aims to educate other unionists about the fight

being waged by farm workers. It is also attempting to collect material aid to enable FLOC to open a union hall in Michigan.

With the winning of a contract with Vlasic Pickles and its growers last year, FLOC has extended its membership from Ohio into Michigan.

The solidarity project was kicked off in the early spring with a rally sponsored by the Farmworker Ministry Coalition and the Detroit chapter of the National Lawyers Guild. Held at the headquarters of United Auto Workers Local 600 and chaired by Local 600's President Bob King, the event drew 200 people, including area union officials and members.

At every union meeting Velasquez and the other FLOC leaders addressed they got an enthusiastic response. More than \$5,000 has been raised for the project and FLOC's organizing work in Michigan is now under way.

Labor news in the Militant

The *Militant* stays on top of the most important developments in the labor movement. You won't miss them if you subscribe. See the ad on page 2 for subscription rates.

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Behind the Killing of 290 on Iranian Airliner: Why U.S. Should Get Out of Persian Gulf. Speakers to be announced. Translation to Spanish. Sat., July 23, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W Pico Blvd. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (213) 380-9460.

FLORIDA

Miami

U.S. Government Cover-Up on Iran Airliner Unravels: U.S. Out of the Persian Gulf! Speaker: Tony Thomas, member of Transportation Workers Union Local 291. Translation to Spanish. Sat., July 16, 7:30 p.m. 137 NE 54th St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (305) 756-1020.

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Celebrate Nine Years of the Nicaraguan Revolution — The Current Stage of the Nicaraguan Revolution. A panel discussion. Translation to Spanish. Sat., July 23, 6 p.m. 6826 S Stony Island Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (312) 363-7322 or 363-7136.

The Cuban Revolution Today. Speakers: Omari Musa, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Chicago, recently returned from Cuba; Debra Evenson, professor, DePaul University Law School, national president of National Lawyers Guild. Translation to Spanish. Sat., July 30, 6 p.m. 6826 S Stony Island Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (312) 363-7322 or 363-7136.

MARYLAND

Baltimore

Celebration of the Cuban Revolution. Sat., July 23. Class 1. "The Legacy of Che Guevara." 1 p.m. Class 2. "The Rectification Campaign in Cuba." 3:30 p.m. Cuban-style dinner at 6 p.m. Celebration of the Cuban Revolution. Speaker: Omari Musa, National Committee Socialist Workers Party, SWP candidate for mayor of Chicago, recently visited Cuba. 7:30 p.m. All events at 2913 Greenmount Ave. Donation: \$2 for each class and forum. Dinner \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (301) 235-0013.

MASSACHUSETTS

Cambridge

Celebrate July 26th: 35th Anniversary of the Birth of the Cuban Revolution. Speakers: Mary-Alice Waters, editor of the *New Internationalist*; others to be announced. Translation to Spanish. Music by Flor de Caña. Tue., July 26, 7 p.m. Old Cambridge Baptist Church, 1151 Massachusetts Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: July 26 Event Committee. For more information call Casa (617) 492-8699 or Nica 497-7142

MICHIGAN

Detroit

Learning About Socialism. A three-part series held on Saturdays at 12:30 p.m. Class 1. "The Coming Revolution in South Africa," July 16. Class 2. "The Fight for Black Liberation," July 23. Class 3. "The Palestinian Struggle Today," July 30. All classes translated to Spanish and held at 5019 1/2 Woodward Ave. Sponsor:

This publication is available in microform from University Microfilms International.

Call toll-free 800-521-3044. Or mail inquiry to: University Microfilms International, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

Young Socialist Alliance. For more information call (313) 961-0395.

Cuba: an Eyewitness Account. Speaker: Joan Campana, Revolutionary Workers League of Canada, participated in Cuban minibrigade. Translation to Spanish. Sat., July 23. Cuban dinner, 6 p.m.; forum, 7:30 p.m. 5019 1/2 Woodward Ave. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (313) 961-0395.

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis

Nicaragua Lives! Celebrate nine years of the Nicaraguan revolution. Dance to "Salsa Blanca." Sat., July 23, 8-12 p.m. Holy Rosary Church Hall, 2424 18th Ave. S. Donation: \$5. Benefit for Pledge of Resistance, Stop the Lies Campaign, Nicaragua Solidarity Committee, Oats for Peace. For more information call (612) 644-8050.

St. Paul

The End of the Contra War: Building the New Nicaragua. Speaker: Ramona Olson, Socialist Workers Party, recent brigade worker in Nicaragua. Sat., July 16, 7:30 p.m. 508 N Snelling Ave. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

Che's Cuba Lives On. Speaker: Tom Jaax, Socialist Workers Party. Video of Guevara participating in volunteer youth work brigades. Sat., July 23, 6 p.m. 508 N Snelling Ave. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

The Drug Trade: Who Profits and How to End It. Speakers: Chris Nisan, Marketplace Forum; Eric Mahmoud, Black People Against Drugs; Mark Burrows, Socialist Workers Party, member United Auto Workers. Sat., July 30, 7:30 p.m. 508 N Snelling Ave. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

Pathfinder Bookstore Sale. Celebrate July 19 Nicaraguan revolution and Cuba's July 26 with our July sale. 10% off books and pamphlets on revolutions in Cuba and Central America. Hours: 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Mon. through Fri.; 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Sat. 508 N. Snelling Ave. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

NEBRASKA

Omaha

The Class Struggle Today in Nicaragua: An Eyewitness Report. Speaker: Scott Dombeck, Young Socialist Alliance. Sat., July 23, 7:30 p.m. 140 S 40th St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (402) 553-0245.

Art and Revolution: the Pathfinder Mural Project. Speakers to be announced. Sat., July 30, 7:30 p.m. S. 40th St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (402) 553-0245.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Day of Happiness. Honor visiting brigade members from Nicaragua's AIDS Education Project. Sat., July 16, 8 p.m. Goddard Riverside Community Center, 593 Columbus Ave. (88th St.). Donation requested to support brigadistas' U.S. tour. Sponsor: Casa Nicaragua. For more information call (212) 928-3106.

An Evening in Solidarity with Nicaragua, Cuba, and Puerto Rico. Speakers: Dr. Oscar Oramas Oliva, Cuban ambassador to the United Nations; Julio Icaza, Nicaraguan ambassador and permanent representative to the UN; Jorge Farinacci, Puerto Rico/Hartford 15 defendant; cultural presentation, Sandra Roldán, cantante de la Nueva Canción. Fri., July 22, 7-10 p.m. Casa de las Americas, 104 W 14 St. Sponsor: Puerto Rican Committee Against Repression.

For more information call (212) 927-9065.

Latin American Video Festival. Selection of recent videos on Latin American politics and culture. Fri., July 22, 7 p.m. Goddard Riverside Community Center, 593 Columbus Ave. (corner of 88 St., basement). Donation: \$5. Sponsor: Casa Nicaragua. For more information call (212) 769-4293.

Grand Celebration Party Honoring Ninth Anniversary of Nicaraguan Revolution. Featuring "Son Primero" live with Charlie Santiago; also a Nicaraguan DJ. Sat., July 23, 9 p.m. to 3 a.m. Local 1199, 310 W 43rd St. (between 8th and 9th avenues). Donation: \$10. Sponsor: Casa Nicaragua. For more information call (212) 769-4293.

NORTH CAROLINA

Greensboro

A Program for International Solidarity in the Face of the World Capitalist Economic Crisis. Speaker: Jane Roland. Sun., July 17, 7 p.m. 2219 E Market. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (919) 272-5996.

TEXAS

Houston

An Informal Educational Series. Political discussions on Nicaragua, Cuba, South Africa, the stock market crash, women's liberation, Malcolm X. Classes every Monday at 6:30 p.m. through July 25. 4806 Alameda. Sponsor: Young Socialist Alliance. For more information call (713) 522-8054.

March for Mandela. Sat., July 16, 10 a.m. at Memorial Park. Sponsor: City of Houston Anti-apartheid Team. For more information call (713) 523-5937.

WASHINGTON

Seattle

Protest Attack on Gay Rights: Victim of Discrimination Speaks Out. Speaker: Staff Sgt. Perry Watkins. Translation to Spanish. Sat., July 16, 7:30 p.m. 5517 Rainier Ave. S. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (206) 723-5330.

Socialist Workers Nominating Convention. Sat., July 23, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Seattle Center, Mercer St. entrance. Sponsor: Washington State Socialist Workers Campaign. For more information call (206) 723-5330.

LONDON

New International Forum

The Iran Airbus Massacre

Fri. July 22, 7:30 p.m.

Waterloo Action Center

Bayliss Rd. Waterloo,

London SE1

Donation 50p

WASHINGTON, D.C.

An Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis. Speakers: Gail Skidmore, Socialist Workers Party candidate for member at-large, Washington, D.C., City Council. Translation to Spanish. Sat., July 16. Dinner, 6 p.m.; program 7:30 p.m. 3165 Mt. Pleasant NW. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Socialist Workers '88 Campaign Committee. For more information call (202) 797-7699.

Celebration of the Cuban Revolution. Speaker: Omari Musa, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Chicago, recently returned from Cuba. Sun., July 24. Dinner, 6 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 3165 Mt. Pleasant NW. Donation: dinner, \$3; program, \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (202) 797-7699.

WEST VIRGINIA

Charleston

Nicaragua: The End of the Contra War. An eyewitness account. Speaker: Matt Munro, Young Socialist Alliance, recently returned from Nicaragua. Fri., July 15, 7 p.m. 116 McFarland St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (304) 345-3040.

Cuba: Our Power Is the Power of the Working People. The Cuban Revolution Today. Speaker: Mary Imo, Socialist Workers Party, member International Association of Machinists Lodge 598. Sat., July 23, 7 p.m. 116 McFarland St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (304) 345-3040.

Peace coalition appeal for funds

On June 11 tens of thousands of people participated in a demonstration in New York called in support of the United Nations Third Special Session on Disarmament. The action drew larger numbers than many had predicted and was a reflection of the tremendous political growth of our movement.

Without lessening the call for complete nuclear disarmament, this protest also demanded an end to military intervention and new commitments for economic development and social justice. In the midst of a presidential election year, it was no small feat to assemble such a massive turnout and maintain the political perspective of linking these issues.

In organizing this successful demonstration, the national coalition that sponsored the action was not

able to rely on financial support from most of the liberal funders who have often helped the anti-intervention and disarmament movement. As a result, the coalition is in debt — a situation that potentially jeopardizes the ability to again organize such mass mobilizations.

Now, as a grassroots movement, the national coalition urges people around the country who understand the need to link issues and the value of mass public protest to help retire this debt. Show your support for the June 11 action and help make it possible to march in large numbers again in the future.

Please make checks payable to: SSD-III Coalition, and send to % Mobilization for Survival, 853 Broadway, Room 418, New York, N.Y. 10001 (attention Leslie Cagan).

IF YOU LIKE THIS PAPER, LOOK US UP

Where to find the Socialist Workers Party, Young Socialist Alliance, and Pathfinder bookstores.

ALABAMA: Birmingham: SWP, YSA, 1306 1st Ave. N. Mailing address: P.O. Box 11963. Zip: 35202. Tel: (205) 323-3079.

ARIZONA: Phoenix: SWP, YSA, 1809 W. Indian School Rd. Zip: 85015. Tel: (602) 279-5850. **Tucson:** YSA, c/o Ursula Kolb, P.O. Box 853. Zip: 85702-0852. Tel: (602) 795-2146.

CALIFORNIA: Los Angeles: SWP, YSA, 2546 W. Pico Blvd. Zip: 90006. Tel: (213) 380-9460. **Oakland:** SWP, YSA, 3702 Telegraph Ave. Zip: 94609. Tel: (415) 420-1165. **San Francisco:** SWP, YSA, 3284 23rd St. Zip: 94110. Tel: (415) 282-6255. **Seaside:** YSA, c/o Brian Olewude, 1790 Havana St. Zip: 93955. Tel: (408) 394-7948.

FLORIDA: Miami: SWP, YSA, 137 NE 54th St. Mailing address: P.O. Box 370486. Zip: 33137. Tel: (305) 756-1020. **Tallahassee:** YSA, P.O. Box 20715. Zip: 32316. Tel: (904) 877-9338.

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

ILLINOIS: Chicago: SWP, YSA, 6826 S. Stony Island Ave. Zip: 60649. Tel: (312) 363-7322.

INDIANA: Muncie: YSA, c/o Brian Johnson, 619 1/2 N. Dill St. Zip: 47303. Tel: (317) 747-8543.

IOWA: Des Moines: SWP, YSA, 2105 Forest Ave. Zip: 50311. Tel: (515) 246-1695.

LOUISIANA: New Orleans: YSA, P.O. Box 53224. Zip: 70153. Tel: (504) 484-6418.

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

MASSACHUSETTS: Amherst: YSA, c/o David Warshawshky, P.O. Box 1383, Hampshire College. Zip: 01002. Tel: (413) 549-4843. **Boston:** SWP, YSA, 605 Massachusetts Ave. Zip: 02118. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

MICHIGAN: Detroit: SWP, YSA, 5019 1/2 Woodward Ave. Zip: 48202. Tel: (313) 831-1177.

MINNESOTA: Austin: SWP, YSA, 407 1/2 N. Main. Zip: 55912. Tel: (507) 433-3461. **Twin Cities:** SWP, YSA, 508 N. Snelling Ave., St. Paul. Zip: 55104. Tel: (612) 644-6325.

MISSOURI: Kansas City: SWP, YSA, 4725 Troost. Zip: 64110. Tel: (816) 753-0224.

St. Louis: SWP, YSA, 4907 Martin Luther King Dr. Zip: 63113. Tel: (314) 361-0250.

NEBRASKA: Omaha: SWP, YSA, 140 S. 40th St. Zip: 68131. Tel: (402) 553-0245.

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

New Brunswick: YSA, c/o Keith Jordan, 149 Somerset St. Zip: 08903. Tel: (201) 828-1874.

NEW YORK: Albany: YSA, c/o Lisa Sandberg, 120 Lark St. Zip: 12210. Tel: (518) 463-8001. **Mid-Hudson:** YSA, Box 1042, Annandale. Zip: 12504. Tel: (914) 758-0408. **New York:** SWP, YSA, 79 Leonard St. Zip: 10013. Tel: (212) 219-3679 or 925-1668. Pathfinder Books, 226-8445. **Stony Brook:** YSA, P.O. Box 1384, Patchogue, N.Y. Zip: 11772.

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

OHIO: Cleveland: SWP, YSA, 2521 Market Ave. Zip: 44113. Tel: (216) 861-6150.

Columbus: YSA, P.O. Box 02097. Zip: 43202.

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

PENNSYLVANIA: Edinboro: YSA, c/o

Mark Mateja, Edinboro University of Pa. Zip: 16412. Tel: (814) 398-2754. **Philadelphia:** SWP, YSA, 2744 Germantown Ave. Zip: 19133. Tel: (215) 225-0213. **Pittsburgh:** SWP, YSA, 4905 Penn Ave. Zip: 15224. Tel: (412) 362-6767.

TEXAS: Austin: YSA, c/o Mike Rose, 7409 Berkman Dr. Zip: 78752. Tel: (512) 452-3923. **Houston:** SWP, YSA, 4806 Alameda. Zip: 77004. Tel: (713) 522-8054.

UTAH: Price: SWP, YSA, 255 E. Main St., No. 1. Mailing address: P.O. Box 758. Zip: 84501. Tel: (801) 637-6294. **Salt Lake City:** SWP, YSA, 147 E. 900 South. Zip: 84111. Tel: (801) 355-1124.

WASHINGTON, D.C.: SWP, YSA, 3165 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.

Drought? No sweat — A Wall Street analyst assures that the drought isn't likely to affect the profits of the food trust. The big fellas, he explains, have enough monopoly control of the market to

farm, and industrial waste continues to pour into the nation's rivers and streams even as the waterways shrivel from drought, increasing the danger of contaminated water across the country."

no fish can survive, and, in another 19 percent, marine life is "endangered." How to explain the numbers gap? The federal survey excluded lakes under 10 acres, which are more susceptible to acid rain.

who had to borrow vacation money.

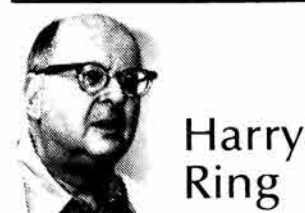
Never occurred to us — The U.S. Army is getting flack for awarding an ad campaign to Young & Rubicam. It seems the ad agency retained Col. Robert Phillips, ex-chief of the Army Recruiting Command, to help grease the way for the \$100-million contract. The Pentagon cleared the colonel, while conceding, "An uninformed person might perceive a conflict of interest."

Try a tea strainer — New York officials warned there is a harmful level of lead in the city's drinking water. It can damage the nervous system, kidneys, red blood cells, and brain. The problem, they say, is the lead pipes used by landlords in service con-

nections. What can you do? For \$25, you can have a sample of your tap water tested.

Double squeeze — Tropicana is suing Minute Maid for falsely touting its "premium choice" OJ as "100 percent Florida orange juice straight from the orange." The suit is based on a ruling won by Minute Maid when it sued Tropicana on the same grounds.

Well bust my belly button — Those concerned with standards will be gratified to know that despite the heat our better restaurants are standing firm on dress codes. "If we do not require a jacket and a tie," warned the owner of New York's Le Bernardin, "everyone will come with the shirt open to the stomach."



Harry Ring

pass on any added costs. Plus, "A key with packaged food is that the package costs more than the food."

Our rational society — "WASHINGTON (AP) — City,

The ugly expert — "An enormous number of medical consequences may accompany a poor appearance, and it would benefit physicians to look upon ugliness not as a cosmetic issue, but as a disease." — Dr. Arthur Balin, Rockefeller University expert on cosmetic surgery.

Liars can still figure — A recent federal study showed that 10 percent of the lakes in New York's Adirondacks were acidified. Now a state study finds that 25 percent are so saturated with acid rain that

Sounds like the USA — In Britain, meat from cattle infected with a fatal brain disease is being peddled in butcher shops and supermarkets. Scientists warned the Ministry of Agriculture it could be dangerous, but a spokesman responded that there was no firm evidence of a health hazard.

He had credit? — A panel found that New York State officials, particularly judges, are underpaid. The ex-judge who headed the panel pointed to a colleague, scraping by on \$100,000 a year,

Mexican elections reveal depth of economic crisis

Continued from front page

July 2 murder of Francisco Javier Ovando, Cárdenas' campaign manager. Ovando was in charge of the NDF's efforts to prevent Cárdenas from being victimized by election fraud.

The police and justice departments said they had no clues to the identity of the killer or killers.

Whatever the final tally, the election marks a massive setback for the PRI. The party has never been accorded less than 70 percent of the vote in a presidential election, which are held every six years. The PRI has unfailingly carried every state for its presidential candidate, and has won every election for governor and senator since 1929.

For the last 50 years, the party has won a

consensus of support from the country's ruling industrial, agribusiness, and banking capitalists along with the endorsement of the official PRI-backed unions and peasant organizations.

The party's appeal has been reinforced by its claim to represent the conquests and traditions of the Mexican revolution that began in 1910. This upheaval broke the domination of the landed aristocracy and the church, and won greater independence for Mexico from the United States and other imperialist powers.

The PRI's hold has been weakened by the devastating economic crisis that took hold in the 1980s, ending a period of economic growth that had lasted four decades.

At the heart of the current crisis is Mexico's foreign debt to banks and finan-

cial institutions in New York, Paris, London, Tokyo, and elsewhere. The debt stood at \$103.9 billion at the end of the year, second only to Brazil's in Latin America. The year 1987 ended with the announcement that 54 percent of this year's national budget would be devoted to payments on the debt.

The government's efforts to stay in the good graces of the bankers have taken a devastating toll on workers and farmers.

Since 1982, official unemployment figures have soared from 4 percent to more than 17 percent. Wages have dropped more than 50 percent — from an average of about \$5.50 per day in 1982 to about \$2.50 today. Average purchasing power is only 57 percent of what it was in 1982.

The economic depression was accompanied by runaway inflation, reaching 150 percent in 1987.

In an effort to put a cap on inflation and maintain the ability of Mexico's government, industrialists, and bankers to get new loans, President Miguel de la Madrid announced the "Economic Solidarity Pact." It has included a freeze on wages and some prices, sharp hikes in other prices, tax increases, and cuts in public services. The rate of inflation has fallen to 2 percent a month, but wages and living standards have continued to fall.

As minister of budget and planning, Salinas had overseen the austerity, debt repayment, and anti-inflation policies. His resulting unpopularity was reflected in resistance to his nomination from within the PRI.

As the crisis deepened, electoral opposition to the PRI increased. The right-wing National Action Party began making electoral gains. The PAN is based on Mexican capitalists who favor closer ties with the U.S. government and big business.

Another reflection of the polarization was Cárdenas' break with the PRI and entry into the race. He is the son of the late Lázaro Cárdenas, who served as president from 1934 to 1940. As president, Lázaro Cárdenas carried out a substantial redistribution of land and nationalized the British- and U.S.-owned oil operations.

Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, a former governor of the state of Michoacan, left the PRI last year when it refused to hold primaries to nominate its presidential candidate.

He has called for a moratorium on payments on the foreign debt.

Heberto Castillo, the candidate of the Mexican Socialist Party, withdrew in June in favor of Cárdenas. The Mexican Socialist Party is a regroupment of several left groups, including the Communist Party, which dissolved in 1981.

Gas leak on North Sea oil rig reported days before 166 died

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON — A violent explosion tore apart the Piper Alpha oil platform in the North Sea off the coast of Scotland on July 6. Of the 232 workers on the rig at the time, 166 were killed. Many survivors were severely burned.

The rig is owned by Occidental Petroleum — a U.S.-based company.

As survivors have started to tell their story, it has been revealed that leaking gas was reported on the Piper Alpha 48 hours before the explosion and that welders had refused to do a job one hour before the tragedy struck because of the fumes in the area where they were working.

Electrician Bob Ballantine told the press, "I was working on the utilities module, which is situated right next to the gas condenser module. . . . The company safety officers confirmed that there was a leak but advised that the work could continue. . . ."

Supervisors ignored complaints from a group of workers about headaches they were getting while working in the affected area. Instead they told the group to carry on.

"I can't stress enough," Ballantine said, "how totally unprepared we were for such a disaster. It's drummed into us that the heli-deck is the main form of escape, but the first explosion buckled the doors leading to our muster point in the canteen from where we would have gone up to the heli-deck. . . . we were cocooned in the living quarters."

Jack Donaldson, who worked for the company for seven years as their "loss prevention manager," said the Piper Alpha had a long history of safety lapses.

"The rig's gas flare also created serious problems," said Donaldson. "It would flare back to the north base of the accommodation blocks and crack the surfaces of the lifeboats. Some of the lifeboats had to have water sprayed on them constantly to maintain them for us. The platform accommodated so many people that it was difficult for safety procedures to be carried out."

Safety on oil platforms is supposedly monitored by a branch of the Department

of Energy — the Petroleum Engineering Directorate (PED). The PED enables companies to get around even the modest independent safety scrutiny standards required by law for factories, agriculture, construction sites, mines, and nuclear installations. Eight PED inspectors are responsible for 123 North Sea installations.

"It is outrageous," the London *Observer* wrote in a July 10 editorial, "that the safety of the men on Piper Alpha — and the tens of thousands of others still perched on potentially explosive structures suspended between the sky and the deep cold sea — should be in the hands of the same Ministry that is charged with seeing that North Sea oil is exploited as rapidly and profitably as possible."

The Piper Alpha was given a clean bill of health by a PED inspector a week before the disaster.

In many of the offshore firms, the workers are not allowed to elect safety representatives. Two years ago, following a strike, management on the Piper Alpha dissolved a joint union-management safety committee.

A previous explosion and fire on the same rig four years ago was hushed up, and the results of an inquiry into the accident were never made public.

One hundred and fifty engineering workers employed on three British Petroleum rigs weren't prepared to wait for an inquiry into the most recent disaster. Fearing for their own safety, they resigned their jobs and were flown ashore. The union's full-time official explained, "They have said to hell with it, our lives are more important than our jobs, and the companies may have to take more notice of safety now."

Many offshore oil rig workers have not had a pay raise since 1980. Others have had their wages cut. Still others have had their shift schedules and working conditions unilaterally undermined by profit-thirsty employers.

Bill Loxton in Aberdeen, Scotland, also contributed to this article.

—10 AND 25 YEARS AGO—

THE MILITANT
A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE
July 21, 1978

WASHINGTON — First they gathered by the hundreds, then by the thousands, and soon tens of thousands of marchers, most dressed in white to commemorate the suffrage movement, stretched up and down the Mall, with their purple-gold-and-white banners fluttering overhead.

They felt they were making history. The July 9 National March for the Equal Rights Amendment — the first march on Washington for the ERA — was the biggest demonstration for women's rights in U.S. history.

Early this spring, the National Organization for Women had called the march to win ratification of the ERA and extension to 1986 of the ratification deadline.

As the action drew closer, the urgency of marching sharpened. On June 7, the Illinois House defeated the ERA, leaving three states still needed to win ratification by the March 1979 deadline.

THE MILITANT
Published in the Interests of the Working People
July 22, 1963 Price 10c

The European Conference on Non-governmental Aid to Algeria, held last month in Algiers, laid the basis for an international campaign to aid the Algerian revolution.

In his speech to the closing sessions of the conference, Algerian President Ben Bella outlined the staggering problems facing the Algerian people after seven and a half years of struggle against French imperialism. "We have 500,000 widows in this country. . . . A real flight to France took place, a real drainage; 800,000 perhaps more — since not more than 130,000 French are left in the country — went away, leaving us with a formidable staffing problem," he said.

"Algeria is faced with another fact — 2,000,000 unemployed. In the city of Algiers alone — 250,000 unemployed. Algeria had 2,000,000 Algerians who had been in what were called 'regroupment camps,' and 500,000 refugees who came back from Tunisia and Morocco with absolutely nothing, scarcely clothed, lacking especially anything with which to work in their fields."

He said 1,500,000 Algerians had died so that Algeria could live. Moreover, there was "the hemorrhage of capital because of the Evian accords, and especially the transfer, the free transfer which followed these accords. Billions, tens of billions, hundreds of billions of francs escaped and continue to escape."

With pride he described how, in the face of the opinion of even "our own agricultural specialists [who] told us 'you are going to break your back,' " the people worked fields which had been idle for five and six years. "We didn't break our backs, since you yourselves have seen these magnificently farmed fields, because we had confidence in the people."

The Third World debt crisis

"Endless calls for sacrifice without hope of relief can be political suicide," warned the editors of the *New York Times* following the July 6 Mexican elections. The outcome of the voting — the breakup of the Institutional Revolutionary Party's (PRI) 60-year political monopoly — reflects explosive pressures building up inside Mexico as a result of the debt crisis and economic depression.

Staggering under a \$103 billion foreign debt, the Mexican government — under pressure from Washington and U.S. banks — has been implementing austerity measures and other "free market reforms" in order to continue paying the debt. Added to the effects of the economic crisis that has gripped the country since 1982, these moves have served to drive down the toilers' standard of living even further. Now, some in U.S. ruling circles are worried that they may be squeezing Mexico's people too hard. "Yet for all the debt restructuring," the *Times* states, "Washington never offered sufficient debt relief." They are concerned that the pressure be eased before a real explosion occurs.

The rest of Latin America, Africa, and Asia face similar situations. Economic, political, and social development is being crippled by the \$1.2 trillion debt burden that each year transfers billions of dollars into the coffers of the ruling families' banks in New York, Paris, London and the other financial centers.

As a resolution adopted by the African Trade Union Conference on the Foreign Debt last December pointed out, the debt has "worsened all evils already endemic — including poverty, famine, illness, illiteracy, and underdevelopment."

In response to the debt crisis faced by a majority of the world's toilers, the leadership of the Cuban revolution

has been in the forefront of a growing international campaign to cancel the foreign debt as the only realistic solution to the problem. The debt is morally, politically, and economically impossible to pay, they explain, urging collective action by debtor countries.

Cuban President Fidel Castro appeals to the chief victims of the crisis, working people and their organizations, to lead the fight to cancel the debt. And this campaign is getting a growing response, as the African trade union conference and other conferences in Latin America and the Caribbean indicate.

The demand to cancel the debt deserves the wholehearted support of working people in the United States, Britain, Canada, Australia, and other imperialist countries. The October stock market crash was a warning that the creeping social crisis of the past decade — which has devastated layers of our fellow workers in the semicolonial countries — will become the reality for the vast majority of working people. Already, in the advanced industrial countries, the most oppressed layers of working people face depression-like conditions. The inevitability of a world depression means millions more will be engulfed, in every corner of the globe.

Confronting this catastrophe requires maximum solidarity and unity among working people internationally. This means championing the demand for relief from the mounting foreign debt that is sucking the lifeblood out of whole regions of the world.

"The consequences of the debt affect the living standards, employment, and well-being of workers in all countries," the African unionists explain. Their call for international working-class solidarity on the debt problem should be championed by all workers and farmers.

More time to free Sharpeville 6

On July 12 South African Justice Minister H.J. Coetsee indefinitely postponed the execution of a group of young Blacks who have become known as the Sharpeville Six to allow all "legal remedies, including appeals" to be exhausted.

According to South African officials the appeals could take weeks or months. This postponement buys precious time for opponents of the apartheid regime to continue to mobilize international support demanding the release of the six.

It is that international outcry that has so far stayed the executioner's hand. On June 28, 12 governments of the European Economic Community appealed to Pretoria to grant clemency to the six. This is the third reprieve for the anti-apartheid fighters, who were first scheduled to be hanged March 18.

The six, Oupa Diniso, Duma Khumalo, Francis Mokhesi, Reid Mokoena, Mojalefa Sefatsa, and Theresa Ramashamola are among some 44 young Blacks now facing the death penalty in South Africa. Ramashamola is

the first woman to receive the death penalty in the country. Another woman, Daisy Modise, is listed among the remaining 38.

The Sharpeville Six have been sentenced to death for participating in a 1984 demonstration against rent increases at which a Black township councilman was killed. The councilman, Khuzwayo Dlamini, was stoned and burned to death after he fired a gun into the crowd, hitting one of the protesters.

During their 1985 trial none of the six were proven guilty of committing the killing. The presiding judge, W.J. Human, ruled that the six shared "common purpose" with those in the protest, which resulted in the councilman's death. It was later discovered that the government's key witness may have lied at the trial. Questions remain as to whether Diniso and Mokhesi were even present when the killing took place.

Saving the lives of the six is the most immediate task facing those around the world who are fighting to bring an end to the apartheid regime.

Economic aid to Nicaragua now

On July 19, 1979, the working people of Nicaragua toppled the Somoza dynasty, which had been imposed on Nicaragua with Washington's backing more than four decades earlier. The insurrection established a new government representing the interests of the workers and farmers, led by the Sandinista National Liberation Front. People the world over celebrated this victory as their own.

For the first time, Nicaragua had a government that didn't take its orders from the U.S. ruling families. The revolutionary regime faced the formidable task of overcoming decades of plunder by U.S. big business that had left a legacy of poverty, illiteracy, and underdevelopment.

Washington set out to overturn the Sandinista-led Government of National Reconstruction or, failing that, to make the Nicaraguan people pay a devastating price for maintaining their revolution.

This year the Nicaraguan people — and the millions of people around the world who support the Nicaraguan revolution — are celebrating the ninth anniversary of the victory. The anniversary comes in the wake of the defeat of the U.S.-organized and -financed contra war.

The victory that the Nicaraguan people has won has helped inspire stubborn resistance in Panama to Wash-

ington's efforts to impose a U.S.-dominated government on that country and assure permanent U.S. control of the canal. It has deepened the opposition of millions in Mexico to U.S. demands that the foreign debt be paid at the price of hunger and impoverishment. It has stiffened the resistance of the liberation fighters in El Salvador.

But Nicaragua has paid a high price for its victory. Tens of thousands have died, and the war has spurred economic disruption and crises that are resulting in lower living standards for workers and farmers.

Washington is attempting to tighten its economic embargo against Nicaragua, in the hope that worsening living conditions will wear down popular morale. Nicaragua remains a central battlefield in the international struggle of the oppressed and exploited to better their lot against the efforts of U.S. imperialism to crush them.

Opponents of Washington's continuing drive to roll back Nicaragua's national sovereignty and reimpose U.S. domination need to demand that Washington drop the embargo, normalize economic and diplomatic relations, and provide massive economic assistance to the Nicaraguan people's efforts to rebuild their country. The U.S. government should immediately send medical supplies, food, farm equipment, and other necessities.

'Ignoring Che's ideas would be a crime'

BY DOUG JENNESS

I recently got around to reading the new pamphlet *Socialism and Man in Cuba* (Pathfinder/Pacific and Asia) by Ernesto Che Guevara. The contents weren't new to me. Neither Cuban President Fidel Castro's speech last October on the 20th anniversary of Guevara's death, nor Guevara's 1965 article on socialism and man in Cuba. I had read both when they first appeared in English; the latter several times since.

But reading the two items together this time around was a different and more rewarding experience. For one thing, I decided in advance not to just read them, but to

LEARNING ABOUT SOCIALISM

study them. It meant making this project the first thing I did in the day, not the last. Moreover, I kept a pencil handy to mark key passages and jot down notes.

I also did something that may seem idiosyncratic — I read the Castro piece first even though it's located after Guevara's in the pamphlet. This proved useful, and I recommend this approach to others.

In the next few weeks, I plan to review some of the main points discussed by Castro and Guevara. I'll start with Castro's central theme — the relevance of Che's ideas for Cuba and for thinking workers in other countries today.

Castro focuses on Che's economic and political writings, which include "ideas without which I am convinced communism cannot be built." This, he notes, makes them particularly timely today in the context of the efforts by the Communist Party of Cuba to rejuvenate itself and lead a process to rectify policies that were diverting the Cuban revolution from a communist course.

Key among the errors the Cuban leadership has pointed to that have afflicted the revolution is the notion that the mechanism of the economic planning system would, on its own, provide the motor power of the advance toward communism. This, Castro explained, spawned corruption, bureaucratism, and sapping of revolutionary spirit.

Building socialism and communism, he said, is not just a matter of producing and distributing wealth; it also requires political education and understanding. Communism, he said, can't be achieved without communists.

The Cuban leader noted, "These questions are discussed frequently in the world today." As part of this discussion he urged that Che's economic views should also be known "in Latin America, in the world; in the developed capitalist world, in the Third World, and in the socialist world. Let it be known there too!"

Castro affirmed his respect for the right of every country to apply the economic methods it considers appropriate. "I simply ask," he said, "that in a cultured country, in a cultured world, in a world where ideas are discussed, Che's economic theories should be made known."

Party members, youth, students, and economists in Cuba, Castro proposed, should study and familiarize themselves with Che's political and economic thinking. "We want our youth to have that instrument, to wield that weapon..." Ignoring Che's ideas, the Cuban leader said, "would be a crime."

We have to "go beyond the image that many people have of Che as a brave, heroic, pure man, of Che as a saint because of his virtues, as a martyr because of his selflessness and heroism." Che was also "a revolutionary, a thinker, a man of doctrine, a man of great ideas, who was capable with great consistency of working out instruments and principles that unquestionably are essential to the revolutionary path."

Reading Che's economic and political writings, including the article in the *Socialism and Man* pamphlet, bears out the accuracy of Castro's judgement. Guevara was clearly one of the outstanding Marxist thinkers of this century.

In Cuba, education on Che's writings is moving forward. A recent example is a seminar, "Socialism and Man in Cuba," held July 2-4 in Havana. The seminar, which drew researchers from Cuba and guests from other countries, was organized by the secretariat of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba.

Jorge Enrique Mendoza, a member of the Central Committee, urged, "We have to make the study of Che's ideas a systematic one. . . . This study of Che's ideas cannot, under any circumstance, be reduced to anecdotes or quotations. This study cannot be an academic task either. It has to be an ideological and political task in close connection with our present problems and future plans."

The relationship between Che's ideas and the current rectification process in Cuba will be the topic of next week's column.

'A symbol of Puerto Rican independence fight'

Murder Under Two Flags: the U.S., Puerto Rico, and the Cerro Maravilla Cover-up by Anne Nelson; Ticknor and Fields, 1986; \$17.95 (hardback). **Requiem on Cerro Maravilla: the Police Murders in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Government Cover-up** by Manuel Suarez; Waterfront Press, 1987; \$9.95 (paperback).

BY RON RICHARDS

Ten years ago Cerro Maravilla was nothing more than a remote mountaintop on a dead-end road. As one of the highest peaks in the U.S. colony of Puerto Rico, it was the location for radio, TV, telephone, and police communication towers.

Today, Cerro Maravilla is a symbol of the struggle for Puerto Rican independence and of police repression against the independence movement.

On Sunday afternoons it's hard to find a parking spot at Cerro Maravilla. Families come to see one of the most controversial spots in Puerto Rico. They also come to pay

IN REVIEW

tribute to the two proindependence activists who were murdered there on July 25, 1978. Several years ago two crosses were anonymously placed at the site. Visitors to Cerro Maravilla frequently put flowers at the base of the crosses.

The police claimed that Arnaldo Darío Rosado, 24, and Carlos Soto Arriví, 18, were killed in a shoot-out. In reality the two youths had surrendered, thrown down their weapons, and were on their knees with handcuffs on when they were shot at point blank range.

The events before, during, and after Cerro Maravilla form a complex story. Included in this story are police provocateurs, grand jury investigations, civil lawsuits, investigative journalism, perjury, and cover-ups in San Juan and Washington, D.C.

Both Anne Nelson and Manuel Suarez do an excellent job of explaining the police murders at Cerro Maravilla

and putting them in the proper political context. Nelson is a journalist who specializes in Latin America. Her book, written with North American readers in mind, reviews the history of injustices that characterize U.S.-Puerto Rico relations.

Suarez is a native New Yorker of Mexican and Spanish ancestry. He immigrated to Puerto Rico more than 25 years ago and is today one of the most respected journalists on the island.

Without Suarez there probably would be no Cerro Maravilla case. For over nine years he has been investigating and reporting on the case. His book is at times difficult to follow but makes a great detective story as he describes how the police department fabrication was destroyed one piece of evidence at a time.

One interesting piece of the story is the role of Alejandro González Malavé. While still in high school he was recruited to be a police agent in the independence movement. González Malavé was not simply a passive information gatherer. He encouraged violent actions, organized them, and frequently provided weapons and automobiles to carry them out.

He and the two independentistas hijacked a taxi cab and forced the driver to take them to the mountaintop. Without González Malavé's actions, no murders would have occurred.

Even from the beginning, the official police story of Cerro Maravilla had many holes in it. The cabbie did not see the killings but he clearly heard two rounds of shooting, not the single round claimed by the police.

The police claimed that they were on the ground firing while Darío Rosado and Soto Arriví were standing. Suarez' wife is a doctor. One night while casually reading the autopsy reports that he had brought home, Dr. María Jiménez noticed that the bullets had gone through the victim's bodies on a downward path. If the police were on the ground the bullets would have been going upward. This contradiction could not be explained for several years.

Much of the information that destroyed the police version of the case came in hearings before the Judiciary

Committee of the Puerto Rican Senate. The hearings began in June 1983 and were televised live. The timing of the hearings by the Popular Democratic Party-controlled Senate helped the PPD win the 1984 elections.

The most dramatic moment of the hearings came when Miguel Marte asked to testify a second time. But before he would tell the truth he requested immunity from perjury he had already committed. Marte had been working as a civilian technician at a TV tower near the shootings. The police had pressured him into supporting their conspiracy.

After Marte's testimony, various cops came forward to tell the truth in return for immunity. Their motive was to save their own skins from murder charges.

Police brutality cases are common both in the United States and in Puerto Rico, but it is rare for cops to go to jail.

Cerro Maravilla stands as an exception. At last count 10 cops have been found guilty of lying to both federal and colonial grand juries. Seven of the 10 cops pleaded guilty and one was convicted of second degree murder charges in local court.

Proceedings that could lead to the disbarment of five district attorneys are not yet over. The five were negligent in their initial investigations of the case.

In June 1988 three of the five district attorneys were also indicted on perjury charges in relation to their testimony before the 1983 Senate hearings.

Civil lawsuits have resulted in the families of the two victims receiving more than \$1 million. The cabbie whose car was destroyed by police gunfire also won a lawsuit against the government.

The police provocateur González Malavé was killed by multiple shotgun blasts outside his parent's home in April 1986.

July 25, 1988, will mark the 10th anniversary of the murders on Cerro Maravilla. It will also mark the 90th anniversary of the U.S. invasion of the island. Both *Murder Under Two Flags* and *Requiem on Cerro Maravilla* can help people in English-speaking countries understand a piece of that reality.

LETTERS

Iran

Today's newspaper carried the story about the U.S. Navy's shooting down a civilian airliner in the Persian Gulf. The USS *Vincennes* destroyed the plane without ever seeing it. The attack was totally based on electronic information processed by computers.

But even without visual identification there are many ways that the USS *Vincennes* should have been able to tell the two types of aircraft apart. They are very different. The F-14 is a fighter-bomber with a crew of one or two while the Airbus is a widebody. They have a different shape and I believe that the F-14 is supersonic although it can be flown at lower speeds. The U.S. ship is one of the most modern in the fleet. The difference in size, shape, speed, and flight patterns should have been apparent with the ship's sophisticated radar.

The Pentagon says that they had been fighting with Iranian gunboats for eight hours before the jet was destroyed in broad daylight. This means that all the naval resources the United States has in the Persian Gulf were focused on this region. Specifically the AWACS radar planes in the area should have known what kind of plane was flying into the vicinity. It is inconceivable that none of these vessels were monitoring radio communications between Iranian air traffic controllers and the passenger liner.

From the above information there are only two possible conclusions: First, that the U.S. Navy is both incompetent and trigger happy; or second, that the U.S. government deliberately destroyed the aircraft.

Ronald Richards
Trujillo Alto, Puerto Rico

Out of touch

I used to be a faithful reader of the *Militant* until my last subscription ran out. At the time I couldn't afford to renew.

I feel so completely out of touch with what is going on around the world, especially in Nicaragua.

The mainstream papers don't print articles about Nicaragua anymore. I don't believe that means everything is fine.

I'm happy to be able to renew my subscription now. I look forward to receiving the only true, progressive paper around, finally!
Kristen Ruppenstein
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Northern Ireland

I see many letters from readers regarding Northern Ireland. How about some reporting from that part of the world? Your reporter in Manila is excellent!
M.B.
Studio City, California

Palestine

As a Palestinian, I would like to thank you for letting the people in the United States know about the suffering of the Palestinian people. They deserve to live like any other people.

A. E.
Soddy Daisy, Tennessee

Solidarity

An AFL-CIO rally in Detroit June 14 at the site of the 1937 "Battle of the Overpass," which helped form the United Auto Workers at the River Rouge Ford plant, drew several hundred to protest union-busting against International Paper Co. and Colt Firearms.

Veterans of the early UAW battles were there. Two dozen strikers from International Paper in Lock Haven, Pennsylvania, and De Pere, Wisconsin, and Colt strikers from Connecticut headed the march.

At a rally beforehand, Detroit-area labor officials pledged their support and money to the embattled unionists. Metro Detroit AFL-CIO Vice-president Bernie Firestone pointed out that IP and Colt were very profitable companies yet had forced their workers out of strike. Some were locked out because of the unionists' refusal to



accept more concessions.

There were contingents at the rally with signs from the UAW, Teamsters, Machinists, meat-packers, and government workers.

After the march a fund-raising dinner was held at the hall of UAW Local 600 in which several thousand dollars was raised.

Mark Friedman
Detroit, Michigan

Communist

The coverage of Fred Halstead's life was excellent as are most articles in the *Militant*, but I have one criticism.

If the term "communist" is to be employed by the *Militant*, I feel that there should be some clarification as to definition and how the Young Socialist Alliance and Socialist Workers Party differ from other groups of the radical left, especially the Communist Party,

USA. For those, myself included, who understand the term, there is no problem, but even in this day and age it is inflammatory to the average individual.

Cliff Nyberg
Seattle, Washington

Nicaragua photo

The photo used with the article on Sandinista-led unions in Nicaragua in the June 17 *Militant* is not a picture of a lathe as the caption stated, but of a cylindrical grinder.

Charlie Rosenberg
Baltimore, Maryland

Cuba

Less "fantastic" reporting on Cuba. Cuba has made a lot of progress, but I am afraid you are white-washing some errors and evils, in all your fervor, that must be aired and cleared.

M.M.
Norfolk, Virginia

Stupendous

The *Militant* is stupendous. It truly represents the interests of working people in the United States and around the world.

G.P.
Staten Island, New York

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.

The *Militant* special prisoner fund makes it possible to send reduced-rate subscriptions to prisoners who can't pay for them. To help this important cause, send your contribution to: Militant Prisoner Subscription Fund, 14 Charles Lane, New York, N.Y. 10014.

Nicaragua expels U.S. ambassador

Sandinistas cite 'open encouragement of illegal activities'

BY HARVEY McARTHUR

MANAGUA, Nicaragua, July 14 — The Nicaraguan government has ordered U.S. Ambassador Richard Melton and seven other top embassy officials to leave the country.

In announcing the expulsion July 11, Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto cited "the intolerable campaign" of Melton and other U.S. diplomats "who have openly and shamelessly encouraged illegal activities by extreme right-wing provocateurs, an example being the July 10 provocations in the city of Nandaime."

Melton was trying to organize an "internal front" in opposition to the Sandinista government, the foreign minister charged. Melton was attempting to make up for what the U.S. government "sees as a lack of leadership among their puppets within Nicaragua," D'Escoto said. This "completely violates the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, which absolutely prohibits all interference in the internal affairs of nations."

Nicaragua is not breaking off diplomatic relations with Washington, D'Escoto stressed, but is acting "to protect the right of the Nicaraguan people to their sovereignty and independence."

"We are not abandoning the search for normalizing our bilateral relations through the road of dialogue," he said. "We are prepared to receive a new U.S. ambassador."

The next day, President Ronald Reagan announced he was expelling Nicaraguan Ambassador Carlos Tünnermann and seven other Nicaraguan diplomats from the

United States. Tünnermann was summoned to the State Department that afternoon and told to leave within 72 hours.

Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega said Tünnermann couldn't be expelled because he is Nicaragua's chief representative to the Organization of American States in Washington. President Reagan declared that the ambassador was "going to get a big surprise" if he tried to defy the order.

Meanwhile on July 11, the Ministry of the Interior (MINT) announced it had closed the right-wing daily *La Prensa* for 15 days and Radio Católica indefinitely, because of their coverage of the Nandaime clashes. Radio Católica is the official station of the Catholic hierarchy here.

The Sandinista daily *Barricada* quoted a "source in the MINT" as saying that after the confrontation between right-wing demonstrators and Sandinista police in Nandaime July 10, "Radio Católica began to spread false and incendiary reports, such as speaking of 'dozens of missing persons,' of 'a massacre,' of 'a large number of civilian casualties,' and that 'the police used sharp cutting objects.'"

The MINT statement on the closing of *La Prensa* stated that the paper had "continued its repeated campaign of misinformation. It threatened internal security and national defense, slandering leaders of the government, inciting violence, and calling for subverting public order and for civil disobedience." All publications "must show a legitimate concern for the defense of the revolution's conquests and should not be instruments of interests opposed to the people," the MINT said.



Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto

Militant/Ron Poulsen

Anti-Sandinista marchers stage provocation

BY HARVEY McARTHUR

NANDAIME, Nicaragua — An anti-government demonstration here led to violent confrontations July 10 when several hundred participants attacked police with stones and clubs. Forty-two people were arrested. Ten policemen and an unknown number of protesters were injured in the fighting.

The demonstration was organized by the Democratic Coordinating Committee of Nicaragua (CDN), a coalition of anti-Sandinista parties, unions, and business associations. The police had granted it a permit for the march in the town of Nandaime, 40 miles south of Managua.

The protest drew 2,000 people, most of whom came by chartered bus and truck from other parts of the country. A delegation of U.S. embassy staff and congressional aides also participated. The demonstrators marched through the town for two hours, chanting "Down with the Sandinista Front," "Death to the Ministry of the Interior," and other antigovernment slogans.

Many Nandaime residents lined the streets to watch the march pass. A few indicated that they agreed with the demonstrators, but most said they opposed the aims of the protesters.

"I don't support them," said Juana María Velásquez as she stood in her doorway, watching the demonstration. "They complain about hunger, but forget that we are suffering a war and aggression by the United States."

Velásquez said she and many other local residents had joined several demonstrations in Nandaime the previous week to repudiate the right-wing march. "Students, teachers, workers from the sugar mill, and peasants all marched," she said. "We support the revolution."

There was no counterdemonstration organized for the day of the CDN march, however, and there were no incidents be-

tween Nandaime residents and the antigovernment protesters.

Provocateurs attack police

A contingent of 50 policemen, some equipped with body armor, riot helmets, and tear gas launchers, followed the marchers closely as they wound through the town. The police had earlier warned march organizers "not to provoke the authorities, [or] to chant slogans prepared by the U.S. embassy," according to Ministry of the Interior official Marcelino Guido.

The violence started as the protesters began a rally at the end of the march. The first speaker, Conservative Party leader Miriam Argüello, pointed to the police contingent and yelled: "Here come the mobs, here come the dogs!"

Several hundred marchers picked up rocks and chunks of concrete and began to bombard the police. Some stripped flags from the heavy wooden poles they had carried in the march and wielded them as clubs. Several officers were quickly surrounded and beaten by the thugs.

The police responded with tear gas bombs, and by using clubs and rifle butts against their assailants. This was the first time tear gas has been used here since the 1979 Sandinista revolution overthrew the Somoza dictatorship.

As the gas spread, most of the marchers dispersed, but several hundred remained and continued to throw stones at the police.

"Don't run! Stay and fight!" cried one young man wearing a Social Christian Party T-shirt.

"Pick up rocks! Fight! Here are the Social Democratic youth!" yelled another.

After about 15 minutes, the police regrouped and scattered the remaining rock-throwers.

By then, most of the demonstrators had headed for their buses and trucks, parked near the highway leading out of town. As

they crowded into the vehicles, however, squads of policemen rushed up, dragged them out onto the road, and chased them out of town on foot. Some demonstrators were beaten with clubs and rifle butts as they ran.

In a statement that night, the Ministry of the Interior (MINT) charged that the CDN had "provoked actions that violated the laws concerning public order and safety, such as inciting violence, disorders, and defiance of the government, as well as physical aggression against the police authorities."

"Faced with the growing disrespect shown by the organizers, who caused injuries to 10 members of the police, the latter were obligated to restore order." The 42 people arrested, including Argüello and two other CDN leaders, "will be investigated to determine their degree of responsibility" for the incidents, the MINT statement continued.

The MINT also warned "leaders of organizations that may solicit permits for public demonstrations that they will be held responsible for any acts of violence that occur."

Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega later told reporters that the Nandaime incidents had been planned "to subvert the public order" as part of "Reagan's plans to overthrow the revolution." The demonstrators "were accomplices in the crimes of the contras," he added, referring to a July 9 ambush of civilians in north-central Nicaragua.

The police in Nandaime had acted to "preserve order" and would "take a hard line against any act of conspiracy against the government," Ortega declared.

Charge U.S. destabilization plan

The Sandinista daily *Barricada* wrote in a July 11 editorial that the Nandaime incidents "surely satisfy the calculations of

U.S. Ambassador Richard Melton and his functionaries, who aim to create a climate of internal disorder to help save Washington's war policy."

Prior to the Nandaime march, Sandinista leaders had publicly charged that the U.S. government had launched a "Melton Plan" to destabilize the Nicaraguan government. The charges came after Ambassador Melton made a well-publicized trip to the northern city of Estelí July 3 to participate in an antigovernment rally organized by the Superior Council of Private Enterprise (COSEP), a group of capitalist opponents of the Sandinista government.

On July 7 Sandinista leader Bayardo Arce discussed the "Melton Plan" in a speech at a teachers' assembly in Managua. The meeting was called to discuss Nicaragua's economic crisis and its impact on teachers. The speech was reported prominently in *Barricada* and other news media here.

Arce "recognized the impact the recent economic measures taken by the revolution have had on the population, but stressed that 'we must make extra efforts and extra sacrifices to resist the final stretch of the Reagan administration,'" the Sandinista daily reported. "He said that the U.S. government seeks to bury the Central American peace agreements, create a 'government of national salvation' in Nicaragua, and expel the Sandinistas from power."

Arce "unraveled all the strands of the Melton Plan, which include political marches, strikes, and all types of chaos, aimed at creating an insurrectional climate," *Barricada* continued.

The Sandinista leader said that "the U.S. ambassador has constantly visited headquarters of political parties, right-wing union federations, some churches, and even written editorials for [the anti-Sandinista daily] *La Prensa* in order to imple-

Continued on Page 5