

## British miners' leader defends union, Cuba

BY PETE CLIFFORD

SOUTH KIRKBY, Yorkshire, England — National Union of Mineworkers President Arthur Scargill addressed a crowd of some 1,000 miners and supporters here March 17, condemning recent attacks against the mine union and defending Cuba against stepped-up threats by Washington.

Scargill and other NUM leaders have been the target of a slander campaign initiated by National Newspaper Group billionaire Robert Maxwell. Allegations have been made that Scargill and NUM General Secretary Peter Heathfield received money from the Libyan government during the 1984-85 British miners' strike and that they misappropriated the funds for their own personal benefit.

"Why is it that Heathfield and Scargill and all NUM leaders are under attack?" said Scargill. "I'll tell you why, and I'm going to say it slowly so the media can write it down. Heathfield and Scargill did commit a crime in 1984-85."

"We refused to lie down" in the face of the attack by the British government, the union leader said. "We fought back and we didn't betray our members."

"To this crime I plead guilty, and if I had to do it again, I'd do it again!" he declared.

The rally was a commemoration of the deaths of David Gareth Jones and Joe Green who were killed on the picket line during the strike. The event followed a march led by a brass band through the streets of the town.

The march featured 15 miners' lodge banners, a contingent of fired miners and their families, two groups from Women Against Pit Closures, and a contingent of ambulance

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## 'U.S. hands off Cuba' rally set for New York

BY JON HILLSON

NEW YORK — Momentum is building toward the broadest action here in years in defense of Cuba. The action has been called to protest the escalation of threats against Cuba by Washington.

The march and rally, organized around the demand "U.S. hands off Cuba!" is set for Times Square in mid-Manhattan on April 7. Some 100 activists met March 15 at Casa de

See editorial page 18

las Américas, a prominent New York City organization that defends the Cuban revolution, to discuss plans for mobilizing a big turnout.

A similar number of activists from more than 25 political, Latin American, Black, and solidarity organizations decided the previous week to launch the U.S. Hands Off Cuba Coalition to begin work on the April 7 protest.

More than 50 organizations have thus far endorsed the action, which also demands a halt to Washington's plans to broadcast "Television Martí" into Cuba and an end to three decades of the U.S. trade embargo and ban on travel to Cuba.

The activists at the March 15 meeting were welcomed and thanked by Luis Miranda, president of Casa de las Américas.

Protests like April 7 are necessary, coalition steering committee member Don Rojas said, opening the meeting, "to answer the lies and demagoguery of those who claim the Cuban government is going to fall in a matter of days."

He referred to ABC Television's March 14 "Nightline" program, which featured Florida Gov. Robert Martinez, Miami Mayor Xavier Suarez, and Cuban-American National Found-



Militant/Cindy Jaquith

February 1 demonstration in Cuba against U.S. attack on Cuban cargo ship *Hermann*. Momentum is building for April 7 action in New York in defense of Cuba.

ation leader Jorge Mas Canosa predicting the imminent collapse of the revolution.

"These fantastic claims, fueled by Washington's hatred of Cuba, are carried by the big-business media to help acclimate public opinion to new, dangerous attacks. April 7 in New York must be a broad, united response to this propaganda," Rojas said.

Washington's campaign to isolate and

threaten Cuba, in the wake of its invasion of Panama and the election of a proimperialist government in Nicaragua, were echoed in remarks made by U.S. Vice-president Danforth Quayle in Brazil on March 15. There for the presidential inauguration of Fernando Collor de Mello, Quayle termed Cuba "the last serious problem in the continent."

Activists emptied boxes of 10,000 leaflets donated by a local union to begin promoting the event, which assembles at 1:00 p.m. at the U.S. armed forces recruitment center at 43rd and Broadway. After speeches and music, demonstrators will march to the

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## Cuban economist to begin U.S. tour

BY SELVA NEBBIA

On April 2 Cuban economist and author Carlos Tablada will begin a six-week tour of the United States. Tablada is the author of *Che Guevara: Economics and Politics in the Transition to Socialism*, published in English by Pathfinder. The 12-city tour will begin in Pittsburgh.

Tablada will present the course advocated by the Argentine-born leader of the Cuban revolution, Ernesto Che Guevara, in the early years of the revolution and its relevance to the current discussion in Cuba on building socialism. These are the themes developed in his book on Guevara's views.

Last November the Cuban economist addressed 1,200 people, including at a dozen universities, during a successful eight-city tour of Canada. This was the largest such audience for any Cuban visiting Canada in the past 30 years. The tour was kicked off with a book launching hosted by Pathfinder in Halifax, Nova Scotia, attended by 200 people.

Tablada was in Halifax as a participant in the international scholars conference, "30 Years of the Cuban Revolution: An Assessment."

Tablada's visit to Canada was reported in several major newspapers. Student newspapers in Toronto and Vancouver reported on the tour, as well as several university radio stations that interviewed Tablada.

Since its publication in 1987, Tablada's award-winning book on Guevara has gone through 11 editions in various countries, with more than 300,000 copies printed. Tablada has given 82 radio, television, and press interviews as well as some 500 talks at universities and research centers.

The Cuban economist has presented papers at universities and other institutions in Argentina, Ecuador, Italy, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, and Venezuela.

During his visit, Tablada will be speaking on "Che Guevara and the Fight for Socialism in Cuba Today."

On April 3 he will speak at the University of Pittsburgh. The event's sponsors include

the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador, Democratic Socialists of America, National Lawyers Guild, Central America Peace Coalition, Thomas Merton Center, South African poet Dennis Brutus, and the Young Socialist Alliance.

In the Los Angeles area he is scheduled to speak at the California State University at

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## Eastern strikers' actions draw striking Greyhound workers

BY SUSAN LaMONT

Machinists on strike at Eastern Airlines extended solidarity to striking Greyhound workers at actions held March 17-18 in Los Angeles and several other cities and a week earlier in Detroit.

Meanwhile, as Eastern strikers head toward the end of their 13th month on the picket line, International Association of Machinists President George Kourpias has sent a taped video message to strikers reaffirming the IAM Executive Council backing of the walk-out. "We will do everything in our power to support you in your gallant struggle against corporate tyranny," Kourpias said. "We will continue to be with you on your picket lines and in your union halls." Kourpias also said AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland had reassured him "that the 14-million-member-strong federation remains 100 percent in our corner and will continue to assist us on the picket lines, at rallies, at demonstrations, as

well as with financial contributions."

Some 20 striking Greyhound drivers, along with other unionists, joined forces with Eastern strikers for an expanded solidarity picket line that began at Los Angeles International Airport and ended at the downtown bus terminal on March 17. Unionists carried a banner that read, "Eastern strikers back Greyhound workers. Solidarity forever!"

A vanload of International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union members were among the 100 unionists who participated. ILGWU members have been locked in a union recognition strike at LaMode du Golf for eight months. ILGWU strike activists brought a leaflet appealing to other unionists for support. Greyhound and Eastern strikers pledged to join a special March 23 picket line, called to back the LaMode strikers.

Five Danish trade unionists, on a study

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## The fight for democratic rights in El Salvador



Militant/Selva Nebbia

Trade union, student, peasant, and community activists in El Salvador are stepping up fight to win back democratic rights. See pages 12-13.

# Socialist candidates launch ballot drive

BY STEVE MARSHALL

STAR CITY, W.Va. — At a rally here March 18, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate, Dick McBride, affirmed his unconditional support for the Cuban revolution. "We defend Cuba," he said. "It's the example of the kind of society we are fighting for."

Two days earlier McBride appeared on Channel 3 television speaking about Cuba at the news conference held in Charleston to launch the West Virginia socialist campaign.

West Virginia public radio and country station WQBE have broadcast clips from the news conference with the socialist candidate speaking out in defense of Cuba and against apartheid in South Africa. He has sharply counterposed his views to those of multimillionaire Sen. Jay Rockefeller, the Democratic Party candidate in the race.

Along with McBride the SWP is running Clay Dennison for state attorney general and Maggie McCraw for state treasurer. Dennison is a union coal miner near Fairmont and McCraw is a furnace tapper at Elkem Metals in the town of Alloy near Charleston.

## Rally caps kick-off weekend

The Star City rally capped the first weekend of a three-week drive to sell subscriptions to the socialist press and collect 13,000 signatures needed to place the SWP candidates on the ballot.

Also speaking at the rally, attended by some 70 people, was SWP candidate Dennison and John Hawkins, a coal miner and SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from Alabama.

Over the March 17-18 weekend 70 campaign supporters fanned out across the state to help get the 1,356 signatures collected. Supporters reported a friendly response from working people they met.

One teacher from Raleigh County took a stack of Clay Dennison's open letter to striking teachers to pass out to coworkers. Other supporters said they had run into coworkers of McCraw and Dennison who signed the petition having already heard about the campaign. And another campaign supporter estimated that one-third of all workers he talked to were on strike or had recently been involved in a struggle.

Beginning March 19 campaign supporters fielded teams to sell subscriptions to the *Militant* and collect more signatures. During the first two days, 126 signatures were collected. Supporters urged everyone available to join the campaign effort.

"With our socialist campaign and with our newspaper the *Militant*," said McBride at the campaign rally here, "we want to raise a discussion" with fighters in the coalfields who have been inspired by the strike against Eastern Airlines and by the coal miners' resistance.

"We want to talk with them about South Africa," he said, "about the momentum of the struggle against apartheid."

"And now Mandela is free — free to fight and we want to fight with him!" McBride

vowed to loud applause.

Clay Dennison was one of the 44,000 members of the United Mine Workers of America who walked off the job last summer in support of striking Pittston Coal company miners. Now it is not unusual, Dennison noted, for a group of camouflage-wearing miners to show up at a picket line of Eastern strikers, the bus terminal where Greyhound workers are striking, or a rally of local hospital workers.

"It's a good time to run a socialist campaign in West Virginia," Dennison said.

Alabama SWP candidate Hawkins explained that the stakes are high for the entire working class in the fight against Eastern Airlines and owner Frank Lorenzo.

"Its outcome will alter the relationship of forces under which all of us fight — miners, bus drivers, teachers, all of us.

The Eastern strikers face many challenges, Hawkins explained. The Pittston miners, who had been the main backers of Eastern workers, have been demobilized. But the victory that is possible at Eastern, he declared, can be a victory for the entire working class.

The rally was chaired by Meg Hall, a leader of the Young Socialist Alliance in Charleston. She announced that the UMWA student auxiliary had just endorsed the International Youth Appeal for framed-up unionist and political activist Mark Curtis.

Campaign codirector Linda Joyce reviewed the decade-long fight against West Virginia's undemocratic election laws and outlined the legal battle that the SWP and the American Civil Liberties Union are undertaking. Her appeal for funds for the socialist campaign drew pledges of more than \$5,000 from participants at the rally.



Militant/Steve Marshall

Parkersburg, West Virginia. March 17-18 weekend kicked off three-week effort to sell subscriptions to the socialist press and collect 13,000 signatures to place statewide candidates on ballot. March 16 news conference announced socialist campaign and local radio and TV carried coverage of candidates' support for Cuba.

## Teachers end strike in West Virginia

BY JIM ALTENBERG

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — Thousands of striking teachers voted March 18 to return to work, ending their first statewide strike. Members of the two unions, the 16,000-strong West Virginia Education Association and 3,000-member West Virginia Federation of Teachers, held a victory celebration afterward attended by many other unionists from the Charleston area.

The teachers voted to end the strike, which began March 7, after forcing heads of the state legislature to agree to ask Gov. Gaston Caperton to call a special legislative session to discuss education funding.

The two teachers' unions went on strike demanding across-the-board pay increases, adequate funds for health insurance and pensions, and \$32 million to equalize teachers' salaries across the state.

West Virginia teachers are among the lowest paid in the nation, with earnings higher only than teachers in South Dakota and Arkansas, according to the National Education

Association.

The strike spread quickly, with teachers off the job in 47 of the state's 55 counties. Picket lines were set up at school facilities and bus garages. In 24 counties the entire school system was shut down.

Caperton had tried to head off a strike by offering a 5 percent pay raise March 6 in return for an agreement by teachers not to strike. This was rejected overwhelmingly.

State Attorney General Roger Tompkins ruled the strike illegal. Seven strikers were arrested early on while picketing at a bus facility, and the press began editorializing against the strike. West Virginia is a poor state and salaries could only be increased if teachers agreed to layoffs of thousands of school employees, the editors said.

The teachers responded by calling on the state legislature to close a tax loophole that has allowed coal companies to avoid \$60 million in taxes this year alone, and demanded idle mineral and timber lands be taxed.

On March 14, 8,000 teachers marched on the capitol and, ignoring a police cordon, held a rally on the steps. Truckers on the nearby highway and boat captains on the Kanawha River blew their horns in support.

The state responded with a lockout, ordering all schools closed March 15-16 for a "cooling off" period. Teachers in Greenbrier County were ordered back to work under the threat of losing their jobs, and state officials gave the green light for other counties to do the same. On March 17 legislators agreed to recommend a special session.

The striking teachers won widespread support from working people in the state. Greyhound bus strikers, coal miners, Machinists, and other unionists joined picket lines and rallies. The United Mine Workers of America announced support for the strike, and some 40 teachers from Ohio came to help out.

Students at every high school in Monongalia County, in the northern part of the state, held demonstrations backing the teachers.

'The *Militant* is one of the best papers today for its coverage of international issues. I follow the Mark Curtis articles and campaign for democratic rights.'



**TYRONE O'SULLIVAN**

National Union of Mineworkers  
branch secretary at  
Tower Colliery, South Wales

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# German election results spur Bonn government's drive toward reunification

BY PETER THIERJUNG

East German elections produced a major victory March 18 for West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl's drive for accelerated economic integration and constitutional unification of the two Germanys. Over the last few months Kohl pressed these issues and succeeded in pitching the elections as a plebiscite on his proposals.

An estimated 95 percent of East Germany's 12 million voters turned out at the polls, giving the Alliance for Germany about 49 percent of the vote. The Alliance consists of three parties, which have close links with capitalist parties in West Germany's governing coalition, and backs Kohl's proposals for reunification. It is dominated by the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), which received about 41 percent of the vote, a party modeled after the one Kohl heads in the West. The other two parties are the German Social Union and Democratic Awakening.

The East German Social Democrats won some 22 percent of the vote, becoming the second largest party in the new East German parliament. They differed with the Alliance only over the pace of currency union and tactics of political unification, claiming Kohl was moving too fast and would further destabilize East Germany. They favor a united Germany outside the U.S.-dominated North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

The Party of Democratic Socialism, a refurbished version of the Stalinist Socialist Unity Party (SUP), gathered nearly 16 percent of the vote.

New Forum, as part of an election coalition called Alliance '90, was swept aside with about 3 percent of the vote. This group gained prominence during last year's protests and campaigned against reunification during the elections.

While the Alliance for Germany received a high percentage of the vote, it will need to win the support of another political party to establish a majority in parliament. The Social Democrats have already rejected a coalition bid from the Alliance. A coalition with the Union of Free Democrats, a liberal grouping, which received 5 percent of the vote, is almost certain. It will be the first government of the bureaucratic caste that has economically and politically dominated East Germany for more than 40 years in which the SUP has not been included.

Kohl campaigned hard for an Alliance

## Alabama socialists announce slate for Nov. elections

BY DAVE PAPARELLO

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — The Alabama Socialist Workers Party has announced that it is fielding three candidates in the 1990 elections: John Hawkins, a coal miner, for U.S. Senate; Sue Skinner, a rail worker, for governor; and David Alvarez, a steelworker, for U.S. Congress, 6th District.

On March 10 supporters of the SWP ticket kicked off a drive to collect 5,000 signatures to put Alvarez's name on the ballot. Due to prohibitive state signature requirements for governor and senator, the SWP is not petitioning for Hawkins and Skinner.

More than 750 signatures were gathered the first day by campaign supporters who fanned out in Birmingham's working-class communities. Hundreds of campaign leaflets were distributed. The campaign piece highlights several planks of the socialist campaign, including "Hands off Cuba, End the Blockade" and "Stop U.S. Intervention in Central America and the Caribbean" and presents the SWP's action program to confront the worsening economic crisis. Petitioners reported a good response to the campaign.

All three candidates have been active in building solidarity with the Eastern Airlines and Greyhound strikes and supported the miners' strike against Pittston Coal Group.

The petition drive is scheduled to conclude March 31. If you can help, call the Alabama Socialist Workers 1990 Campaign at (205) 323-3079.

victory, pouring funds and resources into the coalition's campaign coffers. He gave the West German parties supporting the Alliance \$4.5 million for the campaign. This allowed the parties of the Alliance to spend more than any of the other political parties on the ballot.

More significantly, Kohl announced just prior to the election that once currency union takes place, the Bonn government will set a one-to-one exchange rate between West and East German marks for private savings. The West German mark is actually worth seven times more than the East German mark, and many East Germans feared their pension and savings would be wiped out in one stroke if currency union were based on an exchange of one-to-seven. This promise, amounting to a massive subsidy to East Germans from the West German government, was designed to allay fears among many East Germans and win their support.

The influence of West Germany's main political parties, especially the CDU and the Social Democrats, was apparent throughout the campaign. Some \$12 million in all was funneled into the East German election from these and other parties. Kohl and former president Willy Brandt, a prominent spokesperson for the West German Social Democrats, eclipsed their East German counterparts who had little public role in the campaign. Kohl and Brandt regularly appeared on TV and were the main speakers at many campaign rallies in East Germany.

### Attempts to stem migration

Kohl hopes the election victory and his economic proposals will stem the massive migration from East to West, which has put a strain on social services provided by the Bonn government. Some 350,000 people left East Germany last year, many of them settling in West Germany. So far this year, more than 2,000 people have crossed the border to the capitalist West each day.

Two days after the election, Kohl announced that the Bonn government would put an end to special reception centers and most benefits for East German resettlers on July 1. Under current arrangements, resettlers report to special centers in West Germany that organize special housing and care until they can find work and shelter.

Lothar de Maiziere, the Christian Democratic chairman and probable next prime minister, outlined March 19 the priorities for the new regime in East Germany. The first priority, he said, was to quickly reach agreement with Bonn on a timetable for currency union. The Bonn government announced March 20 that it would seek an agreement with East Germany by the end of April. It has targeted July 1 as a deadline for merging currencies and social benefits.

### Moving toward constitutional unity

The second priority of the new government, de Maiziere said, would be to move toward the dissolution of the 15 East German administrative regions in favor of five states, like those that existed before Germany was divided at the end of World War II. These states would be similar to West Germany's subdivisions, called *lander*. Each state's government would then vote to enter the West German federation, the Federal Republic of Germany, and accept its constitution.

The plan, devised by Kohl, is designed to avoid alternative calls for joint commissions of representatives of East and West Germany to write a new constitution or for referenda on unification. It would also allow East Germany to enter the European Community under West Germany's auspices, providing it more favorable trade status without filing a separate application for membership and opening complicated negotiations on admission.

The EC, also known as the Common Market, is a trade alliance of 12 European capitalist countries designed to protect European capitalists from capitalist competitors in other countries, primarily Japan and the United States.

Other priorities outlined by de Maiziere include preparing for talks on German reunification with the West German government and the "four big powers" — the United

States, France, Britain, and the Soviet Union. The four are the countries that defeated German military forces in World War II and divided German territory in 1945. These "two plus four" negotiations are slated to discuss issues related to a united German government's role in Europe, especially with regard to existing military alliances.

After World War II, West Germany became part of NATO, a military alliance of European capitalist governments dominated by the U.S. government. NATO's role has been to preserve capitalist rule in Europe, and prevent the re-emergence of a militarily powerful imperialist Germany. East Germany became part of the Warsaw Pact alliance of the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries where capitalism had been abolished. Kohl thus far has promised to keep a united Germany in NATO.

The U.S., British, and French governments see the election results as a boost for their perspective of keeping a united German government anchored in NATO. A more assertive and economically powerful West German imperialism has worried its imperialist competitors and is shaking up the post-World War II framework that NATO represents.

### Borders of unified Germany

Moscow has called for a neutral German government after political unification and is pressing the new East German officials to stay out of NATO. "We respect the choice" in the elections, Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman Gennadi Gerasimov said at a news conference March 19, "but we also expect the new government in East Germany to respect its obligations and our interests." Moscow has also insisted that a reunified Germany guarantee its post-World War II borders, which were not ratified with a formal peace treaty at the end of the war.

The Solidarity-led Polish government initiated a major diplomatic offensive a few weeks ago when Kohl initially refused to guarantee that a unified Germany would accept its current western border with Poland. The Polish government has demanded that it be included in the "two plus four" talks. "Any attempt to change this border simply means war," said Adam Michnik, a leading Solidarity figure. After repeated hostile exchanges with Polish leaders and pressure from other imperialist governments, including Washington, Kohl agreed on March 6 to take steps to reassure Warsaw that a unified Germany would accept its western borders.

Other European capitalist governments, notably Italy, Belgium, and the Netherlands, have also demanded a role in talks on German reunification, prompting a sharp rejoinder from West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher at a March 1 European foreign ministers' meeting in the Netherlands. When the Italian foreign minister criticized the "two plus four" arrangement, Genscher shot back, "You are not part of the game."

The Soviet government is also pressing West Germany to honor trade commitments between East Germany and the Soviet Union, which amount to about 38 percent of East Germany's exports.

Moscow is also asking for guarantees that hard currency not be required as payment for future East German exports.

### Capitalist restoration

In the last few months West German capitalists have been pouring into East Germany, signing trade deals and enlisting East German enterprises for cooperative ventures. So far these only exist as potential exchanges on paper, because East German law currently forbids noncitizens from owning real estate, does not provide investment protections and does not allow for corporate takeovers, and no common currency yet exists. The country has perhaps the most restrictive laws against the inroads of private capital of any Eastern European country where capitalism has been



abolished, even though there has been a high degree of economic interaction between the capitalist West and the noncapitalist East.

These measures express the historic differences that exist in the economic foundations of the two Germanys. In 1945 imperialist Germany was divided by Britain, France, the United States, and the Soviet Union. In 1948, the British, French, and U.S. governments united their zones in Germany into a single capitalist economic unit and instituted a currency reform in what became West Germany.

In East Germany, the Soviet zone, capitalist property relations were overturned and the key industries were nationalized that same year. In 1949 the German Democratic Republic was established.

For Bonn or Berlin to enact measures to dismantle the nationalized property relations in East Germany and establish private ownership of basic industry and transportation would mean changing more than laws on books. It cannot be done by decree. It requires ripping apart the entire fabric of social relations that has been established in East Germany over the past four decades. Restoration of capitalist property relations in East Germany would mean introducing massive layoffs and unemployment, plant closures, cuts in social benefits, and work speedup. Attempting this will inevitably lead to resistance by working people in East Germany.

"The closer that German leaders have looked at union," a *New York Times* reporter observed in a March 20 article, "the more they realize the work that needs to be done to meld two systems that have grown in such separate ways over the last 40 years."

"Even under the direct annexation envisioned by the West German constitution, officials have come to appreciate the work that will be required to mesh entirely different systems of law, medicine, property, taxation, even traffic."

WASHINGTON, D.C.

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# Iowa prison warden challenges 'Militant' coverage of Curtis fight; Curtis writes reply

Mark Curtis, a Des Moines, Iowa, political activist and unionist, is serving a 25-year sentence on a frame-up rape and burglary conviction. He has been incarcerated at the Iowa State Men's Reformatory in Anamosa since December 1988.

Despite limitations imposed on him by prison conditions, Curtis has actively participated in helping to lead his international defense effort. He has corresponded with the *Militant*, writing for the column "Behind Prison Walls." He keeps current on the struggles of working people around the world. And he has been politically active in prison, from defending prisoners' rights to helping with the activities of the Martin Luther King, Jr., Organization, an inmates' group.

The February 16 *Militant* carried an article by Priscilla Schenk and Sandra Nelson that explained prison authorities' charges against Curtis for allegedly gambling on the Super Bowl football game. The article detailed this new frame-up, as well as previous attacks by prison officials on Curtis' rights.

John Thalacker, the warden at the Anamosa prison, took exception to the article and detailed his criticisms in a February 22 memorandum to Curtis. Below we reprint the memorandum in its entirety, and Curtis' March 13 reply. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

## Warden John Thalacker

To: Mark Curtis #805338A-2  
From: John A. Thalacker, Warden  
Subject: The *Militant*

The Feb. 16, 1990, issue of the *Militant* contains several comments or inferences attributed to you which are clearly not in keeping with the facts as relates to your stay at this institution. Such remarks include:

"Curtis also recently won permission to see the video about his case *The Frame-Up of Mark Curtis* after pressuring prison authorities." — Since when does a simple request to see a video and the equally simple response

## Protests needed to defend Curtis

The Mark Curtis Defense Committee is conducting an urgent international campaign to reverse Iowa prison authorities' recent frame-up and punishment of Des Moines political activist Mark Curtis. He was falsely charged in January with gambling on the Super Bowl football game.

Penalties against Curtis have included two weekends locked up; two good conduct days removed from his record; lengthening his sentence; denial of phone privileges; confiscation of his radio; and removal as elected secretary of the Martin Luther King, Jr., Organization, an inmates' group.

Curtis is currently serving a 25-year sentence at the Iowa State Men's Reformatory in Anamosa on a 1988 frame-up rape and burglary conviction. While in prison Curtis has remained active defending his rights and those of other prisoners.

Recently the MLK Jr. Organization won an important victory. Prison authorities were forced to release to the general prison library books by Nelson Mandela, Fidel Castro, Malcolm X, and Piri Thomas after a year-long effort by inmates. Curtis' frame-up on gambling charges came on the heels of this victory.

Protest messages should be sent to Paul Grossheim, Director, Department of Corrections, Capitol Annex, 523 E. 12th St., Des Moines, Iowa 50309 USA; and John A. Thalacker, Warden, Iowa State Men's Reformatory, Anamosa, Iowa 52205 USA. Copies of messages and replies from prison authorities should be sent to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, P.O. Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311 USA.

"okay" constitute pressure?

"The year-long effort to get books by Malcolm X, Nelson Mandela, Thomas Sankara, Fidel Castro, and other working-class fighters and revolutionaries made available to inmates" is also hokum. The Martin Luther King Jr. Organization has had library privileges in the main library for books which they had purchased for approximately six years. They had included titles authored by some of the people you have mentioned.

"Following a barrage of international protests against this victimization, prison officials reduced the major report to a minor report." — The fact is the penalty imposed was modified in the normal appeal process before any protest letters were received, just as other inmates with this same violation and frequency.

"In July, Curtis joined Native American prisoners in a campaign to defend their religious and cultural rights. Prison authorities had denied the Native American inmates a sweatlodge for their ceremonies." — This is equally misleading. The fact is the Native Americans did make a request to exercise their religious beliefs and the request was approved. State funding was used to hire a Native American's consultant to ensure that education in their religious beliefs. This followed examples of sweatlodges being successfully used in other correctional institutions in Iowa.

## Slanted misinformation

Beyond all the slanted misinformation that you are being given credit for, you know that the Supreme Court has ruled for years that in any disciplinary report there is an appeal process, not only at the institutional level, but within the Department, and that any disciplinary action taken can be appealed to the District Court.

While you may have no confidence in the court system in the United States, that is the system that a democracy uses at this point in our nation's history. Interestingly enough, this idea of a democracy seems to be catching on around the globe, too!

It's also interesting to me that in the entire time that you've been in this institution, not once have you ever approached me in the yard, the cellhouse, or anywhere else to talk with me about any problem that you were experiencing as an inmate here. This includes the time that you and your wife were in the dining line with me when I spoke to the Martin Luther King Jr. Organization in early 1989.

Given your interest in freedom, I am sure you would want to share this material... unedited... with the readers of the *Militant* so that they will not only understand the facts, but your future comments as well.

## Mark Curtis' reply

John A. Thalacker  
Warden  
Iowa State Men's Reformatory  
Anamosa, Iowa 52205

Dear Mr. Thalacker,

Your February 22 letter argues that an article written by Priscilla Schenk and Sandra Nelson in the Feb. 16, 1990, *Militant* newspaper "contains several comments or inferences attributed to you [Curtis] which are clearly not in keeping with the facts as relates to your stay at the institution." You claim that the summary of recent events in the prison contained in the article is "slanted misinformation that you are being given credit for."

After carefully reading your letter, reviewing this as well as past *Militant* articles, and discussing with other inmates the points you raised, I reject your criticism. I stand by the article as accurate. In answer to the specific points you raised:

1. When the videotape *The Frame-Up of Mark Curtis* arrived for me at the mailroom, I was told by personnel there that I would not be allowed to see it and that it would have to be returned. When I went to see my counselor, Mr. Steve Wendl, he was already aware of the video being here, and had already checked with your office to see if I would be allowed

to see it. He informed me that your office replied that I would not be allowed to view the tape.

This videotape was produced by Nick Castle, a film director whose credits include *Tap*, *The Boy Who Could Fly*, and *Escape from New York*.

The video includes footage from my trial, about conditions in the meat-packing industry which are essential background to my case, from meetings and rallies surrounding my arrest and defense campaign, and an interview he conducted with me here.

Naturally, I was very eager to see it. I put in a second request, pointing out that this was not "merely entertainment, but was important to my defense as well." It was not until this point that I was allowed to view the tape.

Simple? It should have been, but it was not.

## Effort to get books released

2. You say that the year-long effort by the MLK Jr. Organization to get the books it ordered is "hokum." The group ordered the books in January 1989. When they arrived, they sat in a box in the office of the Activities Consultant for more than six months. When the books were finally released to the Organization, it was under a special stipulation that the books remain in the office and not be checked out by anyone.

A proposal was submitted to check the books out to any inmate who wanted to read them. This was denied with no reason given.

Finally, the Organization was given permission to donate them to the main library. Library cards were made up and when the books were placed in the library, all of them were checked out within minutes.

The next week, however, prison authorities ordered all the books recalled. The inmates who had checked them out were required to turn them back in and they were taken out of the main library and again placed under restriction in the MLK Jr. Organization's office.

Finally, in February, the books were returned to the main library and are now being enjoyed by the inmates, and, by the way, are much in demand. This happened in February 1990 — a full 12 months from the date when they first arrived at the institution. Twelve months! Doesn't this sound a little on the long side to you?

3. Last summer I was playing basketball in the MLK Jr. Organization's Summer League Games. During the game, I spit, hitting the edge of the sidewalk near the court, and was immediately given a major report. The adjustment committee dropped me from Level IV to Level III, and I had to do two weekend lockups. Although an appeal of the adjustment committee's decision was ruled in my favor, I spent one week in Level III during which your office received numerous messages urging the punishment be reversed. The following week I was returned to Level IV.

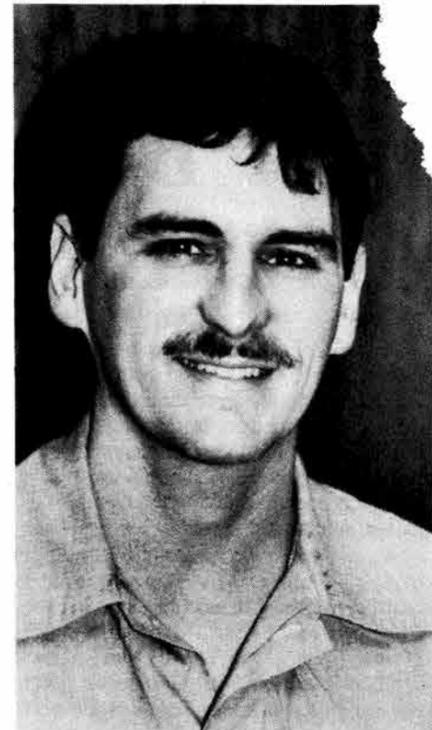
## Ban on non-English publications

This major report was given to me shortly after I won the right to receive Spanish-language books and magazines, including a Spanish-English dictionary and verb book, which had been initially denied to me by your staff. I am still denied all correspondence in Spanish.

The Cedar Rapids *Gazette* of May 19, 1989, says: "Thalacker said the reformatory allows letters and other correspondence if they are written in the inmate's primary language, but merely because a publication is written in a non-English language would not be grounds for denial." Enclosed you will find a copy of the "Notice of Rejection of Incoming Mail" — the "Contraband Notice" where it says quite plainly "Foreign languages not allowed."

In keeping with the appeals process, I talked to the mailroom supervisor, who told me foreign-language materials were not allowed. I also talked with the treatment director, who told me the same thing. When I filed a grievance, it was returned with the statement that this was "not a grievable issue."

4. You say it is misleading to report that Native American inmates have fought for,



Militant/Luis Madrid  
Mark Curtis at Anamosa prison in February. He rejected warden's criticism of *Militant's* coverage.

and are still fighting for, the right to exercise their cultural and religious beliefs. After several years, Native American prisoners have won the right to have a sweatlodge inside the institution. However, they are still not allowed to have certain religious articles such as medicine wheels, dyed cotton cloth, eagle feathers, and needles and beads for bead work.

In a lawsuit filed in U.S. District Court for Southern Iowa against Paul Grossheim, director of the Iowa Department of Corrections, 12 inmates argued, "These rights to Freedom of Religion do apply to individuals, as we have 'individual daily prayers'... That denial of this and these rights can result in the fundamental unfairness and questionable constitutional validity of imposing other peoples' personal feelings toward Native Americans. The Native American religion is the first religion in the United States, yet it is the most neglected, due to unfamiliarized understanding of this way of life."

It was after this lawsuit was filed that the institution granted permission for the sweatlodge to be constructed. The lawsuit is still in court as the effort to win the right to use religious articles continues.

Is this sequence of events accurately summarized in your "The fact is the Native Americans did make a request to exercise their religious beliefs and the request was approved"? I think not. I think the *Militant* article's summary is more accurate.

The *Militant* has solicited regular contributions from me concerning issues of concern to prisoners. I believe it is these columns you have labeled inaccurate. Much of the information in the February 16 article was originally contained in these articles. In fact, as I have tried to demonstrate here, the articles are accurate. It is the allegations in your letter which distort the truth.

However, the purpose of your letter was not to engage in a dialogue about prison procedures. It has been used to violate my basic constitutional right to free speech.

## Prison censorship

On March 1, I was called to a meeting with William H. Soupen, director of activities, and with Jeff Fliehler. Mr. Soupen wrote me a letter with his summary of this meeting. He states, "I told you that in a recent article in the *Militant*, your statements contained inferences which are not accurate, and that the Warden had documented those statements in a memorandum to you, 2/22/90."

"As a result of your documented statements, I told you that you must submit to me, prior to the MLK Jr. Organization meeting, a written text of your intended remarks."

Mr. Soupen was referring to a program sponsored by the Martin Luther King, Jr., Organization on March 4 to celebrate Black History Month, at which I was scheduled to deliver Closing Remarks for the group.

Mr. Soupen writes further, "You asked that if you submitted a written text and I disagreed with your comments, would I censor your remarks. I told you that the text would have to be reviewed before I could comment on your question." He told me, "the Warden had been informed and he concurred." Mr. Soupen warned me that "if you

Continued on next page

# Miners' student auxiliary supports int'l appeal

Mark Curtis is a unionist and political activist from Des Moines, Iowa, who is serving a 25-year prison term in the state penitentiary in Anamosa on frame-up charges of rape and burglary.

The Mark Curtis Defense Committee is leading an international

campaign to fight for justice for Curtis. For more information about the case or how you can help, write to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311, USA; telephone (515) 246-1695.

## DEFEND MARK CURTIS!

If you have news or reports on activities in support of Mark Curtis from your city or country, please send them to the *Militant*.

An example of the growing support among young fighters for framed unionist and political activist Mark Curtis comes from Dickenson County, Virginia. There the student auxiliary of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) has de-

cid to add their name to the growing list of signers on the International Youth Appeal for Justice for Mark Curtis.

"We were all very moved by the treatment of Mark Curtis," wrote student auxiliary President Carmen Mullins and Vice-president Rodney Neece. "We are all very interested in helping. So, we are putting our organization down on the Youth Appeal. If there's anything we can do to help, please say so! We are all alike in more ways than one. Good luck in your fight."

The group helped mobilize support for the UMWA during the miners' strike against the Pittston Coal Group and many are high school students. During the strike, students staged high school walk-outs, participated in union support rallies, made signs and banners, delivered food to picket lines, picketed state troopers, and blocked buses hauling strikers to jail.

New support has also come from

Lusaka, Zambia, from members of the Youth Section of the African National Congress of South Africa. The new signers of the Youth Appeal include Collin Njalo, Gladstone Zenzo, and Bachana Mokwena.

The International Youth Appeal for Justice for Mark Curtis is part of an effort by Curtis' defense committee to involve young people in the defense effort. The appeal explains the importance of defending Curtis and why his fight is important for all young people.

In the next few weeks, the Mark Curtis Defense Committee will put out a new edition of the youth appeal with the name of prominent youth leaders and organizations that have signed it.

Signers so far include Bobby Singleton, a young Alabama civil rights activist; Peace Watch, an organization at the University of Alabama in Birmingham; Chris Nisan, the political coordinator of the Africana Student Cultural Center, and Jeff Meisner of the Palestine Solidarity Committee and the Progressive Student Organization at the University of Minnesota — both in Minneapo-

lis; Erich Christiansen from Youth for Peace in Omaha, Nebraska; Bong Javier of the League of Filipino Students and Thabo Bopape, the project director of the South Af-

rican International Student Congress — both in the San Francisco Bay Area; Doug Calvin, national student coordinator of the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador in Washington, D.C.; and the Young Socialist Alliance.

Canadian signers include Cory Ollikka, the youth president of the National Farmers Union; Sanites Casimar of the Haitian Literacy Project; Aias Pérez Alemán, the deputy chair of the Canadian Federation of Students, western provinces; and the Young Socialists.

In Iceland, the Group Against South African Apartheid has signed and is involved in winning new support for Curtis' defense effort.

The Young Socialists of New Zealand have made circulating the appeal a top priority.

The new edition of the appeal will be printed in French, English, Spanish, Icelandic, Swedish, and Norwegian, and copies are available from the Mark Curtis Defense Committee.

Heather Randle from New York contributed to this week's column.



Militant/Margrethe Siem Gladstone Zenzo, ANC Youth Section member, signs appeal.

# Miners' meetings highlight Kaku tour of Britain

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON — Three hundred British miners and their families heard Kate Kaku, wife of jailed U.S. trade unionist and political activist Mark Curtis, speak March 17 about the campaign for his release. This brought to more than 500 the number of National Union of Mineworkers members and their families, at 10 meetings and socials, who heard the Mark Curtis Defense Committee leader during the British leg of her European tour.

The event was the final one in the two-week tour. Held at the Empire Club in the small mining village of South Elmsall in Yorkshire, it followed the annual march in commemoration of the deaths of Davey Jones and Joe Green, NUM members killed on the picket line during the 1984-85 British miners' strike.

Kaku attended the 1,000-strong march and spoke at the post-march social at the invitation of the march organizers, the officers of Frickley NUM.

At the march, she met many miners' leaders, including NUM President Arthur Scargill and General Secretary Peter Heathfield; secretary of the Notts NUM, Henry Richardson; secretary of the Durham Mechanics, Billy Etherington; president of the Yorkshire-area miners, Jack Taylor, and Yorkshire NUM leaders Ken Capstick and Howard Wardsworth; and leaders and members of the Women Against Pit Closures organization, which is an endorser of the Curtis defense committee.

Introducing Kaku, Frickley NUM President John Pickin called on miners to study the defense committee's material and support the campaign. Dozens of people took literature from the stall organized by local supporters of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee.

## Meetings at the mines

Kaku first met the Frickley officials at their union office at the pit. Other such pit meetings included ones at Bickershaw and Parkside in Lancashire, Tower and Phumacite in South Wales, and Maltby in Yorkshire. Kaku also met with area officials at the NUM offices in Notts, and she spent 30 minutes speaking and answering questions at a meeting of the North Yorkshire NUM "panel," comprised of delegates to the Yorkshire Area Council from the North Yorkshire region.

The Murton Mechanics organized a social event for the defense committee leader that drew 80 people, and the Tower NUM invited her to address 120 people at a social they organized in support of striking ambulance crews.

As a result of these activities, dozens of NUM members, NUM branches and other bodies, and members of Women Against Pit Closures have endorsed the Curtis defense campaign, contributed financially toward it,

and sent messages of protest to the authorities at the Anamosa, Iowa, prison where Curtis is incarcerated.

Out of Kaku's 40 engagements during the tour many people endorsed the campaign. These include general secretary of the National Council for Civil Liberties, Andrew Puddephat; Labour Party member of Parliament Bill Mackie; prominent Labour Party member and official of the Union of Communication Workers, Peter Hain, himself a victim of a frame-up by the South African secret police in the mid-1970s; and the lord mayor of Sheffield Tony Damms.

Kaku was also able to meet with Mandy Bath, a research officer with Amnesty International. Curtis has filed an application that his case be taken up by Amnesty, and the international organization is currently look-

ing into the matter. Altogether, 1,000 people attended the engagements organized for Kaku by supporters of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, or at which the defense committee leader was invited to speak.

## London rally

A reception and rally organized by London supporters was attended by Miguel Martínez, chargé d'affaires at the Cuban embassy, and by George Johannes of the African National Congress. Transport and General Workers Union general executive committee member Steve Riley was present, along with other members of the 1/1107 branch of the union at Ford, Dagenham. They brought a donation of £250 (US\$400) for the campaign. More than £700 was raised at the meeting.

Ten members of the National Union of

Railwaymen also attended. Their participation followed from a special NUR members' meeting on the case a few nights before. At another such special union meeting in Sheffield, 50 shop stewards heard Kaku.

During the London leg of the tour, meetings were held with Turkish and Kurdish immigrants and with workers of Latin American origin. The chairperson and translator at the meeting of the Turkish Education Group explained that some participants at the meeting had been the victims of the political repression in Turkey. The Education Group has volunteered to translate some Curtis defense committee literature into Turkish and circulate it in the community.

Pamela Holmes in Sheffield contributed to this article.

# Joe Doherty benefit attracts hundreds

BY MARC LICHTMAN

NEW YORK — Some 900 people attended a sold-out February 24 benefit for Joe Doherty, who has been incarcerated at the Manhattan Metropolitan Correctional Center for more than seven years without any criminal charges being placed against him. He was arrested in 1983 for entering the United States without immigration papers.

Doherty came to the United States after escaping from prison in the British-occupied north of Ireland. He was a volunteer in the Irish Republican Army, fighting to end British rule and to reunite Ireland. Accused of killing a captain in Britain's Special Air Services, an army counterinsurgency unit, he was sentenced to life imprisonment.

U.S. courts have repeatedly ruled that Doherty could not be extradited to Northern Ireland on the demand of the British government because the acts he was charged with grew out of a political conflict. The U.S. government has changed its strategy, and is now trying to deport him to Northern Ireland.

People facing deportation generally get to choose what country they will go to, but two successive U.S. attorneys general have argued that it is against the national interest for Doherty to be deported anywhere other than Northern Ireland. Doherty hopes to avoid deportation and is attempting to win political asylum here.

On January 19 Doherty's appeal of the most recent deportation order was heard in a federal appeals court. A decision is expected this summer. If he wins the appeal, he can start the long process of applying for political asylum. If he loses, he could rapidly be deported.

Doherty has from the beginning had a strong base of support among many Irish-American groups, but his support now goes

beyond that. Some 99 members of Congress and nine senators have cosponsored Concurrent Resolution 62 that calls for Doherty to be released on bail and to be given a hearing on his claim for political asylum. Last November the AFL-CIO national convention unanimously passed a motion in support of

the congressional resolution.

Dozens of Irish traditional musicians and dancers, including Mick Moloney, the Greenfields of America, Celtic Thunder, and the all-women group Cherish the Ladies performed at the benefit for Doherty, which was held at Symphony Space.

# Warden challenges coverage

Continued from previous page

address the group without prior submission of the written text, that you would receive a major disciplinary report for disobeying a direct order."

After consulting with the leaders of the Martin Luther King, Jr., Organization, I refused to submit to censorship. Since I declined to turn my remarks over to Mr. Soupen, I was effectively prevented from speaking for the Organization at the March 4 meeting.

This gagging follows recent efforts by prison authorities to victimize me because of my political activities. I was framed by a prison guard on fabricated charges of gambling on the Super Bowl. I was found guilty of a major report, lowered two levels to Level III, and consequently had my telephone use revoked, my visitation rights restricted, and had to surrender my radio and tape player. This report goes on my permanent record, to weigh against me in all future parole hearings. I am also now barred from my elected post as secretary of the MLK Jr. Organization.

Your office has rejected my appeal of this conviction. I have appealed this ruling to Paul Grossheim, director of the Iowa Department of Corrections.

Will your disagreement with my articles in the *Militant*, or Mr. Soupen's disagree-

ment with my "inferences," be used to attempt to gag me or further punish me in the future? Are they an attempt to justify further general restrictions against the democratic rights of all inmates here?

The ideas of democracy are "catching on around the globe," but these ideas do not include censorship and victimization. From South Africa to Eastern Europe, people are demanding and winning the right to read more publications and to reject censorship. They are tearing down walls to win more contact with the outside world. They are releasing prisoners by the thousands, abolishing the death penalty, and demanding freedom of speech and religion.

One of the most dramatic victories for democratic rights was the winning of Nelson Mandela's freedom from South Africa's apartheid jails. Ironically, while millions around the world watched his first speech on television, your institution had withheld a book containing his speeches for one year after it was ordered by the MLK Jr. Organization.

I am pleased to arrange to share your unedited comments with the readers of the *Militant* — including as many inmates as possible. I believe the facts speak for themselves.

Sincerely,  
Mark Curtis

# New Jersey Oil, Chemical Workers aid strikers

Some 8,500 International Association of Machinists (IAM) members struck Eastern Airlines March 4, 1989, in an effort to block the company's drive to break the union and impose massive concessions on workers.

As of the *Militant's* closing news date, Wednesday, March 21, the strike was in its 383rd day.

The Eastern workers' fight has won broad support from working

plant in Geismar, Louisiana.

Some 70 OCAW officials and members from 10 New Jersey locals were on hand, along with OCAW International Vice-president Robert Wages and Secretary-Treasurer Anthony Mazzocchi. After the speakers, the chairman turned the podium over to Borowik to report on the latest stage in the fight against Frank Lorenzo, head of Texas Air Corp., which operates Eastern and Conti-

help Eastern strikers picket Lorenzo when he turned up at Newark International Airport last month.

An Eastern striker and a striking Greyhound bus driver joined forces March 7 to speak at a meeting of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 99R at the Sunland Beef packing house in Tolleson, Arizona.

Greyhound striker Humberto Padilla explained the issues in the strike and fielded questions in Spanish for nearly half an hour. Eastern strike coordinator Gerald Watson also spoke to enthusiastic applause. UFCW international organizer Hugo Caballero urged Local 99R members to participate in the strikers' picket lines in Phoenix. "Their fight is the same as ours," he said. "If we help them now, they'll help us in the future."

The St. Louis Board of Aldermen recently adopted a resolution in support of the Eastern strikers. The measure was introduced by Alderman Ken Jones, who is also a member of the Ironworkers union. At the strikers' anniversary rally March 4, which drew 600 unionists, Jones spoke and read the resolution.

"For one year," the resolution says, in part, "a year of unparalleled change in the world, Machinists at Eastern have been on the front line

in this country, fighting for a decent standard of living, fighting for the rights of labor, and fighting against the dismantling of industry in the United States."

The Boston City Council also sent a message to the Machinists on the March 4 anniversary, reaffirming the council's support for the strikers.

IAM Local 702's headquarters in Miami was busy, as it usually is on Sundays, when *Militant* reporter Selva Nebbia stopped by last month. Strikers came in to get their strike benefit checks, grab a bite to eat, and pick up food from the food bank. Most were wearing the local's new red strike T-shirt that says "Please don't fly Eastern or Continental" in English and Spanish. After picking up their checks, many headed out to the picket line, often with family members.

Striker Rick Walker pointed out to Nebbia the fenced-in parking lots by the union headquarters. "This parking lot was used by us at the beginning of the strike," Walker recalled. "Now the company uses the site to bus in scabs during the day."

The union began using the parking lots after they were abandoned earlier in the strike. "The company no longer had enough workers to use them," Walker explained. "After a couple of months the company objected and agreed to lease the union

100 spaces in the lot.

"But then Eastern changed its mind and decided not to allow us to use the lot at all. So the union took them to court, charging Eastern with violating our lease. By the time the court ruled in our favor, we had no need for the lot, since we were renting space elsewhere.

"But Eastern decided to try to provoke the union," Walker said, "and in late January the company began to bring in scabs through the lot. Now when the scabs walk in, strikers gather by the lot to show the strength of the strike."

The International Chemical Workers Union recently donated \$15,000 to the Eastern Machinists strike fund, the February *Machinist* reported. "This provides valuable support for the thousands of IAM families battling Frank Lorenzo," said IAM International President George Kourpias.

IAM Local 1484 in Long Beach, California, also donated half of a recent \$2,500 arbitration award at Metropolitan Stevedore to the Eastern strikers, the *Machinist* noted. The other half went to International Guiding Eyes, which provides guide dogs for the blind.

Harvey McArthur from Phoenix contributed to this column.



## SUPPORT EASTERN STRIKERS!

people in the United States, Puerto Rico and the Caribbean, Canada, Bermuda, Sweden, New Zealand, France, and elsewhere in the world. Readers — especially Eastern strikers — are encouraged to send news of strike solidarity activities to this column.

Striking IAM Local 1445 President Ed Borowik from Newark, New Jersey, was a guest at the March 7 "BASF Victory Celebration" organized by the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union in northern New Jersey. The celebration marked the end several months ago of a four-and-a-half year lock-out of OCAW members at the BASF Corp.

mental airlines.

In the last few months, Borowik has spoken to several OCAW local meetings in northern New Jersey. At Local 8-575, some 70 OCAW members from the Merck pharmaceutical plant in Rahway applauded Borowik's appeal for solidarity and donated \$500 to the strike fund. The local's newsletter also carried a prominent article on the strike.

Borowik also spoke to Local 8-406, which represents workers at 20 chemical and refining plants. The OCAW members donated \$100 to the strikers and voted to organize in-plant collections at all the plants where its members work. Five Local 8-406 members also turned out to

# Eastern strike actions draw Greyhound fighters

Continued from front page

tour in the United States, also joined the Eastern strikers' picket line.

After picketing for two hours at the airport, 50 people carpooled down to the Greyhound terminal. The Eastern strikers rented a van to make sure everyone could make the 30-minute trip.

Some 75 people picketed the bus station, targeting the door to the terminal and the bus exit and entrance ways. Some Eastern strikers were surprised to see a group of uniformed thugs from Vance/APT, hired by Greyhound. These are the same strikebreakers used by Pittston Coal Group against the United Mine Workers of America.

"All the commotion is that people are starting to stand up to fight for their rights," explained Eastern strike coordinator Joe Mos to passersby on the busy downtown street. Pointing to the garment workers, oil workers, Machinists, rail workers, and other unionists picketing with the Greyhound drivers, Mos urged people, "Support your fellow workers! Don't patronize a scab operation."

Jim Cushing-Murray, an official from the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU), which represents the Greyhound strikers in Los Angeles, thanked everyone for coming. As the picket line ended, chants of "We'll be back! We'll be back!" went up.

The leaflet for the March 31 Eastern strike solidarity picket line already includes a call to join the Greyhound picket that day as well.

A "March for the Eastern Strikers" was also held in Alexandria, Virginia, near Washington, D.C., March 18. Some 45 strike supporters made the mile-and-a-half march from a sailing marina to National Airport, where they were joined by 25 members of the Seafarers' International Union and other Eastern strikers.

The march was led by Paul Baicich, president of striking Eastern Machinists Local 796, and Frank Motsay, president of ATU Local 1610. The lead banner read, "Eastern and Greyhound: Two strikes — one goal."

"Fred Currey, the owner of Greyhound, is a clone of Frank Lorenzo," said Motsay at the rally after the picket line. He was referring to the owner of Eastern's parent company, Texas Air Corp. "We will continue our solidarity and our support to one another. Our message is loud and clear. Negotiations should take the form of negotiations, not dictatorship. We will continue to have solidarity in our battles."

An expanded picket line also took place the day before at New York's La Guardia Airport.

A week earlier, on March 10, a solidarity picket line held by Eastern strikers at Detroit Metropolitan Airport drew a contingent of Greyhound strikers, members of a dozen other unions, and high school and college students.

At the rally which closed the two-hour picket, Eastern strike coordinator Tom Barker, from Machinists Local 141, told the crowd that it would have been impossible for the Detroit Eastern strikers to have held out for an entire year — keeping up their spirits and their picket lines — without the solidarity shown by the rest of the labor movement, which has supplied not only funds but people for the picket lines.

When Barker asked the pickets if they wanted to come out to the airport again, the answer was a resounding "Yes!"

Striking Machinists Local 796 member Nancy Brown from Alexandria, Geoff Mirelowitz from Los Angeles, and Diane Sarge from Detroit contributed to this article.



In Los Angeles on March 17, striking Greyhound and garment workers teamed up with Eastern Airlines Machinists for a picket line that began at the airport and ended at the bus station.

# Eastern workers donate food to N.Y. garment strikers

BY MAREA HIMELGRIN

BROOKLYN, New York — Machinists on strike at Eastern Airlines expressed their solidarity with garment workers fighting for union recognition at Domsey Trading Co. by donating a van-load of food to them on March 12. The seven-week-old strike by Domsey workers is aimed at winning recognition for the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU).

Some 40 Domsey strikers, who are mostly from Haiti, were part of a contingent of 75 garment workers that attended the Eastern strikers' anniversary rally held March 4 at La Guardia Airport.

ILGWU International President Jay Mazur and Executive Vice-president Edgar Romney spoke at the airport rally and described the ILGWU organizing drive.

Domsey Trading made \$13 million last year in sales of used clothing at their Brooklyn outlet and through exports to Third World countries. The 300 workers, who sort the clothing and pack it in cargo containers, make \$3.75 an hour with no overtime pay or benefits. Bosses refuse to learn workers' names, instead calling them by numbers.

A contingent of New York cops guard the entrances to Domsey's store and warehouse and escort several hundred scabs in and out every day. The owner has also hired a

dozen thugs, who spend the day trying to provoke a violent confrontation with strikers.

"The other day, one of the goons crossed the police barricades to try to get into a fist fight with me," explained ILGWU organizer Evens Heurtelou.

"And last week, this boss did something I'll never forget," Heurtelou continued. "He led over 200 workers and supervisors out of the plant, chanting cuss words at us. He marched them right up to the barricades. The scabs had been told that they were going to have to fight for their jobs, and it was a very dangerous situation. The police just stood there looking surprised."

"But we were determined to be disciplined. We just chanted, 'Union! Union! Union!' until they went back into the plant."

"We're out here, keeping the picket line strong, waiting for the National Labor Relations Board to set a date for a vote where the workers can choose to be represented by the ILGWU," explained TiGus, an organizer for the union who launched the Domsey organizing drive.

"Everybody hired after the strike started won't be able to vote," he said, "and we know we will win. Then the law says the employer has to give everyone their jobs back and bargain with us for a contract."

The strike at Domsey is part of a larger ILGWU "Campaign for Justice" in Brooklyn. The campaign is targeting 148 factories affiliated with the Williamsburg Trade Association. So far petitions have been filed at 37 factories for union representation elections. Workers are demanding that elections be held now at these factories, although a company union — "Local 17-18" — has a contract with the entire association.

According to union lawyers the matter is tied up in the court system.

A victory for the union was recently won when Miguel DeJesus, a presser at Made-moiselle Knitwear, the largest shop targeted by the organizing drive, got his job back with three months' back pay. DeJesus had been illegally fired for union activity.

On his first day back at work, DeJesus wore an ILGWU T-shirt to make sure the union got credit for his rehiring. Soon after, many workers who are part of the in-plant organizing committee had a day where they showed up in ILGWU T-shirts — a courageous show of unity in a factory where intimidation is common.

Marea Himelgrin is a member of ILGWU Local 62-32 and a volunteer in the Brooklyn organizing campaign.

# Greyhound steps up attacks on strikers; labor support grows

BY SUSAN LaMONT

While labor support for striking Greyhound workers continues to grow, company attacks and violence-baiting of the strikers is also escalating.

Striking Greyhound driver Roger Cawthra was arrested March 16 in Hartford, Connecticut, four days after a scab-driven Greyhound bus was reportedly shot at on a highway near Farmington, Connecticut. No one was injured. Cawthra was charged with reckless endangerment and weapons violations; bond was set at \$100,000.

On March 9 Cawthra and other Hartford strikers were videotaped by Greyhound personnel at a picket line honoring Bob Waterhouse, the striker who was killed March 3 on the picket line in California.

Following the shooting incident, the scab driver described the alleged assailant as a "heavy-set white man," although he admitted not having seen his face. When shown the videotape of the picket line, however, the scab fingered Cawthra, supposedly on the basis of his build and because of the car he was driving. "How can you identify someone on the basis of their body?" asked Hartford striker James Finklea the day after the arrest. "It seems like they're trying to set him up."

On March 18 federally mediated talks between Greyhound and the Amalgamated Transit Union broke off after Greyhound's chief negotiator P. Anthony Lannie charged strikers with "intimidation, violence, and terrorism."

"We view the company's declaration as just another effort to engage in smear tactics against the union and as a phony excuse to break off contract talks with the union," said Amalgamated Transit Union spokesman Nick Nichols. The strikers are in the ATU.

Some 9,000 Greyhound bus drivers, mechanics, cleaners, and clerks struck the only nationwide U.S. bus company on March 2 after Greyhound refused to back off from union-busting contract proposals. The company is demanding the unrestricted right to contract out maintenance work and routes, gutting of the union's grievance procedures, elimination of seniority, cuts in medical benefits, no wage increases, and more. Union members rejected the pact by a 92 percent majority.

## Scabs hired

Greyhound has been hiring scabs in an effort to break the strike and get its operations going again, although strikers report that only a fraction of the regularly scheduled runs are taking place. In Newark, New Jersey, strikers set up a week-long picket line at a local hotel after an ad for scab drivers appeared in the Newark *Star-Ledger*. Despite the offer of a \$2,000 sign-on bonus, few applicants turned up.

Strikers on the picket lines in some cities have been struck and injured — and one killed — by buses driven by poorly trained scab drivers. Buses coming into and out of terminals are often under heavy police escort.

Greyhound has obtained court orders limiting the size of union picket lines in 14 cities. In Jacksonville, Florida, the company obtained a consent decree in which the union agreed to end all picketing at Greyhound facilities after a shooting incident in which several passengers were reportedly injured.

## Rallies back strikers

Greyhound strikers are seeking — and getting — support from the labor movement, including rallies and help on the picket lines.

On March 14 some 800 steelworkers marched through downtown Pittsburgh in support of Greyhound strikers there. The United Steelworkers of America officials and members were in town for a union meeting on health and safety issues. A contingent of striking Eastern Airlines Machinists also joined the march.

In Boston construction workers and Eastern strikers were among the 300 unionists who turned out to back Greyhound strikers at a March 14 rally at the downtown bus terminal. Eastern strikers have been dividing their time between Eastern's downtown ticket office and the Greyhound terminal, in addi-

tion to picketing the airport.

A rally of 400 unionists took place in Philadelphia on March 16. As they were listening to speakers, word spread that Greyhound would try to move a bus into the terminal. The crowd quickly moved to block the terminal entrance. Chanting "No scabs!", unionists spilled into the street, halting traffic until mounted cops waded in to disperse them. Four strike supporters were arrested, most from Teamsters Local 115.

In Birmingham, Alabama, more than 100 strikers and other unionists turned out for a rally March 17. Local ATU official K.B. Tiddell reports three Greyhound strikers in Mobile, Alabama, have been hit by scab bus drivers. Drivers who had crossed the picket line and then rejoined the strike said that Greyhound is telling the scab drivers to run over pickets, Tiddell added.



Militant/Michael Carper

Philadelphia cops arrested four unionists at March 16 rally for Greyhound strikers

## Farmstead shuts meat-packing plants; workers divided over concessions

BY PHIL NORRIS

ALBERT LEA, Minn. — Packinghouse workers at the Farmstead Foods plant here voted by a 62 percent majority on March 11 to accept mid-contract concessions. The vote was held a month after the company first demanded union members at its Albert Lea and Cedar Rapids, Iowa, plants take the cuts or have the plants closed. On March 5, before the vote, Farmstead "temporarily" laid everyone off at the Albert Lea plant, which remains closed. On March 20, the company announced that the plant was being shut for good.

Workers at the Cedar Rapids plant refused to take the concessions. The plant there was permanently shut March 8. The 1,200 Farmstead workers in Albert Lea are in United Food and Commercial Workers Local P-6. Some 1,400 workers at the Cedar Rapids plant are in Local P-3.

The concessions demanded by Farmstead included less complete and more expensive health insurance coverage, greater company latitude in changing "inefficient" work gang line-ups, doubling the length of the probationary period, and drug testing for those who have lost-time injuries on the job. A company demand that retirees also start paying for part of their insurance was dropped.

The company's final proposal was designed to split the two UFCW locals and frighten union members. "If either plant rejects these changes, the plant will be closed," a company flier said. "Your vote will decide whether you have a job at Farmstead; whether retirees will continue receiving health insurance; and whether Farmstead continues to exist!"

At first, the UFCW International refused to let the locals vote on the concessions. "The company's proposals . . . contain elements which the union believes may be unlawful, particularly as regards reductions in retirees' benefits," said International President William Wynn in a letter to P-3. It was explained to a Local P-6 meeting that having retirees' pay for part of their own insurance would be a first in a union meat-packing contract.

The International also explained that Farmstead would go under even with the concessions. "If there wasn't going to be a death by a heart attack, there was going to be a death by anemia," said UFCW spokesman Al Zack.

On March 9, after the Cedar Rapids plant was permanently closed, the International lifted its ban and allowed the Albert Lea local to vote.

## Resistance at Cedar Rapids

From the time Farmstead made its proposals, the Cedar Rapids local put up resistance. Many workers felt the company was not providing sufficient information. When a vote was scheduled on having discussions with the company about reopening the contract, so many members protested that the vote was canceled. UFCW Business Agent

Dennis Colvin said that Local P-3 was opposed to concessions since Farmstead faced such serious competition from low-wage packers that the company would soon need even more concessions.

One Local P-3 member described the experience of workers from Rath's meat-packing plant who now work at Farmstead. Rath workers took concessions from 1979 to 1983 and the company still closed, he said, adding that all the former Rath workers were against accepting Farmstead's demands.

Local P-6 members voted by a three-to-one margin to hold discussions with Farmstead. After seeing the final proposal, however, many were against the concessions. Most workers in the hog kill opposed the deal, although some thought it was necessary to save their jobs.

Before everyone was laid off at the plant here March 5, a petition was circulated protesting the International's decision not to let the local vote on concessions. In the hog kill, about 12 of 85 workers signed the petition, which was on a foreman's desk for most of a shift. At a shift change, quite a few workers signed it. A radio station announced that a petition would be at the guard shack for those on layoff to sign. More than 300 signed the petition and several people picketed the plant with a sign that said, "We want to vote — right or wrong."

After the announcement was made that a vote would take place, union members who opposed the concessions began to organize. One person put two "No concessions" signs in his yard at home. Another called the Cedar Rapids local to see if some of their members could attend P-6's union meeting and explain

their opposition to the cuts.

Another worker wrote a letter to the local paper. "We have bent over quite a bit to keep that plant open," he wrote. "Our wage is still \$1.77 per hour less than it was seven years ago. Our benefits were mutilated, we lost vacation time, speed changes, etc. . . . Now I ask, are we expected to bend over until our faces are completely in the dirt? I should say not!"

The Executive Board of Local P-6, however, unanimously voted to approve the cutbacks.

## Discussion at meeting

At the union meeting to discuss the company's demands, one worker pointed to the Greyhound and Eastern Airlines strikes. "We should stand up and fight," he said. "We can win a victory here." Another worker said a majority didn't want to vote, pointing out that only 300 signed the petition. Another said that some people wanted the right to vote, but what they meant was the "right" to take concessions. A woman worker said that if they took concessions now, the company would soon be back for more. All of these comments got loud applause.

Only Local President Derby Olsen spoke in favor of the concessions, and he received some applause. At the vote itself, people carried picket signs opposed to concessions.

Although the concessions proposal passed, many Local P-6 members felt they had put up an important fight.

*Phil Norris is a member of UFCW Local P-6 and works in the hog kill at Farmstead's Albert Lea plant.*

## Carpenters back San Jose strikers

BY RICK TRUJILLO

SAN JOSE, Calif. — On March 13 nearly 300 Carpenters union members took a break from their state convention to march to the bus station here in support of striking Greyhound drivers. Some 75 delegates returned to the picket lines the next two days.

The carpenters' actions were a boost to the already high morale of the 17 San Jose Greyhound strikers in Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1225. "With this kind of support, we can beat Fred Currey," said one striker, referring to the Greyhound chairman.

John Campbell, a Greyhound driver who heads up solidarity work for the San Jose strikers, spoke to the Carpenters union gathering. Despite company claims, Greyhound is only managing seven out of 47 daily scheduled pullouts or connections in San Jose, he told cheering delegates. No San Jose strikers have crossed the picket line. A collection of \$2,050 was presented to the strikers.

ATU Local 265, which represents 1,600 bus drivers, mechanics, and light-rail workers

in Santa Clara County, has been backing the strikers and is organizing a campaign to get its members to walk the strikers' picket line.

On March 7 a picket line of 45 stopped three Greyhound buses at the San Jose terminal, delaying them for 45 minutes.

The Santa Clara County Central Labor Council strike support committee has called another mass picket line for March 30.

"Solidarity is the key," said Campbell, speaking at an Eastern strike support rally at the University of California, Berkeley, on March 16. "Like the Eastern strikers, we have to reach out to all our allies."

Campbell reports that a Spanish-language leaflet about the fight at Greyhound is in the works. "Our Latino sisters and brothers, who make up a large portion of our passengers, need to find out the facts about the strike," he said.

*Rick Trujillo is a shop steward and coordinator of strike support and solidarity for ATU Local 265.*

# Salvador refugees' future in Nicaragua is uncertain

BY SUSAN APSTEIN

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — What will Salvadoran refugees in Nicaragua face after President-elect Violeta Chamorro takes office here April 25?

This question is on the minds of tens of thousands of Salvadorans who have been welcomed here over the past 10 years, after being forced by the repression of the U.S.-backed regime in San Salvador to leave their country.

Estimates of the number of Salvadorans in Nicaragua range up to 40,000. Some are liberation fighters in the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) who were wounded in action. Others fled to escape the brutality of the Salvadoran army.

One of the refugee organizations here is Resalcoop (Salvadoran Refugees in Cooperatives). It organizes a farm cooperative, medical clinic, restaurant, auto repair school, and child-care center. Two other groups, Procares and Acres, are also active.

Resalcoop depends on donations from solidarity organizations in other countries, explained the group's director, Vladimir Hernández. He is hopeful these will continue.

The refugee group has been able to function in Nicaragua only because the government headed by the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) welcomed Salvadorans "as productive members of society," Hernández stressed.

But today Salvadorans are concerned about statements made by Virgilio Godoy, Chamorro's vice-president. "Godoy vowed he will personally escort Salvadorans — and activists from other countries — to the airport because we will not be welcome here," Hernández said.

Most Salvadorans here are supporters of the struggle against Washington's domination in the region and partisans of the Nicaraguan revolution, which overthrew the U.S.-backed Somoza dictatorship in 1979.

Many expressed their solidarity with Nicaragua in the war to defeat the contras. Some Salvadorans even joined workers' and peasants' militias. Others have participated in community health brigades.

## Threatened by Chamorro supporters

Now, some of the refugees are being threatened by backers of UNO, the National Opposition Union coalition that defeated the Sandinista Front in the elections. Hernández said that a few days after the voting, an UNO supporter walked into the Resalcoop restaurant in Managua, well known as a Salvadoran cultural center, and warned that as soon as Chamorro takes office the cafe will be closed down.

Salvadorans working at a Managua carpentry cooperative organized by the refugee group Acres were startled by a loud voice outside on the street shouting, "The good life just ended for you. Wait until April 25!"

Others woke up the morning after the elections to find signs on the doors of their houses telling them to pack their bags and leave the country, or threatening to destroy their homes.

According to Alejandro Gaitán, a member of UNO's political council, the new government has not determined its policy toward Salvadoran refugees. But once in office, "We will be able to find out how many Salvadorans are here and what they've been doing."

Gaitán said UNO "suspects" many have been carrying out "logistical support" for the FMLN. Any Salvadorans "involved in politics" will have to leave, he said, predicting that many "will want to go" because "they are going to feel very differently here with an UNO government."

Strong ties of solidarity between Salvadoran and Nicaraguan revolutionaries were forged in the early 1980s, when an upsurge in the liberation struggle in El Salvador and the formation of the FMLN followed on the heels of the workers' and peasants' victory here.

A leader of the FMLN in Managua, who asked that his name not be used, said the organization does not yet know if it will be able to keep offices here. But, he added, "We won't have to wait very long to find out what

kind of government UNO is going to be. Will, as some say, the democratic gains of the past 10 years remain? Or will we start seeing death squads here?"

"What the U.S. government wants is for nothing of the FMLN to be left in Nicaragua," he stressed. "They will put pressure on the Chamorro government to get us out."

According to the FMLN leader, Salvadoran President Alfredo Cristiani is optimistic that the end of the FSLN government in Nicaragua and the "economic problems Cuba is facing" will weaken the Salvadoran liberation front. Cristiani, he said, has been pulling back in recent weeks from an earlier commitment to negotiate with the FMLN, "setting more and more preconditions the FMLN must meet before talks can begin."

In November of last year, he said, the FMLN "launched its biggest military offensive of the war to demonstrate its strength" in an attempt to force the opening of negotiations. "If Cristiani thinks the result of the elections in Nicaragua has weakened us, another demonstration of our strength may unfortunately be necessary."

The Salvadoran leader contrasted the freedom refugees have found in Nicaragua to conditions they have faced in Honduras. "There our people were forced into concentration camps, some of which were even invaded," he said. "Some risked their lives to return to El Salvador to escape this imprisonment in Honduras, only to face continued army repression in their home country."

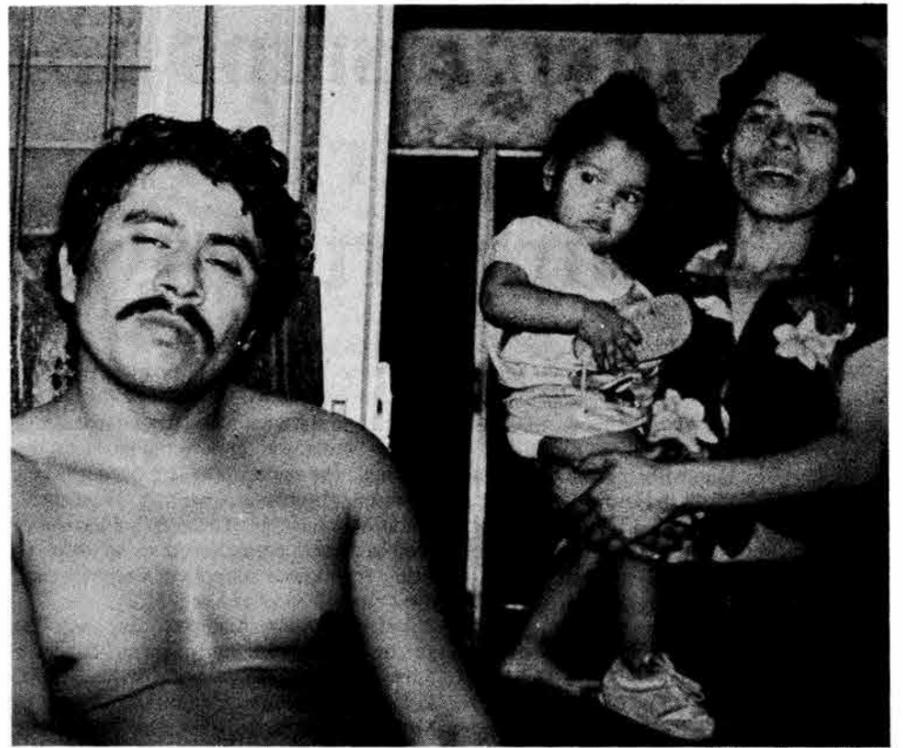
## Threats to freedom

The freedom they have found in Nicaragua — and the new threats to it — are uppermost on the minds of the families who live and work at the Oscar Figueroa Resalcoop farm. On three acres just outside Managua, they raise chickens and grow corn and beans. The food goes to help support the other Resalcoop projects.

Sitting on the back porch of their home one evening, five members of the cooperative talked quietly about what the future might bring.

Carmen has been at the farm for four years. "With the loss of Daniel Ortega, we're worried. We don't know what's going to happen," she said. Roberto added that the Salvadorans are waiting to see how the Nicaraguan people will respond to the new government's policies.

They don't know if they will be able to continue farming. Their neighbors, who also



Roberto and Isabel, Salvadoran refugees who are members of a farm co-op outside of Managua. Victory of pro-U.S. candidates in recent election raises question of fate of thousands of Salvadorans who have fled to Nicaragua in past 10 years.

have small farms, say the old owner of much of the land in the area left the country after the revolution. "But rumor has it he'll be coming back now, claiming the land is his," Carmen said.

A large number of refugees here are peasants. The FSLN government had given many of them small tracts of farmland. Hundreds of such cooperatives were established throughout the country.

Isabel and Roberto explained that the refugees hope to get work permits, or some kind of residency papers, before the new government takes office.

Carmen's 10-year-old son, who has Down's syndrome, traveled from Nicaragua to Cuba for a year-long medical evaluation and treatment. Since he returned, he has been cared for at the Resalcoop medical clinic.

Liberation fighters wounded in El Salvador's civil war receive long-term rehabilitation treatment at the clinic. Many first go to Cuba, by way of Mexico. In Cuba, they obtain the immediate medical care they need.

"Nicaragua has been like a rear area for us," Luis said. "The revolution here has made it possible for many, many fighters to come here to recover."

The discussion among members of the cooperative soon turned to the situation in El Salvador. Ramón, who heads the co-op, said negotiations between the Cristiani government and the FMLN would make it possible "to end the bloodletting that is destroying the country."

The most recent political initiative by the

FMLN, announced in San Salvador March 13, was well received by the co-op members. The FMLN said it will suspend attacks on most nonmilitary targets in order to "strengthen the possibilities for a negotiated political solution."

"Cristiani has to be pushed, by every possible means," Ramón said, "so that what his government says doesn't end up being just demagoguery." More pressure is needed to persuade "the most recalcitrant sectors" to accept negotiations, he added.

## Pressure to 'repatriate'

The Salvadoran organizations here consider that present conditions in El Salvador preclude the return of refugees.

Simón Flores, director of Acres, believes that under the Chamorro government there will be pressure on Salvadorans to "repatriate," including from the office of the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees. But "repatriation can only be voluntary," he insisted.

"The FSLN government, on the other hand, never treated us like refugees," Flores explained. "We didn't have to register here as refugees — something the Salvadoran embassy always wanted us to have to do."

Acres and the other groups, he said, will continue to appeal for aid from international refugee organizations. Even more important, Flores emphasized, will be "making our presence here known and taking the message to solidarity groups around the world that we need their support now more than ever."

# Kentucky coal strikers fight frame-up

BY JIM ALTENBERG

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — Union coal miners on strike in eastern Kentucky traveled to Pennsylvania and West Virginia March 4 to build support for their strike and for five fellow members who were arrested in February and framed on false charges.

"It's clear what they are trying to do to us," said United Mine Workers of America Local 1812 Financial Secretary Lonny Tackett, in a telephone interview. The company wants to use the charges to further interfere with the union's picket line and strike activities, he said.

The 50 members of UMWA Local 1812 at Mine 29 Mining and Processing in Robinson Creek, Kentucky, struck October 2 along with six other UMWA locals in the region, protesting the sale of coal to then-struck Pittston Coal Group.

Six coal companies agreed not to fill Pittston orders and the UMWA locals returned to work October 6. At Mine 29, however, owner BethEnergy, Inc., a subsidiary of the giant Bethlehem Steel Corporation, declared the strike had forced the operation into bankruptcy. BethEnergy then proceeded to "sell" the mine to a group of engineers who renamed it Jackal Mining and reopened it with scabs.

On February 23 five Mine 29 strikers, including UMWA Local 1812 President Freddie Bowling and Vice-president David Wright, were arrested and charged with riot-

ing and criminal mischief for an attack on a Jackal security guard. The unionists immediately denounced the frame-up.

"Everyone of us was at home in bed when it supposedly happened," said Wright.

Strikers have continually faced company violence and police harassment throughout their fight. Early on, a striker was seriously injured after being hit by a truck driven by a company official.

After strikers successfully kept Mine 29 from running coal from its processing plant, the company got a court injunction limiting pickets to five and mandating the picket shack be 35 yards away from the mine entrance.

## Miners take strike on the road

On March 4 more than a dozen Mine 29 strikers, joined by UMWA International officers, took their fight on the road, visiting miners at BethEnergy mines near Johnstown and Washington, Pennsylvania; Bethlehem corporate headquarters in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania; and company mines in West Virginia.

The unionists appealed to other BethEnergy miners by leafletting and explaining their fight at mine portals. "We're afraid that they will be in the same boat next," said Tackett, who participated in the tour, referring to the mine bankruptcy schemes of BethEnergy.

The strike at Mine 29 was "for everyone's

benefit," said Tackett. "We've received 100 percent support." While touring, Tackett reported, he heard of another BethEnergy mine where the name change shuffle had begun.

UMWA Local 1812 is also trying to push back the frame-up of its members.

Company lawyers want the union to accept new restrictions on picket duty in exchange for the company dropping the trumped-up charges against the five strikers. Jackal is also trying to get the union to drop its case against the company official who hit a striker with his truck. The union has refused to accept any such "deals."

## Company uses courts

On March 12, dressed in camouflage, miners and retirees packed the Pikeville, Kentucky, courtroom where a judge granted Mine 29 owners everything the bosses were trying to get the union to accept.

He ruled picketing could only take place during the day, limited pickets to three at a time, and ordered strikers to remove a curtain they had attached to their shack, making it easier for the company and cops to keep watch on them. The charges against the five strikers remain and their hearing was postponed.

Further solidarity tours to get the word out about the strike and the frame-up are in the works. Meanwhile, "we're not going to let our picket lines lapse," said Tackett, "and we're not going to give up."

# Sales drive launched March 17

BY RONI McCANN

The international seven-week drive to win 7,500 new readers to the socialist press began on Saturday, March 17.

Supporters around the world launched the circulation campaign with a kick-off target week, taking the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, *Lutte ouvrière*, and *New International* magazine out to working-class communities and political events in their cities and regionally.

Supporters in Los Angeles won 34 new readers to the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and *New International* the first day of the drive. For the remainder of the target week they plan to hit English-as-a-second-language classes and set up tables with the periodicals in front of the Pathfinder Bookstore.

The results of the first day's efforts in other cities were lower than many supporters expected. By getting into a real campaign spirit, making adjustments in plans for the remainder of the kick-off week, and making the sales of the press a priority on the picket lines, workplaces, and at solidarity activities, supporters can finish off the target week reaching their goals and going into the second week of the drive on schedule.

The goal of the circulation campaign is to win 4,950 subscribers to the *Militant*, 1,100 to the Spanish-language monthly *Perspectiva Mundial*, and 250 to the French-language quarterly *Lutte ouvrière*, and to sell 1,200 single copies of *New International* magazine by May 5.

Throughout the campaign, supporters will be encouraging workers who buy subscriptions to kick in another dollar for the pamphlet *An Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis*, which discusses the worsening international economic crisis and what working people can do to defend themselves from its consequences.

## Eastern strikers

A top priority during the seven-week drive is to approach Eastern strikers, many of whom already know the *Militant*, and urge them to subscribe if they do not already. Many *Militant* supporters, through activities in their union, work with Eastern strikers and are regulars on the Machinists picket lines. At New York's La Guardia airport on the first day of the drive, eight Eastern strikers bought a copy of the *Militant* and one subscribed. Supporters in the New York area who are also members of the Machinists union have taken a goal of selling 60 subscriptions to Eastern strikers during the campaign.

A Teamster member on strike in the Bronx stopped by the La Guardia picket line to learn more about the Eastern strike and also decided to pick up a copy of the *Militant*. During the target week, *Militant* supporters in Philadelphia have decided to phone all readers who are members of the Machinists union, or on strike at Eastern, and whose subscriptions have lapsed, urging them to resubscribe.

Other workers in struggle are more attracted to the paper as well. Supporters in

New York have taken an initial goal of selling 10 subscriptions to transportation workers on strike at Greyhound. Five strikers at the New York bus terminal bought copies last week and supporters plan to return and sign a few up as regular readers during the target week. At a Greyhound strike rally March 16 in Philadelphia, 19 strikers bought copies of the *Militant*.

Three auto workers at the Saab-Scania plant in Södertälje, Sweden, just south of Stockholm, bought copies of the *Militant* at a union demonstration backing the workers' demands for wage increases and other issues. *Militant* supporters in Stockholm plan to return to Södertälje March 24 and go door-to-door in the community where many of the auto workers live, introducing them to the *Militant* and selling subscriptions.

A *Militant* subscriber at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas called to order three papers a week for the drive. He reported on regular discussions he has had with Grey-

## Los Angeles supporters win 34 new readers the first day of the drive.

hound strikers in downtown Las Vegas and hotel workers on strike who he has talked to every week for the last month. Two strikers bought single copies of the *Militant* and Action Programs. His goal is to sell five subscriptions during the drive.

## Getting out into the region

*Militant* supporters in many cities sent sales teams into surrounding areas the first weekend of the drive. In Los Angeles supporters headed for Oxnard to talk with workers in the strawberry fields there. Nine farm workers subscribed to *Perspectiva Mundial* and one to the *Militant*.

In Portland supporters visited members of the paper and pulp workers union on strike in Toledo, Oregon. On March 24 they will travel to Seattle for a demonstration against U.S. intervention in El Salvador and then head out with supporters from there on a sales team to Sunnyside, Washington, to meet farm workers in the Yakima Valley.

Supporters in Oakland and San Francisco have three sales teams outside their cities planned for the week: one to East Palo Alto and two to farm worker areas in Salinas and Watsonville, California. Supporters in Austin and the Twin Cities in Minnesota visited workers in Albert Lea, where a struggle has broken out at the Farmstead meat-packing plant, and also plan to travel to International Falls, where construction workers are still out on strike.

In Britain the first of 10 sales teams to the coalfields headed for South Yorkshire and a miner and miner's wife bought subscriptions to the *Militant* the first day. Eleven miners bought copies of the paper at pit heads (mine portals) and one miner also bought a *New International*.

reliable, and least efficient in New York, according to the unions. Workers at the plant are exposed to serious health and safety hazards as a result, including toxic vapors, paper dust, and devastating noise levels.

The company's demands for more cuts come on the heels of \$100 million in givebacks in wages and work-force levels already squeezed from the unions over the past 10 years. Union members say the current demands are aimed at busting the unions at the *News*.

The *Guild Reporter*, paper of the Newspaper Guild, reported in January that the *Daily News* is converting a former Sears warehouse in Secaucus, New Jersey, into a "scab newspaper site" for use during a strike.

In 1985, the owners broke two unions at another of its papers, *The Chicago Tribune*.

Unionists from the *Daily News* have joined in activities supporting striking Eastern Airlines Machinists and Greyhound workers. A "Unity Rally" to back the *Daily News* unionists will be held March 25 at the Sheraton Hotel Grand Ballroom, 811 Seventh Avenue (at 53rd Street) in Manhattan at 11:00 a.m.

Supporters in Newark, New Jersey, kicked off their target week by visiting bookstores where *New International* magazines were placed during the September-November circulation effort. They received payment for eight copies they had sold.

Following up on earlier placements of *New International* can net sales for the drive. The upsurge in the freedom struggle in South Africa and the advances in building socialism in Cuba will make the *New International* more attractive to fighters today. The seven-week drive promises increased sales of the magazine as supporters take them to work and to political events and discuss the articles in them with striking workers.

*Militant* supporters in Sweden and Britain are making plans to get out the *New International* and subscriptions to the *Militant* to activists and workers opposed to apartheid at numerous events this week.

Supporters in Britain have ordered a bundle of 1,200 *Militants* in preparation for the March 25 demonstration in London where African National Congress leader Walter Sisulu will be speaking.

In Sweden 112 people attending an event March 16 to hear Nelson Mandela bought copies of the *Militant*. Supporters want to focus on selling subscriptions March 21 at events organized to commemorate the Sharpeville massacre in South Africa and Namibian independence day.

Next week the *Militant* will print a scoreboard with the first week's results. The *Militant* urges readers to get involved in the



Militant/Nancy Cole  
Sales at March 6 protest by Haitians in Miami.

campaign and help win new readers to the socialist press. For more information write or call the *Militant* business office at 410 West Street, New York, NY, 10014; telephone (212) 929-3486.

## Subscription Drive SCOREBOARD

DRIVE GOALS	Total	Militant	New Int'l	Perspectiva Mundial	Lutte ouvrière
<b>UNITED STATES</b>					
Atlanta	165	117	30	15	3
Austin, Minn.	75	53	10	10	2
Baltimore	150	112	25	10	3
Birmingham, Ala.	150	123	20	5	2
Boston	190	125	25	30	10
Brooklyn	340	200	60	60	20
Charleston, WV	115	88	20	5	2
Chicago	280	185	45	45	5
Cleveland	110	78	20	10	2
Des Moines, Iowa	160	123	15	20	2
Detroit	250	200	30	15	5
Greensboro, NC	115	90	15	8	2
Houston	145	98	20	25	2
Kansas City	105	78	15	10	2
Los Angeles	400	210	75	110	5
Miami	200	110	40	30	20
Morgantown, WV	150	113	30	5	2
New York	500	280	95	110	15
Newark, NJ	385	210	95	65	15
Oakland, Calif.	185	120	25	35	5
Omaha, Neb.	110	80	15	13	2
Philadelphia	160	108	25	25	2
Phoenix	85	53	10	20	2
Pittsburgh	140	113	20	5	2
Portland, Ore.	100	75	13	10	2
Price, Utah	75	53	10	10	2
Salt Lake City	190	138	30	20	2
San Francisco	220	150	30	35	5
Seattle	140	108	15	15	2
St. Louis	200	162	25	10	3
Twin Cities, Minn.	210	162	30	15	3
Washington, DC	145	100	20	20	5
Cincinnati	7	7	-	-	-
Las Vegas, Nev.	5	5	-	-	-
<b>U.S. TOTAL</b>	<b>5,957</b>	<b>4,027</b>	<b>953</b>	<b>821</b>	<b>156</b>
<b>AUSTRALIA</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>BRITAIN</b>					
Cardiff	59	40	10	7	2
London	162	105	30	25	2
Manchester	74	50	20	3	1
Sheffield	107	65	30	10	2
<b>BRITAIN TOTAL</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>CANADA</b>					
Montral	170	65	20	45	40
Toronto	190	120	30	30	10
Vancouver	115	75	15	20	5
<b>CANADA TOTAL</b>	<b>475</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>ICELAND</b>					
	42	35	3	3	1
<b>NEW ZEALAND</b>					
Auckland	100	80	15	4	1
Christchurch	55	45	6	3	1
Wellington	70	54	11	4	1
<b>N. Z. TOTAL</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>SWEDEN</b>					
Int'l teams	76	45	5	25	1
	155	75	25	50	5
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>7,382</b>	<b>4,906</b>	<b>1,181</b>	<b>1,065</b>	<b>230</b>
<b>DRIVE GOALS</b>	<b>7,500</b>	<b>4,950</b>	<b>1,200</b>	<b>1,100</b>	<b>250</b>

## 'Daily News' strike date nears

BY NANCY ROSENSTOCK

NEW YORK — With contracts set to expire March 30, some 3,000 union members at the New York *Daily News* are preparing for a strike. Workers at the *News* are represented by different unions, depending on their job. The unions are in the Allied Printing Trades Council of Greater New York and negotiate jointly. The *News* is the largest U.S. metropolitan daily, with a circulation of 1.2 million.

The Tribune Co. of Chicago, which owns the *Daily News*, and its New York publisher James Hoge are demanding major concessions from the unions, including wage cuts, reduced vacation time, rollbacks in pension and welfare contributions, and work-force reductions. As the Allied Printing Trades Council explains in its publication, *The Real News*, "The *News* management has delivered a series of contract proposals so outrageous that it is difficult for the unions to believe that they really want a new contract of any kind."

A key issue for the unions is the outmoded printing presses, which are the oldest, least

# Challenges facing the African National Congress

## Interview with Neo Mnumzana, an ANC secretary

The following is an interview with Neo Mnumzana, administrative secretary of the African National Congress Department of International Affairs in Lusaka, Zambia. The interview was conducted by *Militant* correspondents Greg McCartan and Margrethe Siem on March 7. The *Militant* reporting team of McCartan, Siem, and Rich Palser is presently in South Africa.

*Militant.* With the legalization by the apartheid regime of the African National Congress on February 2 and the release from prison of Nelson Mandela on February 11 and the earlier release of other leaders, what are some of the challenges facing the ANC today?

*Mnumzana.* I think the biggest challenge is that the legalization of the ANC and other democratic organizations is incomplete. In

“**We have to see to it that championing ANC positions is as legal as the ANC itself . . .**”

circles that are a bit removed from the South African situation, the legalization has given rise to premature expectations.

The legalization is incomplete because, although the ANC as an organization has been declared legal once again,<sup>1</sup> the positions it champions remain illegal due to very specific laws that have been passed. If the ANC is to be legalized in a meaningful way, its positions also have to become legal. This is one part of the challenge.

We have to see to it that the championing of the ANC positions is as legal as the ANC itself. In the interim we have to address ourselves to those people in the international

1. The African National Congress and a number of other anti-apartheid organizations were declared illegal by Pretoria in 1960.

community, especially those who are apologists for apartheid like [British Prime Minister] Margaret Thatcher, who say Pretoria has released Nelson Mandela and has legalized the ANC, therefore it is time to lift the economic sanctions on apartheid.

We have to make those people understand that the measures that Pretoria has taken, as Nelson Mandela himself has said, are not yet meaningful because they are not yet complete — however positive they may be as a first step in the right direction.

*Militant.* Promoting positions which the ANC advocates, such as those outlined in the Freedom Charter, is illegal then?

*Mnumzana.* Yes, the advocacy of a non-racial, democratic South Africa remains illegal. Right now trials are continuing, treason trials, of people whose “crime” is furthering the aims and objectives of the ANC because they have raised the Freedom Charter.<sup>2</sup>

*Militant.* Is distributing *Sechaba*, the journal of the ANC, still illegal?

*Mnumzana.* Yes. All the publications of the ANC except the Freedom Charter remain listed publications, which means it is a crime to distribute or possess them. So this is why the ANC keeps saying we haven’t gone far enough toward the creation of conditions that are conducive to meaningful negotiations.

As a result of existing repressive laws, we are at a disadvantage vis-à-vis the Pretoria racist regime, which has all the latitude to champion its positions and to speak to its constituency without fear of legal repression. This is not the case with the ANC. If you like, the shell of the ANC has been legalized, its content remains illegal.

There is another equally formidable challenge — the challenge of reasserting the organizational presence of the ANC throughout the country. We have, on the one hand, some

2. The Freedom Charter, adopted by a broad representative congress in Kliptown in 1955 and supported by the ANC, is the guiding document of the national, democratic struggle.

experience because we were once legal in South Africa.

But we still labor under the disadvantage that, in the years since we have become illegal, we have grown as an organization both inside and outside the country. To reassert an organizational presence inside the country is going to entail establishing as much of a national presence as possible.

We used to be very adept at overt organization while we were legal. Now we have to relearn how to organize effectively after almost 30 years, this time as a legal organization. That in itself is not easy.

There is some question of how the ANC in organizational terms is going to impact on the groups that are known as charterist organizations,<sup>3</sup> who are part of the progressive alliance against apartheid. How are we going to relate to the Mass Democratic Movement? How are we going to relate to the United Democratic Front [UDF] and the Congress of South African Trade Unions [COSATU]? All these organizations are very glad to see that we are unbanned. But, as you can imagine, a lot of very serious discussion around the terms of organization have to take place.

*Militant.* Since Mandela’s release he has been able to explain the Freedom Charter

“**We must address ourselves to people like Thatcher who say it’s time to lift sanctions . . .**”

and the goals of the ANC at rallies and through the press more broadly than was possible before. From your explanation it seems there is much more political space for activity in South Africa than legal rights.

*Mnumzana.* There is a lot more de facto political space than there is legal space. A

3. Organizations that agree with the perspectives outlined in the Freedom Charter.

very good illustration of what I am referring to happened several weeks ago. The Conservative Party said they were going to take Nelson Mandela and others to court and charge them with treason because they had been saying treasonable things.

The Democratic Party replied: Yes, according to existing laws you could charge them with treason. The Democratic Party then went further and put their finger on the problem saying: This means all those laws that have declared advocacy of ANC positions illegal should be repealed forthwith in order to make the legalization of the ANC legal.

*Militant.* What is your assessment of the decision by the majority in the National Party and of ruling circles in South Africa to scrap significant aspects of apartheid rule.

*Mnumzana.* It is important to understand that this is a government in crisis, which faces disintegration because the people are united in struggle as never before.

This is a government whose best shots at repression have been outstripped by the struggles of the people — struggles that, despite extreme provocation, have managed to stay as peaceful as possible. This has taken the teeth out of government charges that the aim of our struggle was violence.

This is a government that is in crisis and is therefore taking these decisions under pressure. We have no illusion that they have undergone a change of heart. We think that Pretoria is continuing an old strategy of conceding reforms as a means of trying to diffuse revolutionary pressures.

### ‘Revolution of rising expectations’

On the other hand we are aware that the piecemeal granting of reforms gives rise to the phenomenon of the revolution of rising expectations. The more reforms they grant, the more they have to give. As they rush to keep abreast of developments, they actually go through a process whereby they lose the initiative. And the initiative is falling back into the hands of the South African people.

This is why one of the standard jokes in South Africa today is that even before Nelson Mandela left prison there were two presidents inside South Africa — Nelson Mandela on the one hand and F.W. de Klerk on the other.

It is also important to note that the decisions coming out of Pretoria do not represent a consensus inside the National Party. They represent an effort to strike a balance between contending positions inside the National Party, with the more extreme elements cautioning against the type of moves that de Klerk is making. The more enlightened elements are saying that if he doesn’t move even faster he will be overtaken by events and this

“**Anything that destabilizes a bantustan is a blow to survival of the cornerstone of apartheid . . .**”

will spell complete disaster for Afrikaner rule.

These are the two contending forces that inform the logic of decision making in Pretoria. This means that the government is not at liberty to respond as constructively, effectively, and as responsibly to the needs of the moment as we think it ought to.

*Militant.* Are there signs of sharpening polarization among those who have supported apartheid?

*Mnumzana.* There have been signs for a number of years: the formation of a Conservative Party in 1982, which broke off from the National Party, and the emergence of the AWB, Afrikaner Resistance Movement. In time of crisis the party in power is going to try to do everything it can to keep its divisions under wraps. But if you scratch the surface,



Squatters in Diepkloof neighborhood of Soweto, too poor to live in houses. Mnumzana says the Pretoria regime is “the cause of political, economic, and social problems” faced by the people. This is the basis for unity in the struggle against apartheid, he says.

# al Congress today of international affairs

you can pick up evidence that things are not as tranquil as they would like them to appear.

One striking example is that the regime's defense minister, Magnus Malan, who used to be very vocal as a member of the government, has suddenly become very silent. Another sign is that de Klerk reversed his decision to suppress investigation of the existence of death squads inside the South African Defense Force. He has lately taken the position that the investigations should proceed at

“**Mandela went to Natal  
to turn around the spiral  
of internecine violence and  
affect unity . . .**”

full pace. There are indications that the trail points to Malan.

It is very intriguing how de Klerk will react to the mounting suggestions that in fact Malan may have been directly responsible for the death squads. If the divisions are as we think, he is likely to abandon Malan. If they are not, he is likely to try and cover up for him. He will have a terrible time explaining the reversal of his decision to follow the investigations to their logical conclusions.

Certainly things are not what they used to be for Pretoria.

*Militant. Given the fact that the regime has maintained apartheid through force and violence, what significance do you give the exposed of the death squads and the fact that the government is having to conduct an investigation around them.*

*Mnumzana. The revelations around the existence of the death squads confirm a contention that we have always made — that apartheid's survival is inseparable from the use of violence, both overt and covert, legal and illegal. The very fact that we know about death squads today spells the regime's failure to achieve its objective.*

Many members of these death squads have since come to the ANC asking for protection against the South African government and, in more than one case, even asking for membership inside the ANC. These are people who were supposed to have killed the leadership of the ANC, and today they find themselves inside the ANC.

Almost everything that comes out of their mouths embarrasses their former masters — which spells the failure of Pretoria's policy of apartheid violence to achieve its regressive objectives.

*Militant. One of the first initiatives of Mandela and other leaders of the ANC inside South Africa was to go to Natal<sup>4</sup> and try to put forward a political solution to the problem there. Would you explain why that was so high on the agenda as a pressing political need inside the country?*

*Mnumzana. The significance lies on two levels: first, on the public relations level, and second, even more importantly, on a political level.*

People like Thatcher have never stopped suggesting that the real problem in South Africa is that Blacks are killing Blacks. And that it's wrong to punish Pretoria with sanctions for the fact that Blacks are killing Blacks when the effect is “Black-on-Black violence.”

On the surface it is obvious that internal warfare has been going on between Black people. But what is equally clear, and Mandela has said as much, is that the government had a hand in fomenting the violence precisely because it wanted people like

4. In Natal Province, located in the eastern part of the country, nearly 3,000 people have died over the last three years in fighting between the Inkatha organization, which includes armed vigilantes, and the UDF and COSATU.

Thatcher to say that the problem in South Africa was “Black-on-Black violence.”

In order to silence people like Thatcher — and there are many of them around the world — it was considered very important to address the question immediately.

### Striving for maximum unity

Secondly, one of the keystones of ANC policy politically, the policy of the Mass Democratic Movement, is to strive for maximum unity of the forces in struggle against apartheid. We have always thought and hoped that all partisans of the struggle against apartheid — this would include most victims of apartheid — would understand that they are all victims of apartheid; that the cause of their political, economic, and social problems was Pretoria; and that they have to unite against Pretoria.

The killings give rise to personal and internecine violence as well as having a tendency to hide their own logic and to expand.

In Natal it was quite possible that the conflict would spill out of the borders and assume organizational form. Some people continue to say it is actually the UDF against Inkatha who are fighting. But these are supposed to be organizations of people involved in the struggle against apartheid, and you would expect that instead of fighting each other they would be fighting the South African government.

So we wanted to correct that and arrest the cycle and spiral of violence and reestablish unity of fighting forces, which would in turn reinforce the already existing unity on a national scale in the struggle against apartheid. To the extent that we attach primary importance to the strengthening of unity, it then became a priority for Nelson Mandela to go into Natal and turn around the spiral of internecine violence, and bring it to an end, and affect unity between the opposing forces.

*Militant. Nelson Mandela said none of the parties can be regarded as right or wrong.*

*Mnumzana. You have to understand the role Nelson Mandela has been playing since even before he left prison and the circumstances under which he operates. Before he left prison he wrote a letter as an individual to Gatsha Buthelezi<sup>5</sup> that sounded remarkably conciliatory. He didn't want to leave Buthelezi with the impression that he was coming into this troublesome situation from a partisan point of view.*

Naturally, what Nelson Mandela wanted to do was to stand astride two opposing forces, which was the only way he could retain credibility in his efforts to bring them together. Being a person with very sound political instincts and also being very responsible, he looked at the situation and was not entirely happy with the way that even the

“**Apartheid's survival is  
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democratic movement responded to the crisis in Natal. He thinks we could have been more political than we were. Of course he then proceeds to be political. He says it is a fight between two brothers and the important thing is to stop the fight, rather than take sides between brothers.

This is an example that you have to be careful not to take too far. It is not the same thing as in the conflict between apartheid and the progressive and democratic movement. There, you have to take sides against apartheid.

When it is between two brothers who are

5. Gatsha Buthelezi was appointed by Pretoria as KwaZulu “homeland” chief minister and heads Inkatha.



Militant/Margrethe Siem  
Neo Mnumzana at ANC office in Lusaka, Zambia. He says that while the “shell of the ANC has been legalized” in South Africa, “its content remains illegal.”

victims of the same oppressive system, your objective should be to end that violence and not to take sides. This has been Nelson Mandela's message, which he conveyed to the people of Natal and to the people of South Africa at that rally.

*Militant. How do you assess the coup in the Ciskei bantustan and the continued struggle there? Is it a blow to apartheid rule?*

*Mnumzana. Anything that destabilizes a bantustan represents a blow to the survival of the cornerstone of apartheid and is a positive development. People like the Sebe brothers<sup>6</sup> are bona fide enemies of the people.*

6. “President-for-life” Chief Lennox Sebe, head of the Ciskei bantustan, was ousted from power by Brigadier Oupa Johua Gqozo on March 4.

To remove them from power, however dubious that power is, represents a positive development. The fact that the coup was possible, in addition to the coup in the Transkei and the fact that there is deep unrest in Gazankulu, shows that after all these years the Pretoria racist regime has failed to consolidate the existence of the bantustans.

The fact that these things have happened also reflects the beginning of a shift, a diminution actually in Pretoria's emphasis on the importance of the bantustan, which in turn reflects the rising general crisis of apartheid. We expect there will be more instability, not only in places like the Transkei, Ciskei, Gazankulu, but in other bantustans as well. And in some, it means the government has lost its struggle to try to co-opt our people through the program of bantustanization. This is of course a victory for us and we expect it to grow in extent.

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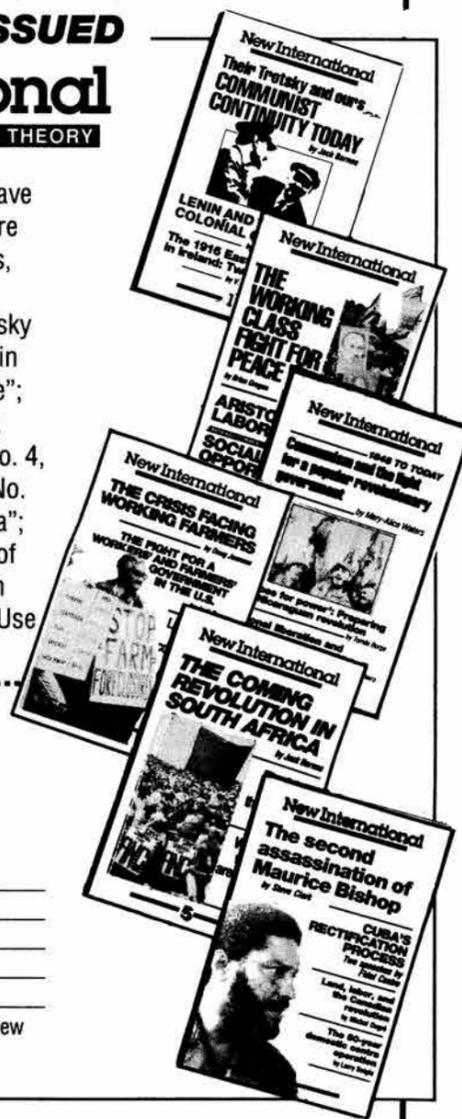
# New International

A MAGAZINE OF MARXIST POLITICS AND THEORY

The six issues of *New International* that have appeared since its founding in 1983 feature articles of importance to workers, farmers, young people, and activists in today's struggles. Included in No. 1 is “Their Trotsky and Ours: Communist Continuity Today”; in No. 2, “The Working-Class Fight for Peace”; in No. 3, “Communism and the Fight for a Popular Revolutionary Government”; in No. 4, “The Crisis Facing Working Farmers”; in No. 5, “The Coming Revolution in South Africa”; and in No. 6, “The Second Assassination of Maurice Bishop” and “Cuba's Rectification Process: Two Speeches by Fidel Castro.” Use the form below to order your copies.

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# Workers, peasants, students press for democratic rights in El Salvador

BY SETH GALINSKY

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador — Trade union, student, peasant, and community activists here are stepping up their activities to win back democratic rights taken away when the government declared a state of siege in November 1989.

On March 8 the Legislative Assembly, dominated by the Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA), voted to extend the state of siege 30 days. The suspension of constitutional rights began on November 12 after rebel fighters of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) launched a military offensive both to protest repressive acts by the government and to press for negotiations.

Some features of the emergency measures, including press censorship and a curfew, have been ended. Others, such as requiring army or National Guard authorization for meetings of more than five people at a time and the holding of suspects for up to 15 days without

## More than 500 political prisoners are still being held in jails across the country.

charges, remain in effect. Heavily armed police often stop passersby to conduct searches and check documents. Armored vehicles and truckloads of soldiers, with their fingers on the triggers of semiautomatic weapons, roam the streets. More than 500 political prisoners are still being held in jails across the country.

Television advertisements appear every evening with President Alfredo Cristiani claiming, "The only people with privileges in our government are the poor." But statistics show otherwise.

The economic crisis that has shaken El Salvador for a decade deepened in 1989 in spite of \$1.4 million a day in U.S.-government aid. The per capita gross national product fell by 3 percent, the sharpest decline since 1982. Inflation rose to 21 percent.

Last June Cristiani officially inaugurated his emergency economic program. He announced plans to privatize banks and parts of some public institutions. Electric, water, and telephone rates were raised and the prices of 250 products, controlled until then, were allowed to float.

At the same time repressive actions against opposition groups increased. In July soldiers fired on protesting students at the national university, wounding 10.

On October 31 the headquarters of the National Federation of Salvadoran Workers' Unions (FENASTRAS) was demolished by bombs placed in the back of a truck. Internationally known leader Elizabeth "Febe" Velázquez and nine other union leaders were killed.

The FMLN, which had been negotiating with the government for a peaceful solution to the 10-year armed conflict, broke off talks. In an official statement after the attack on Fenastras, the FMLN said, "We must not allow our presence in the dialogue to be used to cover up the government's responsibility for that massacre."

## Guerrilla offensive

On November 11 the guerrillas launched a large-scale offensive. The FMLN won control of some working-class neighborhoods in San Salvador, San Miguel, and other parts of the country for several days before being forced to retreat by intense air attacks and the superior firepower of the government troops.

Residents of parts of Soyapango, a scene of heavy fighting east of the capital, were just returning to their homes in early February.

An older woman there referred to the young guerrilla fighters as the *muchachos* — the kids. "The muchachos told us not to leave, everything would be all right," she said. "But then the government started bombing. All the muchachos had were rifles and handguns. A lot of people died here. The government says they were killed by the guerrillas, but that's not true. We blame the army."

Early on the morning of November 16,

government troops assassinated six Jesuit priests and two domestic workers at the Central American University (UCA). Soldiers searched and ransacked the homes and offices of many union and opposition leaders, but most had already gone into hiding.

## Workers fight for democratic rights

At the end of November, when the fighting was over, the teachers' union, Andes, reopened its headquarters. Coaces, a coalition of peasant and credit cooperatives, opened offices in December. By February most of the popular organizations were operating at new locations.

The National Unity of Salvadoran Workers (UNTS), at a February 22 meeting attended by 450 delegates from around the country, mapped out plans to continue to fight for political space.

The UNTS is a coalition of peasant organizations, trade unions, shantytown dwellers, and human rights groups, formed in 1986 in opposition to the Christian Democratic government and the right-wing ARENA party. The government often accuses the UNTS and other oppositionists of being front groups of the FMLN to justify restricting their rights.

Executive committee member Humberto Centeno told the gathering, "The UNTS was born four years ago in the middle of another state of siege and we succeeded in overturning it. The fact that we are here is proof that we will not surrender our rights."

## 'More misery for the people'

The Federation of Independent Unions and Associations (FEASIES) announced the opening of its new headquarters at a February 26 press conference. Several TV stations and newspapers covered the event. José Mazariego, president of FEASIES, denounced the February 12 announcement of a 30 percent hike in the government-set price of petroleum products, that sparked hikes in other basic necessities. "This will mean more misery for the people," he said.

During an interview the next day, Mazariego commented on some of the difficulties faced by unions as well as the progress made in recent days. "As a result of the press conference, workers at two factories that had

## Government hike in petroleum prices sparked price hikes for other necessities.

lost touch with us came by our new office," he said. "Until now, they didn't know how to reach us. We have not been able to visit many of the work sites, especially those outside the city."

In some cases factory owners have used the offensive and state of siege as an excuse for getting rid of unions. Manuel Burgos used to work at Steel, Inc., a metal shop in Zacatecaluca, 20 miles from the capital. "The owners fired 170 workers, including the members of the union executive board, claiming the plant's installations had been damaged by the FMLN," he said. "But that was just an excuse. Now they've hired replacement workers, but they pay them just over half of what we received under the union contract."

## Workers hold union meetings

On February 25 leaders of the Salvadoran Association of Telecommunications Workers (ASTTEL) visited the Central Roma, a major center for the government-run phone and mail system. Denied entrance to the facility, union officials took turns addressing a group of workers inside the plant's main gate by standing on a makeshift platform. Special telecommunications police, heavily armed, made no attempt to interfere in the assembly.

William Berrios, president of ASTTEL, informed the assembly of progress in negotiations. Average wages at the company are 1,000 colones a month, about \$145. "Our main demand is for a wage increase of 500 colones," he said. "We also need to fight to enforce the contract we negotiated in 1985." As the meeting wound down, workers chanted, "Viva ASTTEL!"

According to Mazariego, who is also a member of the executive committee of ASTTEL, even before the declaration of the state of siege, union meetings had to be held in this fashion.

STISS, the union at the state-run social security institute, which operates many of the country's hospitals, has organized a series of meetings around the country.

"Where have you been keeping yourself," one nurse at the public hospital in Santa Tecla, west of San Salvador, asked Jorge Amaya, president of STISS on February 2. "It's about time." This was the first union visit since November.

Amaya rapidly made the rounds of the floor passing out leaflets and inviting the workers to a meeting to elect two new shop stewards, held in the main nursing station.

STISS has also held union meetings in other parts of the country. Hundreds of workers attended in Santa Ana, a city in western El Salvador where little fighting took place in November, Amaya said. But in San Miguel, a city devastated by government bombing during the offensive, only a handful of workers were willing to meet union officials, he stated.

## Unions have lost ground

While unionists have begun retaking ground closed off following the initiation of the offensive, they have not been able to regain what they have lost under the impact of the economic crisis of the last several years.

According to UNTS leader Centeno, the unions face difficulties because "the high

Development (AIFLD). While nowhere near as hard-hit by government repression under the state of siege as the UNTS, 21 of its members were arrested briefly and then released on January 23.

Amanda Villatoro, UNOC president, stated, "We have been dealt heavy blows, but we are not weakened."

## Peasants under attack

Peasants have also faced attacks under the ARENA government, Villatoro added. The government is trying to dismantle the agrarian measures instituted by the previous regime, she charged.

In 1980 the Christian Democratic government of José Napoleón Duarte broke up many of the large landholdings owned by the country's biggest landowners. While the

## By February most of the popular organizations were operating in new locations.

stated goal was for these farms to be run collectively by the peasants through democratically elected committees, in reality state-appointed managers were given veto power over many decisions, including distribution of profits.

The 1980 law also gave individual plots of land to several thousand peasants who rented from large landowners. But this was



Militant/Selva Nebbia  
Soldiers on the streets of San Salvador, February 1990. Armored vehicles and truckloads of soldiers, with their fingers on the triggers of semiautomatic weapons, roam the streets.

rates of unemployment and underemployment have made the workers movement smaller.

"In comparison with the '60s and '70s, with the higher availability of a cheap work force, the unions and federations have only been able to hold on. It has not been possible to force the bosses to carry out the labor contracts already agreed to."

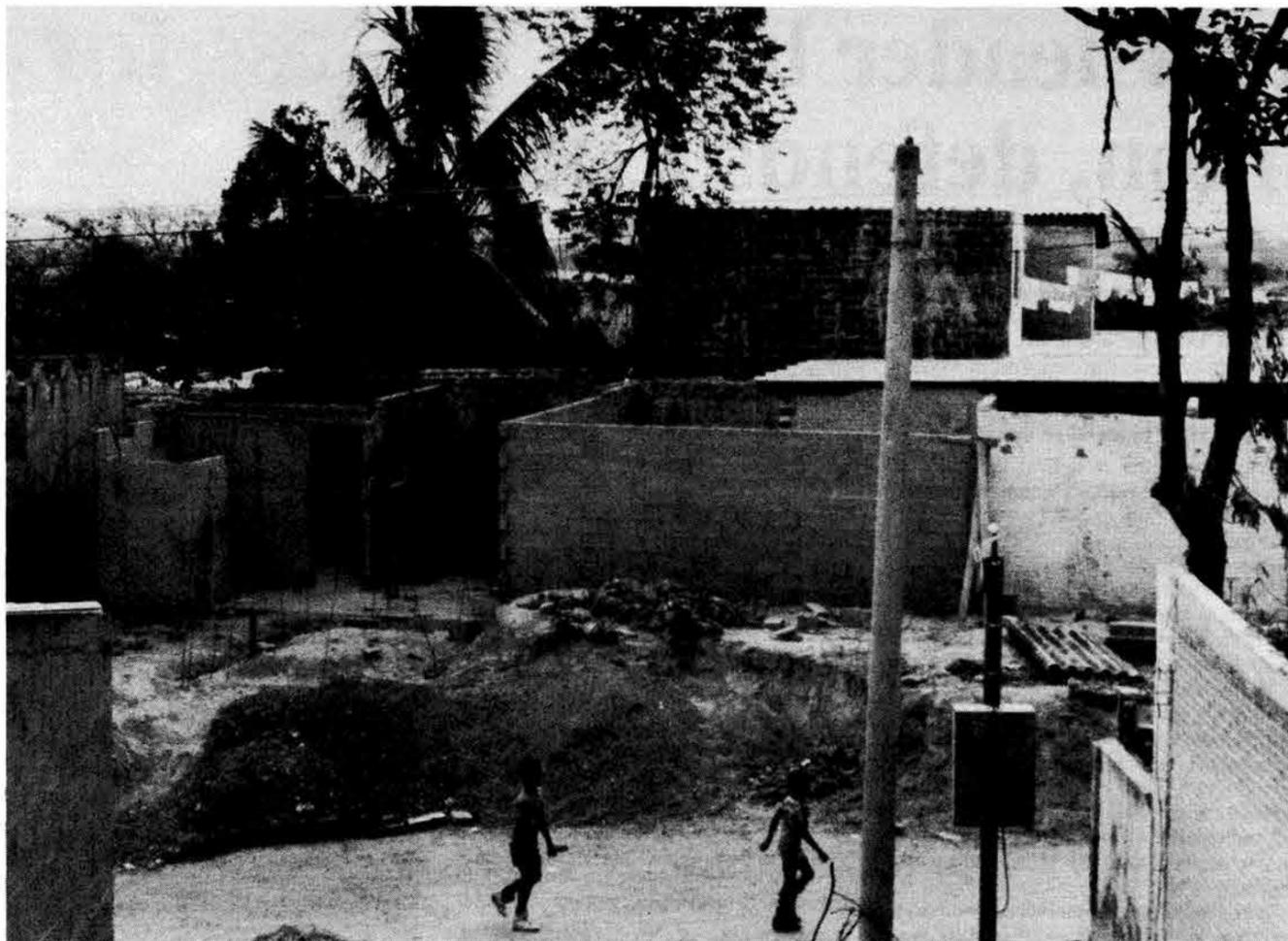
The National Union of Workers and Peasants (UNOC) was closely tied to the previous government led by the Christian Democrats and to the American Institute for Free Labor

very modest and left most peasants without land or enough land on which to make a living.

The ARENA-dominated Supreme Court ruled last year that several collective farms had received land illegally under the law and ordered them returned to their previous owners. In the case of the Hacienda Nueva cooperative, the court gave members 24 hours to vacate.

UNTS leader Rosario Acosta, who is an official of the peasant organization ANTA, described what happened.

"To stop a precedent from being set that



Militant/Selva Nebbia

Children walking by homes bombed out by the Salvadoran army in Soyapango, east of San Salvador — a scene of heavy fighting during the November FMLN offensive.

could lead to the end of the co-ops, we joined with UNOC and organized several thousand peasants to demonstrate on October 16 to back up the co-op members who said they would not leave," she said. "As a result the government backed down and no cooperatives have been evicted yet."

On February 26 the ARENA-affiliated Popular Democratic Unity (UPD) publicized its proposal for a new agrarian law to be presented to the Legislative Assembly. The bill would make it easier for the state-managed collective farms to be dissolved and the land assigned in individual parcels to the peasants. This would allow the land to be bought and sold, which cannot be done in most cases with the collective farms under the present law.

Union leaders charge this would lead to reconcentration of the land in the hands of

### Owners have used the offensive and state of siege as an excuse to get rid of unions.

large capitalist plantation owners. Exploited peasants would be unable to obtain necessary credit and would be forced to sell their plots.

"ARENA says it is better to have their own piece of land," Acosta said. "But what they really want to do is destroy the land reform."

Twenty-three peasant organizations, mostly from UNOC and the UNTS, have formed the Democratic Peasant Alliance (ADC) to defend the state-managed farms. According to Marco Tulio Lima, COACES president, 480 peasant delegates attended a March 7 conference in San Salvador. The meeting demanded more land for peasants, government-guaranteed prices for agricultural products, a moratorium on debts, and an end to all lawsuits against beneficiaries of the 1980 law.

### 'ARENA against everybody'

UNOC and the UNTS belong to the Permanent Committee for a National Debate, a coalition that also includes religious groups and political parties. The committee has organized several demonstrations over the past year calling on the government and the FMLN to negotiate a peaceful solution to the armed conflict.

Villatoro said she expects to work with the UNTS on a wide range of issues over the coming months. "We have not adopted the slogan of everybody against ARENA. What has happened is that ARENA is against everybody and we must work together."

As soon as the FMLN offensive began last November, army troops, which had surrounded the national university campus for

over a year, moved in. Buildings were burned, equipment destroyed, and the campus shut down.

The university has been forced to hold classes at sites around the city, including using abandoned buildings.

At a February 2 meeting between the president of the university, the Ministry of Education, and the armed forces, the government agreed to return the campus. But as of March 16 Col. Francisco Elena Fuentes, head of the army's First Infantry Brigade, has continued to delay the return.

Opposition leader Rubén Zamora, president of the People's Social Christian Movement, believes this is proof that "the real power here is the military, now more than ever."

Another example of military dominance is the case of the killings of the Jesuit priests. While nine soldiers, including Col. Guillermo Benavides — head of the army's military school — have been indicted, many are skeptical that justice will be done. The *Washington Post* has reported that Benavides is kept in a luxury cell at police headquarters and allowed to go to the beach.

José Maria Tojeira, in charge of Jesuit affairs for Central America, said in a March 2 interview, "Progress has been made in the investigation of the material authors of the crime. But the intellectual authors are still free."

"Colonel Benavides did not just do this on his own," Tojeira said. "He didn't even know most of the soldiers involved in the killings until just days before. They spent two hours at the scene of the crime. They even had flares fired to give it the appearance of a firefight with the FMLN. It is illogical to think that he did this on his own initiative," he explained.

The case could take several years before even coming to trial. "There are different pressures," Tojeira stated. "There are forces in the government and army that want to see the prosecution carried out without touching any higher ups. Others want to make it a farce and see Benavides freed."

According to Zamora, in the aftermath of the killings of the Jesuits, there "has been a temporary decline in the operation of the death squads, linked to the military." This is the result of the international scandal following the assassinations, he said, and protests from all around the world.

### 'Concertación'

Héctor Bernabé Recinos, an adviser to FENASTRAS, commented on some of the changes in El Salvador since November. "As a result of the offensive, there is a greater possibility of a political settlement," he said. "It has been proven that neither the FMLN nor the government can defeat each other."

"I would say there are now more points of agreement between labor organizations and

people's organizations.

"Now it is possible to achieve a *concertación* — an accord — between political parties, businessmen, workers, and bosses," he added. "Businessmen themselves have said there cannot be economic development as long as the war continues."

UNTS leader Centeno stated in an interview, "We are following a policy of reaching an accord with opposition political parties and some businessmen, including some that voted for ARENA in the elections, but are now dissatisfied." He added, "ARENA can no longer pretend to talk just for the sake of talking. The moment has arrived for reaching concrete agreements to democratize the country."

### Three points for an agreement

According to Centeno, the Christian Democratic Party, the Democratic Convergence, the National Democratic Union, the UNTS, UNOC, some businessmen, and many church leaders already agree on three points.

"One is that we need an autonomous judicial system that is in the hands of honorable people," he said. "Up until now the courts have been at the service of the oligarchy — really just 10 families — and the military."

"Another simple point is that the role of the armed forces must be reviewed," Centeno stated. "The real power here is in the hands of the joint chief of staffs. We need to negotiate what the place of the high command is in a democratic country, in the democratic republic that we want."

"The third point we all agree on," he said, "is the need to have an electoral system that

guarantees that one day, if we decide to participate in the elections, all Salvadorans from all the social forces and different points of view can participate and be sure that the election results will be respected. There must be guarantees that there will not be fraud as in past years. We need an election council of honorable people who are not tied to the groups that are in power."

Zamora also backed negotiations between the government and the FMLN. "There are really two possible scenarios," he said. "One is that there are serious negotiations that modify the picture leading to participation in the upcoming elections for legislative assembly in 1991."

"The other scenario" he continued, "is that nothing changes and the FMLN will have to launch a new offensive. Otherwise it would look like they have been defeated. This would result in spaces being closed once again, just like in November of last year," he predicted.

### El Salvador and Nicaraguan elections

Zamora commented on the defeat of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) in the elections in Nicaragua.

"One lesson of that contest is that war wears out any government," he said. "If Cristiani does not negotiate a political solution to the conflict with the FMLN, the present government will also be forced out of office here."

"In El Salvador a solution of the conflict is tied to the electoral process," he stressed. "Even though the FSLN lost, the elections in Nicaragua were a victory for democracy. That

### 'The real power here is the military, now more than ever.'

is what we want in El Salvador — the chance to participate in fair and free elections. That automatically implies the possibility of winning and of losing and the chance to run again."

Workers are also discussing the meaning of the Sandinista election defeat.

Carlos Argueta, a worker at the public hospital in Santa Tecla, said, "There are really just two classes of people in the world, the rich and the poor. Doña Violeta Chamorro — the president-elect in Nicaragua — is with the rich. Her victory can't mean anything good for us."

On March 13 the FMLN announced it was ceasing all attacks on public transport, telephone lines, commercial establishments, and civilian officials to "strengthen the possibilities of a negotiated political solution to the conflict." The Salvadoran government has complained that guerrilla attacks on economic targets are an obstacle to negotiations.

"It is now up to Cristiani's government," FMLN commander Salvador Sánchez said at a Mexico city news conference. "He has the ball. Let's see him play it."

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# British miners' leader blasts attack on union, defends Cuba

Continued from front page

workers in uniform. Hundreds of supporters came out of their houses and shops and lined the streets, shouting support to Scargill and Heathfield.

## 'Never more need to defend Cuba'

In his speech to the rally Scargill discussed the developments taking place in Eastern Europe and the talk about the attractiveness of capitalist market economies for those countries.

"They must be joking," he said. "Just imagine. There are nearly 3 million people unemployed in real terms in Britain."

"I'd want a hell of a lot of convincing, if I lived in Eastern Europe," said the mine union leader, "that we wanted 3 million unemployed."

Scargill continued, "Nobody can deny that these societies have been wrong," but there is no way "anyone can sustain an argument that capitalism is the solution or an answer to the problems facing working people."

"There is only one solution," said Scargill, "to take into the hands of working people the means of producing wealth."

In today's world it is actually imperialism that is on the defensive, said Scargill. "I've never felt as confident in my life."

The NUM leader said he knew from history that there will be reverses and setbacks. He explained that when Cuban President Fidel Castro first launched an attempt to overthrow the dictatorship in Cuba in 1953, and was defeated, there were those who said it was the end.

But it was the beginning, said Scargill. "This started a new revolution that was to transform the whole of Latin America."

"Over the next few months you will see mounting pressure on Cuba from the United States of America," Scargill explained to the miners. "You will see pressure on a scale unprecedented."

"Never in the history of our class has there

been a bigger need to defend the Cuban revolution, which was sustained, and has been sustained, by the efforts of ordinary men and women in that society," said Scargill.

The NUM leader said it was time for the U.S. military base that remains in Guantánamo, Cuba, to be removed.

## 'We have right to stand on our feet'

Scargill went on to defend the militant stance of the mine workers' union, saying the union "has the right to stand on its feet and fight back."

Demonstrating and lobbying Parliament are important, he said, but key is the determination to take action. Workers taking action is the only language the employers understand, he added.

"If you don't believe me, ask those brave comrades in the ambulance service," Scargill said. The ambulance workers had just voted to accept the employers' wage offer and end their dispute. The workers "had a public relations exercise second to none."

"And yet after six months they got no more than what they were being offered at the beginning."

Scargill compared the ambulance workers' settlement with that of the rail workers last summer who achieved a significant wage increase after a campaign of strike action. "They didn't do it by slick advertising. They did it by being prepared to fight back by

taking industrial action."

Scargill denounced the British government for shutting down uneconomical mines and importing coal. He said that with "every single ton of coal or every single barrel of oil that they import into Britain, it more and more adversely affects the balance of payments problem. And that means the standard of life of every man, woman, and child is adversely affected."

## 'Never forgiven for fighting'

Scargill concluded by asking why the campaign of vilification and slander is taking place against the national leaders of the union.

"The answer is abundantly clear," Scargill said, responding to his own question. "They will never, ever forgive us for daring to challenge their system" and for costing them billions of dollars during the struggle.

Scargill saluted slain miners Jones and Green, as well as "everyone in the mining communities," for supporting the NUM. Scargill and the other NUM leaders have received widespread support by the rank-and-file members of the mine workers' union.

Other speakers at the rally included Mark Jones, father of David Jones; mine union leaders Henry Richardson from Nottinghamshire and Ken Homer from Yorkshire; and NUM leader Heathfield.



G. M. Cookson

Arthur Scargill, president National Union of Mineworkers.

## Miami activists denounce TV Martí

BY MIKE DALTON

MIAMI — A broad panel of activists spoke out against the planned transmission of U.S. television broadcasts from Florida into Cuba at a forum here March 3.

Jorge Roque, a young Cuban from Miami, explained that TV Martí, set up by Washington, is "a violation of the sovereignty of the

Cuban people" as well as a violation of international treaties and agreements of which the U.S. government is a signatory.

Margaret Shapiro, a representative of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, called TV Martí a provocation and an attempt to create an armed confrontation with Cuba.

Donald Mitchell, a striking Machinist at Eastern Airlines, branded TV Martí an example of the "cultural imperialism" that poor countries around the world suffer. "The powerful U.S. media promotes U.S. values and U.S. political views as well as U.S. consumer goods that can only be afforded by an elite in these countries," he said.

Lavarice Gadin, a Haitian rights activist, compared TV Martí to the ready access that the CIA had to the radio and television stations in Haiti under dictator Prosper Avril.

Speakers blasted the U.S. Department of State contention that TV Martí is needed to give Cubans alternative information and viewpoints.

Brett Merkey, representing the Socialist Workers Party, described the type of programming available on Cuban television before the 1959 revolution. He recalled growing

up on the Florida Keys and watching Cuba's only television station at that time, which could be received clearly in southern Florida.

"All the programs and movies were U.S. produced, in English with Spanish subtitles. After the revolution this began to change, with a growing portion of the programming in Spanish, and much of this produced in Cuba," Merkey explained. He pointed out that Cuban television currently airs 26 programs from around the world, the majority of these from the United States.

A lively discussion followed the formal presentations at the meeting sponsored by the Militant Labor Forum. Around a third of the audience of 40 were Cubans from the Miami area. Several are active in local Cuba solidarity organizations like the Association of Workers of the Community (ATC) and the Antonio Maceo Brigade. Several of them expressed their solidarity with Cuba against the TV Martí provocation.

Merkey called on all those opposed to U.S. aggression directed at Cuba and the region to participate in the March 24 protests against U.S. aid to the murderous regime in El Salvador and against U.S. intervention in Central America.

## Cuban economist's tour to begin



Militant/Jon Hillson

Cuban economist Carlos Tablada in Halifax, Nova Scotia, 1989. Tablada begins U.S. tour April 2.

Continued from front page

Riverside, California State at Los Angeles, and University of Southern California.

On April 7 a city-wide meeting will be held for Tablada at the United Methodist Church in Los Angeles sponsored by MASPS, an organization in solidarity with the people of El Salvador; Comité El Salvador; Panamanian Sovereignty Support Committee; Comité Panameño 9 de Enero; Venceremos Brigade, a Cuba solidarity group; Pledge of Resistance; Lifeguards for Nicaragua; and the Pathfinder Bookstore.

The Los Angeles tour will end April 13 with a reception for the Cuban author at the Pathfinder Bookstore.

The first two stops of the tour will be Pittsburgh (April 2-3) and Washington, D.C. (April 5-6). Other areas Tablada will visit include: Salt Lake City (April 16) and Price, Utah (April 17); the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Area (April 18-22); Greensboro, North Carolina (April 24), Chicago (April 25-26); Boston (April 27-May 1); western Massachusetts (May 2); and New York (May 3-9).

## April 7 'Hands off Cuba' rally slated

Continued from front page

Cuban mission to the United Nations for a second rally at 3:00 p.m.

The march will be led by a column of youth from the African National Congress and a contingent of Latin American activists bearing the flags of their countries.

The Cuban mission has been the target of several right-wing protests since December of last year. One aim of the action is to assert the right of Cuba's diplomats to function free of fear of harassment.

Afro-American activists plan to produce a poster highlighting Cuba's solidarity with the African freedom struggle.

Coalition leader Rosemary Mealy of the National Alliance of Third World Journalists announced the formation of a women's contingent in solidarity with their Cuban sisters.

News of the April 7 protest was warmly received by 150 participants at a meeting of the Northeast Anti-Apartheid Network on March 17. Many pledged to build the action as part of their ongoing work.

Activists at Hunter College and other city schools are organizing a broadly sponsored forum on Cuba on March 29 to involve students in the April 7 action. They and other protest organizers plan to distribute thousands of demonstration leaflets in Washington on March 24 as part of a "U.S. Hands Off Cuba" contingent participating in that day's march against U.S. intervention in Central America. The leaflets invite protesters from dozens of cities and states to come to New York for April 7.

To contact the U.S. Hands Off Cuba Coalition call: (212) 246-3811, ext. 890.

Che Guevara:

## Economics and Politics in the Transition to Socialism

by Carlos Tablada

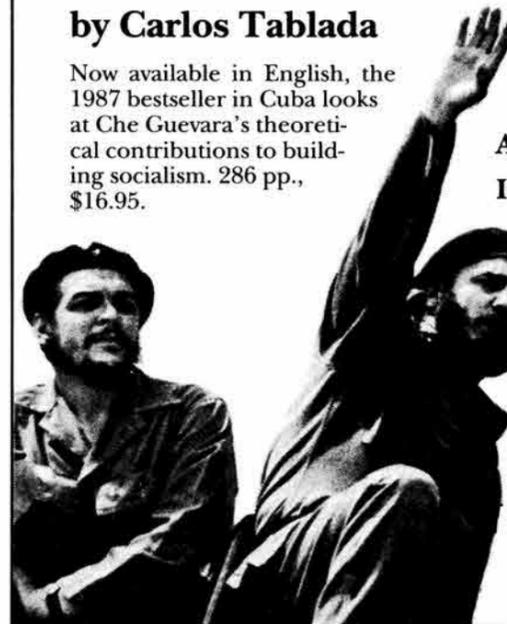
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# Communist Party projects new steps to advance toward socialism in Cuba

BY DOUG JENNESS

The leadership of the Cuban Communist Party has announced steps to deepen the process of rectification that it has been leading since 1986. This was done in conjunction with calling the party's fourth congress for the first part of next year.

The CP Central Committee, at a meeting on February 16, agreed that the "result of the process of rectification in economic and social development had been fruitful and promising," and that this is shown by the increased "political awareness" of the Cuban people.

According to a statement printed on the front page of the February 17 issue of *Granma*, the CP's daily, and reprinted in the February 25 *Granma Weekly Review*, the party leadership body decided to review the

## The new measures are 'a logical continuation and deepening of process of rectification.'

structures and methods of functioning of the CP, the Union of Young Communists, government institutions, and mass organizations and to discuss how their activities can be improved and better linked to the struggle for socialism.

"It was stressed," the statement said, "that this is a logical continuation and deepening of the process of rectification, whose most immediate antecedent was the rigorous self-criticism formulated at the third congress of the party [1986] and which is, in fact, an uninterrupted and permanent task of the revolution."

At a report to the deferred session of the Cuban Communist Party's third congress in December 1986, Cuban President Fidel Castro explained that problems had been developing in Cuba for a decade that, if left uncorrected, would have proved "irreversible." (See *New Internationalist*, No. 6.) Demoralization, depoliticization, and discouragement would have eventually developed to the point where the revolutionary consciousness and internationalist commitment of the masses of Cuban working people would have been destroyed.

### 'Blind belief in mechanisms'

"We've harbored two types of illusions," Castro said in his 1986 report. These were that the Economic Planning and Management System and the People's Power organs, Cuba's system of elected representative governing bodies, would automatically build socialism. But this "blind belief in mechanisms," he said, showed "a lack of understanding of the idea that the construction of socialism and communism is fundamentally a political and revolutionary task."

Since 1986 the mobilization and deepening proletarianization of tens of thousands of volunteer workers who are participating in the minibrigades and revolutionary construction contingents that have emerged in the rectification process has increased the confidence of Cuba's working people. This has created the possibility and pressure for moving the rectification process forward.

In launching a new stage of the rectification process, the February 16 Central Committee meeting agreed to set up working groups to study and propose measures for improving the "structure, contents, methods, and work style" of the CP, the People's Power organs, and the mass organizations.

In a speech to the National Assembly four days after the Central Committee meeting, Castro explained that these steps are necessary because these organizations "were overstuffed" and there were "dualities of command" and "dualities of functions."

The Central Committee statement said that many errors had been avoided in Cuba because of the party's "revolutionary policy." But "certain premises exist in our society, basically due to the transfer and copying of experiences alien to Cuba's tradition, history, and way of life and in some cases incompatible with the political and governmental principles we uphold."

One example cited is "a formalism that has nothing in common with the practice that

emerged from our revolutionary process. This has been manifested both in the procedure for entering the party and in checkups and elections — that lost their freshness and became bureaucratic — as well as in the methods of organizing political and ideological work, all of which has had a bearing in one way or the other on the work of the other organizations and social institutions of the country."

The special plenary meeting of the Central Committee discussed the need to study the "content, methods, and structure of party branches and organizations, so they will be able to give a fuller and more effective response to their two major missions: on the one hand, economic construction and the solution of problems in the development of social programs, and on the other, leadership in political and ideological work, with the guidance and integrating role it presupposes."

### Need to improve 'People's Power'

The Central Committee said that "the structure and mechanisms" of People's Power also suffered from formalism. "It was considered important," the Central Committee stated, "that the Cuban parliament [National Assembly], as a representative of the will and interests of all electors, improve its function as a forum reflecting and serving as a counterpart to the efforts of the government," that is, the Council of Ministers.

Castro explained in his speech to the National Assembly that this meant establishing more systematic links between the Council of Ministers and the National Assembly, including inviting the president of the National Assembly to attend meetings of the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers. This is where the problems of government are currently analyzed and much of the country's development programs are implemented, he said. The proposed change would better allow the National Assembly to participate in these decisions.

The National Assembly is elected through the system of People's Power. Municipal People's Power bodies are based on neighborhood districts that each elect a delegate. The municipal assemblies elect delegates to provincial assemblies, which in turn elect representatives to the National Assembly. The National Assembly appoints the country's top executive body, the Council of Ministers.

The work of the executive leadership of the Council of Ministers, the Central Committee concluded, "has been strengthened during the process of rectification and characterized by the close attention given to everything related to production and services."

But, the CP leadership body stressed, "equally systematic attention" to government agencies that are not part of the material production sectors is also needed.

The Central Committee meeting came shortly after an important congress of the Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions, which deepened the role of the trade unions in advancing the rectification process. The Central Committee emphasized that a review of the effectiveness of all other mass organizations, including the Committees to Defend the Revolution and the Federation of Cuban Women, will also be made.

This effort is important, the statement said, to help create "a favorable climate for the development of creative thinking and fruitful debate" and to strengthen the active participation of the masses in these organizations.

The CP's Political Bureau announced that the Commission of the Economic Management and Planning System would also be restructured.

### Lessons of Abrantes, Ochoa trials

The new stage of the rectification process, the Central Committee statement noted, had been stressed in a *Granma* editorial on September 2, which drew the lessons of two major cases tried by military courts in Cuba last summer. (See the *Militant*, Sept. 29, 1989.) In these trials top army and Ministry of Interior (MININT) officials were charged and convicted for a range of offenses. Gen. José Abrantes Fernández, former head of the MININT, along with other MININT officials were convicted August 31 of abuse of authority, negligence in carrying out duties, and improper use of government funds and resources.

Gen. Arnaldo Ochoa, Col. Antonio de la Guardia, Capt. Jorge Martínez, and Maj. Amado Padrón were found guilty of drug trafficking and high treason, sentenced to death, and executed on July 13.

In addition, former minister of transportation Diocles Torralbas was sentenced by a civil court to 20 years imprisonment for unlawful use of government funds and resources, illicit occupation and administering of buildings and falsifying public documents.

The Central Committee statement quoted the following excerpts from the September editorial:

"Perhaps in the future, these events which have rocked the country will be viewed as the start of a turning point towards a profound institutional, political, and moral improvement of the revolution. . . . Let's put it clearly: what has happened reflects a series of shortcomings that affect, in one way or another, all the institutions of the revolution. . . . A

meaningful self-analysis must lead us to the conclusion that an improvement of society means an improvement of the party, which must not only be the source but also the object of rectification."

A central theme of the September 2 editorial was that a narrow layer of party leaders and government officials were using their positions to gain privileges and that there was a "proliferation of excessive tolerance, cronyism, complicity, and even the creation of groupings, virtual fiefdoms, which battled for power and resources."

In the MININT, for example, recreation centers, restaurants, clinics, and other facilities had been set up for special use of MININT functionaries. Some officials became involved in commercial and business transactions for personal benefit.

### Acting like a member of caste

One of the consequences of the trials, the editorial concluded, was reaffirming "a vital principle: respect for the law and the concept that it applies to all citizens equally regardless of their political or government position."

"The greater the political or government responsibility they have," the *Granma* editors stated, "the greater the citizen's obligation to

## Castro stated, 'Our country is a gigantic *Hermann*, but with enough weapons to defend ourselves.'

behave in an honest and dignified manner in his public and personal life."

"What kind of a revolutionary," the editorial asked, "is a person who doesn't respect the law or moral standards and tries to act as if he were a member of a caste above all and everyone? . . . How can we speak of socialism and revolution when we fail to realize that privilege, arbitrary conduct, abuse, and separation from the masses are one of the main causes of the problems now facing the socialist system that was created to eradicate these evils when they existed under capitalism?"

### Cuba is 'a gigantic *Hermann*'

The February 16 meeting of the Central Committee took note of the stepped-up provocations and threats from Washington and reaffirmed the necessity of continuing to strengthen the country's defenses and "preparing the people to resist and defeat any aggression, in case of war, or to endure the rigor and continued development if the country has to face a special period in time of peace."

In his speech to the National Assembly, Castro cited the example of the crew on the Cuban freighter the *Hermann*, who refused to surrender to a U.S. gunship in international waters. "They said: We won't be boarded, and that's all there is to it," Castro said.

"Our country," he continued, "is a gigantic *Hermann*, but with weapons, with enough weapons to defend ourselves."

In harmony with this stand, the theme of the CP's fourth congress is, "The future of our country will be an eternal Baraguá."

This refers to Cuba's first war for independence from Spain, 1868-78, when a majority of Cuban generals signed a truce and laid down their arms in 1878. Independence fighter Antonio Maceo, leader of the revolutionary forces in Oriente Province, issued the Baraguá Protest condemning the terms of the pact, which did not grant Cuba its independence or abolish slavery on the island.

The Central Committee statement affirmed that, in carrying out the projected improvement of organizational structures and methods of leadership, "we will be making a new and important contribution" to the preparation for difficult times, including war, "at a time when not only our own independence, nationality, and the future of our just cause depend on the progress and durability of the Cuban revolution, but also the destiny of socialism in this period, the sovereignty of Latin America, and the hopes of the Third World."

## NEW YORK



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## ALABAMA Birmingham

**The Coming Revolution in South Africa.** Speaker: John Hawkins, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate. Sat., March 24, 7:30 p.m.; preform dinner at 6 p.m. 1306 1st Ave. N. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (205) 323-3079.

**Hear the Socialist Workers Party Candidates.** Speakers: John Hawkins, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate; Sue Skinner, candidate for governor; David Alvarez, candidate for Congress, 6th CD. Also speaking: Dick McBride, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from West Virginia. Sat., March 31, 7:30 p.m. 1306 1st Ave. N. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (205) 323-3079.

## ARIZONA Phoenix

**Forging Fighting Trade Union Leaderships: The 1934 Minneapolis Teamsters Strikes and Their Lessons for Today.** Classes based on books by Farrell Dobbs. Tuesdays at 6 p.m. through April 3. 1809 W Indian School Rd. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (602) 279-5850.

## CALIFORNIA San Francisco

**U.S. Hands Off Nicaragua, Cuba, and El Salvador: What Nicaraguan Elections Mean for National Sovereignty in Central America and the Caribbean.** Speaker: Judy White, former Nicaragua correspondent for *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*. Translation to Spanish. Sat., March 24, 7:30 p.m. Capp Street Center, 362 Capp St. Donation: \$5-\$10. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum/Foro Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (415) 282-6255.

## FLORIDA Miami

**Racist AIDS Scare Against Haitians.** Translation to Spanish and French. Sat., March 24, 7:30 p.m. 137 NE 54th St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (305) 756-1020.

## ILLINOIS Chicago

**New Developments in the Labor Movement.** A panel of unionists discusses Eastern and Greyhound strikes. Sat., March 24, 7:30 p.m. 545 W Roosevelt Rd. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (312) 829-6815 or 829-7018.

## MASSACHUSETTS Boston

**Young Socialist Alliance Discussion Class: The Fight for Abortion Rights.** Thurs., March 29, 7 p.m. 605 Massachusetts Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Young Socialist Alliance. For more information call (617) 247-6772.

## MINNESOTA St. Paul

**Is Communism Dead?** Speaker: Wendy Lyons, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Minnesota governor. Sat., March 24, 7:30 p.m. 508 N Snelling Ave. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

**The Fight for Student Rights and Free Speech.** Speakers: Justin Atwood, Apple Valley High School Student Union; Saudah Kidow, All-African Student Alliance, Washburn High; Evan Roberts, Young Socialist Alliance. Sat., March 31, 7:30 p.m. 508 N Snelling Ave. Dona-

tion: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

## MISSOURI Kansas City

**Nicaragua After the Elections: Defend the Workers and Farmers.** Speakers: Ed Haase, Central America solidarity activist recently returned from Nicaragua; Arlene Rubinstein, Socialist Workers Party. Sun., March 25, 7 p.m. 5534 Troost. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (816) 444-7880.

## St. Louis

**Bridge to Freedom '65.** Video and discussion on the civil rights movement. Sat., March 24, 7:30 p.m. 4907 Martin Luther King Dr. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (314) 361-0250.

## NEBRASKA Omaha

**Open House at Pathfinder Bookstore.** Following march and rally against U.S. war in Central America. Speaker: Brian Gibbs, Young Socialist Alliance. Sat., March 24, 2 p.m. 140 S 40th St. Sponsor: Young Socialist Alliance. For more information call (402) 553-0245.

**The Continuing Crisis in the Countryside: Issues Facing Farmers and Rural Towns.** Speakers to be announced. Sat., March 31, 7:30 p.m. 140 S 40th St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (402) 553-0245.

## NEW YORK Brooklyn

**Harvard Medical School Delegation Reports on Haiti.** Slideshow and presentations by delegation members. Sat., March 24, 5:30 p.m. 1025 Eastern Parkway. Contribution: \$3. Sponsor: Committee Against Repression in Haiti. For more information call (718) 434-3940.

**Cuba Report-back.** Speaker: Michael Baumann, correspondent who covered 1990 Havana International Book Fair. Sat., March 31, 7:30 p.m. Translation to Spanish and French. 464 Bergen. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (718) 398-6983.

## Manhattan

**Commemoration of the 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist Fire.** Corner of Washington Pl. and Greene St., site of sweatshop fire that killed 146 workers. Mon., March 26, 12 noon. Sponsor: International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. "Out of the Ashes." Exhibit of photographs of Triangle Shirtwaist fire and political drawings of the time. Tuesdays through Fridays until June 8, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Lower East Side Tenement Museum, 97 Orchard St. For more information call (212) 431-0233.

**Tear Down the Korean Wall! U.S. Troops Out of South Korea!** Speakers: Peter Thierjung, *Militant* staff writer; others. Sat., March 31, 7:30 p.m. 191 7th Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (212) 675-6740.

**Bailemos/Let's Dance.** Fri., April 13, 9 p.m.-2 a.m. 300 W 43rd St. Donation: \$10. Sponsor: Venceremos Brigade. For more information call (212) 349-6292.

## New York City

**Behind the News.** Radio program hosted by Don Rojas, former press secretary to slain Grenadian prime minister Maurice Bishop. Every Wed., 7-7:30 p.m. WBAI 99.5 FM.

## PENNSYLVANIA Pittsburgh

*Spear of the Nation: The Story of the African*

*National Congress.* Video presentation. Sun., March 25, 5 p.m. 4905 Penn Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (412) 362-6767.

**Students Fighting Racism.** Speakers: Dawna Bivins, graduate of East Allegheny High School; Paula Koschak, Young Socialist Alliance. Sun., April 1, 5 p.m. 4905 Penn Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (412) 362-6767.

## UTAH Price

**End U.S. Aggression in Central America and the Caribbean.** Speaker: Bob Hill, Socialist Workers Party, member International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. Sun., March 25, 5 p.m. 253 E Main. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (801) 637-6294.

## WEST VIRGINIA Charleston

**U.S. Hands Off Nicaragua, Cuba, El Salvador! What the Nicaraguan Elections Mean for National Sovereignty in Central America.** Speaker: Dick McBride, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate. Sat., March 24, 7:30 p.m. 116 McFarland St. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (304) 345-3040.

**How Can Working People Fight Back Against the Economic Crisis?** Speaker: Maggie McCraw, Socialist Workers Party candidate for state treasurer. Sat., March 31, 7:30 p.m. 116 McFarland St. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (304) 345-3040.

## BRITAIN Cardiff

**Eastern Europe and the Fight for Communism Today.** Speaker: Jonathan Silberman, Communist League National Organisation Secretary. Fri., March 30, 7:30 p.m. 9 Moira Terrace, Adamsdown. Donation: £1. Sponsor: New International Forums. For more information call 0222-484677.

## London

**Celebrate Publication of Malcolm X: The Last Speeches.** Speakers: Mandla Langa, African National Congress of South Africa; Suresh Grover, Southhall Monitoring Group; Gerry MacLochlainn, Irish republican leader; representative Broadwater Farm Defence Committee; Alan Harris, Pathfinder Press. Fri., March 30, 7 p.m. 47 The Cut, SE 1. Donation: £1. Sponsor:

## S. Africa workers step up strikes

**Continued from back page**  
miners to live in hostels far away from their families.

Strikes in health and education have highlighted the wholly inadequate conditions for Blacks in hospitals and schools across the country.

In Cape Town 6,000 members of the Health Workers Union have shut down most of the city's hospitals, demanding higher pay and better working conditions. The workers earn as little as \$100 a month.

The union, which is not recognized by the employers, has won support from other hospital workers, doctors, students, and commu-

nity organizations. For more information call 01-928-7947.

## CANADA

### Montréal

**Oppose U.S. Intervention in Central America.** Picket line at U.S. consulate, corner Ste-Catherine and Jeanne-Mance. Sat., March 24, 3 p.m. For more information call (514) 987-3794.

**Justice Denied.** Video on racist frame-up of Donald Marshall. Speaker: Roger Andrews, recently returned from reporting tour of Nova Scotia. Sat., March 24, 7:30 p.m. 6566, boul. Saint-Laurent. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Forum Lutte Ouvrière. For more information call (514) 273-2503.

**Defend the Pathfinder Mural.** Speakers: Armand Vaillancourt, artist who painted on the mural; Carole Caron, coordinator of mural defense in Montréal; others. Sat., March 31, 7:30 p.m. 6566, boul. Saint-Laurent. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Forum Lutte Ouvrière. For more information call (514) 273-2503.

### Toronto

**Hagersville Tire Fire: Environmental Disasters on the Rise.** Speakers: David Bruer, member Pollution Probe; Cliff Mack, Communist League, member Canadian Auto Workers Local 707. Sat., March 24, 7:30 p.m. 410 Adelaide St. W., Suite 400. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (416) 861-1399.

**Behind Attacks on French Rights.** Speaker: Gary Kettner, Communist League, member Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union Local 836. Sat., March 31, 7:30 p.m. 410 Adelaide St. W., Suite 400. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (416) 861-1399.

### Vancouver

**Solidarity with the Eastern Airlines Strike.** Video showing of *The Eastern Story* and presentation by strike solidarity activist. Sat., March 31, 7:30 p.m. 1053 Kingsway, Suite 102. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (604) 872-8343.

## SWEDEN

### Stockholm

**Grand Opening of Pathfinder Bookshop.** Speakers: Maria Hamberg, Pathfinder Bookshop; representatives of the Cuban embassy, African National Congress, Pathfinder Press in New York; Kendechor Hien. Sat., March 31. Open house, 12 noon; program, 4 p.m. Vikingagatan 10 (T-bana St Eriksplan). For more information call (08) 31 69 33.

**The Frame-Up of Mark Curtis.** Video by director Nick Castle. Wed., April 4, 7 p.m. Folkets hus, sal 204, Wallingatan 21.

nity organizations.

Teachers in the townships of Alexandra and Soweto are also on strike. The teachers are seeking a wage increase, employment of more teachers, building of more schools, and a three-month paid maternity leave.

Other strikes and protests have hit the regime's plans to sell state-run businesses to private companies. Thousands of workers in COSATU-affiliated unions covering transportation, telecommunications, education, health, and municipal workers *toyitoyied* — danced and sang — in a mass demonstration through central Johannesburg here March 10. Speakers demanded an end to the privatizations moves by the regime.

## IF YOU LIKE THIS PAPER, LOOK US UP

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### SWEDEN

**Stockholm:** Vikingagatan 10. Postal code: S-113 42. Tel: (08) 31 69 33.

He's no welfare chiseler — "I think unless someone's got inherited wealth, they should be willing to earn a living outside." — Ron, who's now grossing \$1.8 million a



Harry Ring

year from his rap to business execs on how to cut government spending on social programs.

Ah, romance — "The main thing most agreements address is

property — assets, including everything from real estate to stock holdings. How will the property each spouse brings to the marriage be held? What will happen to property acquired during the relationship?" — The *New York Times* on why prenuptial contracts are cool.

**A Perrier promise** — When Perrier announced the world recall of its product, it assured that the benzene-tainted water would be disposed of in an environmentally sound way. Sure. Like the Hong Kong wire service photo showing a big tractor crushing cartons of the stuff.

What else is new? — "NEW YORK — U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator William Reilly said he was 'appalled at the current nightmare of careless oil spills at the Arthur Kill channel,' but said the EPA has no plans for immediate action to better safeguard the crowded waterway." — News item.

**Remove before kissing** — Red Dye #22, used in lipstick, is a powerful herbicide now being tested by the feds as an airborne weapon against marijuana. FDA officials say that when they approved its use in lipstick they knew that in its pure form it is dangerous. But, they hasten to affirm, when mixed with other ingredients, it loses its toxicity.

**The sardine special** — A Tokyo rail line has new cars in which the

seats can be folded into the walls during rush hours. Cramming in standees, the railway explains, reduces overcrowding. Passengers complain of being treated like packages.

**"I love you like Ronzoni pasta"** — Hollywood has long picked up spare change by placing name-brand products in films. Now it's being standardized. For \$20,000 you can have your product seen in the coming Walt Disney film, *Mr. Destiny*. For \$40,000 an actor will mention it by name, and for \$60,000 will use it.

**Clobber that union** — If you're a business exec with an inferiority complex, check out the Executive Gladiator, an audio tape offered by

Gary Chapin, a hypnotherapist. Listen to it and picture yourself as a victorious gladiator in the old Roman Coliseum. "Images in fantasy," Chapin says, "can help resolve problems in reality."

**More bang for the buck?** — Rigaud scented candles — \$25 to \$65 each — have been recalled worldwide because, inexplicably, they've been exploding. It's a new crimp in the social season since nobody who's anybody would do a party without them.

**Note to new readers** — In good part, this column is based on the clippings people send in. All such contributions are gratefully received.

## Long-time political activist Ron Wolin: 1934-90

BY HARRY RING

NEW YORK — Ron Wolin, a veteran political activist, died here March 4 after a protracted siege of cancer. He was 55.

Wolin played an important role in the movement against the Vietnam War. And, staunchly anticapitalist, he was a member of the Socialist Workers Party from 1965 until the late 1970s.

In 1968 he won a landmark class-action suit establishing the right to leaflet inside the



Militant/Ellen Lemisch  
Ron Wolin at 1972 antiwar action

Port Authority bus terminal in New York City. Later, that key precedent was extended to virtually all transportation terminals and shopping centers.

In 1983 Wolin was diagnosed as having cancer. Doctors recommended chemotherapy and said he had perhaps a year to live.

He decided to find alternate treatment. In 1984 he became a patient of S.R. Burzynski, a Houston doctor who had developed a non-chemical therapy for cancer. Because his therapy was not accepted by the medical establishment, Burzynski experienced super-scrutiny by the Food and Drug Administration. In 1985 the FDA raided his office, seizing files and patients' records.

Wolin responded to this by initiating the Patients Rights Legal Defense Fund that filed suit for the right of patients to seek alternate forms of treatment. The protracted court battle is still being waged by his companion, Avis Lang.

Born in Brooklyn, Wolin went through the public school system and, in college, majored in business administration.

This was during the Korean War, and, on campus, Wolin joined the Reserve Officers Training Corps. During the closing period of the war, he was called for active duty in Korea.

On returning home, he and a partner established a public relations firm.

In the early 1960s, he became acquainted with neighbors who were then members of the Socialist Workers Party. They introduced him to Marxist literature, and he joined the SWP in 1965. At about the same time, he left his PR firm and thereafter put his public relations skills at the service of his politics.

Three people who knew Wolin in the SWP during that period each offered the same recollection of him — his ability to organize and lead sales of the *Militant*.

One of them, Ed Bromberg, recalled, "He had us out every Saturday morning. He didn't just sell the paper though. He'd begin talking

to people and pretty soon it would be like a street-corner meeting. People would gather round and Ron would be talking to them. Meanwhile, he'd be selling papers."

It was at this time that the U.S. intervention in Vietnam began escalating and Wolin quickly became involved in the opposition to it.

He organized a group called Veterans and Reservists Against the War in Vietnam and was its representative to the New York Fifth Avenue Vietnam Peace Parade Committee, a large ongoing coalition that played a key role in the nationwide antiwar movement.

Meanwhile, Wolin with others organized regular Sunday leafleting at the Port Authority bus terminal in midtown Manhattan. It was a good way to meet GIs who were traveling to various military bases.

Wolin and the others sought out GIs and gave them leaflets that offered facts about the U.S. role in Vietnam and why GIs should oppose it.

Within the early antiwar movement, only a minority recognized the need to enlist GIs in the antiwar effort. But this changed as the war went on and growing numbers of soldiers began marching in antiwar demonstrations and expressing opposition to the war in other ways.

Wolin can be credited as one of those who helped plant the seeds for that progressive

development.

At the outset, Port Authority cops persistently hassled the leafleters. Wolin undertook to challenge this and went to the American Civil Liberties Union. The ACLU arranged for him to be represented by Gene Eisner, a labor and civil liberties attorney, who took the case without fee.

In a telephone interview, Eisner said that Port Authority officials had argued that the terminal was private property and therefore had a right to bar leafleters.

"We went into federal district court," Eisner said, "and asked for declaratory judgment that the terminal was in fact a public place in which the right of free speech should be exercised. The court granted both the declaratory judgment and the injunction."

The Port Authority then took the case to the court of appeals, "and we filed a cross appeal," Eisner continued. The cross appeal asked that the lower court ruling be upheld and that the police be enjoined to carry it out.

The appeals court upheld the cross appeal and the Port Authority took the issue to the Supreme Court. But the high court refused to review the case.

**Key precedent**

*Wolin v. Port Authority* became an important precedent that is often cited in related

cases, Eisner said. It figured prominently, he added, in the recent decision affirming the right of the homeless to ask people for money in the subways.

Wolin also used his energies and talents to raise funds for the antiwar movement.

In 1970 the Cartoonists Guild had appointed him their executive director. Through the guild he came to know many cartoonists and other artists.

He organized a number of Art for Peace auctions for which prominent artists contributed original works. This raised substantial amounts of urgently needed money.

After the Vietnam War, Wolin became active in Artists Call Against U.S. Intervention in Central America and, later, in Ventana, a group of artists and cultural workers who were early defenders of the Nicaraguan revolution.

Gaudencio Thiago de Mello, the Brazilian jazz composer and musician, worked closely with Wolin in both groups and recalls him with special warmth and appreciation. "Ron was a clear thinker, and a wonderful speaker, with a commanding voice," he said.

And, Thiago added, "He was a fighter." Some 250 people attended a March 14 memorial meeting for Wolin at the Ethical Culture Society auditorium. Chaired by Avis Lang, the meeting heard tributes from artists, writers, and other friends.

## Rights gain scored in Freedom Socialist suit

SEATTLE — In a unanimous ruling last month, the Washington State Supreme Court struck down a 1987 default order leveled against the Freedom Socialist Party.

The FSP had refused to hand over meeting minutes in a civil suit against it. In its ruling, the court said the FSP had shown that disclosure could jeopardize its constitutional rights.

The decision basically accepted the arguments made to the court on behalf of the FSP by the late civil liberties attorney Leonard Boudin. It was the last appeals case he argued before his death last November.

The February 22 ruling overturns an earlier state appeals court decision that held the FSP had not proven it would be harmed by turning over the minutes. Instead, the state supreme court ruled, it is only necessary to show "some probability" of harm to First Amendment rights for the court to weigh the issue.

Reaffirming constitutional privacy rights, the ruling breaks new legal ground by specifically including minutes as constitutionally protected information.

The decision sends the case back to the local court in Seattle where it began in 1984.

Richard Snedigar, a former FSP member, sued the party and nine individuals for return of a donation he had made five years earlier when the organization faced eviction from its headquarters. He charged the party had defrauded him by manufacturing a crisis around the eviction.

From the outset, his lawyers tried to force disclosure of internal FSP records, including minutes, lists of members and supporters, and financial records.

The party was ordered to turn over portions of its minutes covering eight years.

In 1987 the FSP was placed in default for refusing to release the minutes. Without trial,

a judge ordered the FSP to pay Snedigar \$42,139.

In returning the case to the local court, the state supreme court shifted the burden on the disclosure issue from the FSP to Snedigar.

He must now demonstrate that his claim for the minutes outweighs the FSP's consti-

tutional rights. Or, instead, he can proceed with the case without the minutes, or he can drop the case.

In its fight against divulging the minutes, the FSP has had the support of numerous civil libertarians, unionists, and political organizations.

## — 10 AND 25 YEARS AGO —

### THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE 30 CENTS

March 28, 1980

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — The Government of National Reconstruction has adopted a tough decree against capitalist sabotage of this country's efforts at economic revival.

Decree No. 329, issued March 2, is aimed at all those "who by action or omission employ deceitful or fraudulent means to remove from the country the fixed or circulating assets of enterprises [that is the capital of such enterprises]."

Violators of the new decree face the penalty of intervention of their enterprises — putting them under state administration — plus fines of up to three times the value of the capital removed from Nicaragua. Individuals convicted under the decree may be jailed for one to three years.



U.S. HIGHWAY 80 (Marching through

Alabama) March 23 — We're now on the two-lane section of the highway and the historic civil rights march from Selma to Montgomery is down to the 300 stipulated in the federal court order, plus federal troops and state guardsmen, justice department officials, and a contingent of newsmen.

All of the marchers consider this an historic occasion in the fight for Black freedom and there is a fantastic spirit of enthusiasm and optimism. Everyone is convinced that the movement has taken a great leap forward.

Yesterday, when we reached the beginning of the two-lane sections of the highway, the great bulk of the nearly 5,000 who started out on the trek returned to Selma. Two hundred and fifty of those who are continuing all the way to Montgomery are Black Alabama freedom fighters who were clubbed and/or jailed in the previous demonstrations. The other 50 are national leaders of the various civil rights organizations and nationally prominent dignitaries.

The contagious enthusiasm of the movement caught hold of everyone as they arrived in Selma for the march. The spirit of the Black community is expressed by the banner outside of campaign headquarters at Brown's Chapel: "Forward ever, backward never!"

## April 7: 'U.S. hands off Cuba!'

On April 7 everyone who opposes Washington's escalating provocations, bullying, and attacks against Cuba can stand up and make their voices heard. The "U.S. Hands Off Cuba" demonstration set for that day in New York is an action political activists, union members, anti-apartheid fighters, and other supporters of democratic rights will want to help organize and join. It's been quite a few years since such a united demonstration has been held in defense of Cuba. This one is sponsored by more than 50 organizations, from the African National Congress to the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador, from the December 12 Movement to the Puerto Rican Socialist Party.

Activists opposed to U.S. intervention in Central America, demonstrating on March 24 in Washington, D.C., San Francisco, and other cities, can be especially effective in protesting the U.S. government's aggressive policies in Central America and the Caribbean by also joining the April 7 march two weeks later. A "Hands Off Cuba" contingent will be participating in the D.C. March 24 demonstration to help get out the word about the next action.

The April 7 action couldn't come at a more needed time.

Emboldened by its brutal invasion of Panama in December, Washington has looked for every opportunity to threaten, harass, and smear revolutionary Cuba. In the last few months the list of aggressions against Cuba has rapidly grown longer.

Even before the Panama invasion, in early December, two shots were fired from the U.S. navy's Guantánamo Bay base at two Cuban sentry posts, the first such incident in more than two years. Washington maintains the Guantánamo naval base on Cuban soil in violation of Cuba's sovereignty and international law.

During the invasion itself, troops from Washington's occupation army, in an almost unprecedented action, surrounded Cuba's embassy in Panama City and at one point illegally detained several Cuban diplomats.

A few weeks later, U.S. imperialism menaced the entire region again when it ordered two warships loaded with 8,000 military personnel to sail from their base in Norfolk, Virginia, to the Caribbean coast of Colombia. Only after vigorous protests by the Colombian government and others in Latin America was Washington forced to back off plans to blockade Colombia, using the pretext of intercepting drug trafficking. The ships then conducted maneuvers in the waters north of Cuba.

The "war on drugs" also provided an excuse for the next assault on Cuba. On January 31, in an unprovoked attack, the U.S. Coast Guard fired nearly 500 rounds at the Cuban merchant ship *Hermann* in the Gulf of Mexico

in an effort to sink it, after Cuba refused to allow the ship to be boarded for a "drug search." The 11 Cuban crew members, armed with only machetes and knives, stood ready to defend the vessel to the death rather than let it be boarded in violation of Cuban sovereignty.

On March 6, after heavy arm-twisting by the U.S. delegation, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights passed — for the fourth consecutive year — an insulting resolution putting Cuba on the agenda of its next meeting. This is despite the fact that Cuba has been the only member of the commission to submit to intensive scrutiny by inviting and receiving a delegation in 1988 to investigate charges of human rights violations. The only purpose of the latest resolution is to provide the U.S. rulers with yet another platform from which to slander the Cuban revolution.

Washington is preparing one of its most serious acts of aggression against Cuba with the launching of TV Martí, a multi-million dollar propaganda operation set to go on line any day now. It will broadcast anticommunist lies and disinformation directly into the island, in flagrant violation of both Cuba's right to self-determination and international telecommunications laws.

To all this must be added the gigantic propaganda campaign the U.S. rulers are waging to isolate Cuba and make it appear without support internationally — a communist "dictatorship" holding out in the face of a supposed global tidal wave of "democracy." Washington stepped up this campaign another notch with the recent election of a proimperialist government in Nicaragua.

This partial list of U.S. assaults on Cuba makes clear how urgent the April 7 action is.

Opponents of U.S. aggression against Cuba who live near enough to New York to be part of the April 7 action should come to join in. Contingents from Boston; Hartford, Connecticut; Albany, New York; Philadelphia; Baltimore; Washington, D.C., and other cities can increase the size and impact of the march.

Activists who live farther away can hold meetings, picket lines, and other activities on the same day in their cities, towns, and campuses, giving the "Hands Off Cuba" protests a national character.

The April 7 march and activities can be the beginning of a sustained response by all those who oppose Washington's aggression against the Cuban revolution. Through education and action, many new forces can be won to the side of those who demand:

- U.S. hands off Cuba!
- Stop U.S. threats against Cuba!
- Stop Television Martí!
- End U.S. trade and travel ban on Cuba!

## Celebrating a free Namibia

As thousands chanted "Down! Down! Down!" the hated flag of apartheid South Africa — the racist regime that had colonized, plundered, and brutalized the Namibian people for 75 years — was lowered. Then to resounding cheers and jubilation, the blue, red, green, and gold flag of independent and sovereign Namibia was proudly hoisted over Windhoek, the new republic's capital.

"The destiny of this country is now in our hands," Sam Nujoma, president of the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) and the first president of free Namibia, said at the March 21 independence celebration.

March 21, the 30th anniversary of the Sharpeville massacre of 1960 where South African police killed more than 60 demonstrators, was chosen as the date for Namibia's independence in solidarity with the struggle against apartheid.

Namibia's freedom was won through a long, hard-fought

struggle in which thousands of Namibians paid with their lives. A decisive turning point in this fight was the 1988 battle of Cuito Cuanavale in Angola, where South African troops were defeated by SWAPO fighters, the Angolan army, and Cuban internationalist volunteers. This victory forced Pretoria to give up its colonial rule over Namibia.

Political independence has opened up opportunities for the Namibian toilers to press ahead in the struggle to combat extensive poverty and illiteracy. Working people around the world should demand their governments provide needed aid without strings attached.

At the same time, the struggle for sanctions against racist South Africa must be stepped up. An independent Namibia's future will not be secure until the people of South Africa are free of apartheid.

## Court's deadly blow to rights

On March 5 the U.S. Supreme Court handed down a sweeping decision that provoked little public debate or outcry. The ruling virtually eliminates a person's right of appeal to federal courts to review the constitutionality of state criminal convictions. This right was made law by Congress in 1867 during the period of "radical reconstruction" when the struggle of freed slaves and their supporters helped extend many democratic rights.

The ruling also essentially prevents federal courts from reopening cases because of changes in law that come about after a conviction.

While the court's decision is shrouded in obscure legal jargon, its intent is clear.

For death row inmates the consequences are devastating. The ruling will guarantee and quicken the execution of many of the 2,500 inmates on death row in state prisons across the United States, whose cases are in various stages of appeal to federal courts.

Statistics show that in more than two-thirds of the cases

appealed to federal courts, rulings favoring death row prisoners have been handed down.

This recent ruling is one in a series of Supreme Court decisions that have strengthened capital punishment. It follows a barbaric Supreme Court judgment in June permitting states to execute prisoners who are mentally retarded, as well as those who are as young as 16 years old.

More than 99 percent of those sentenced to death in the United States are working-class poor, and a disproportionate number are Black, Latino, and Native American. This figure exposes capital punishment for what it is — part of the institutionalized violence and terror used by the state to keep working people down. It is a weapon those who now rule intend to use with less restraint.

It's no wonder the decision received little fanfare. The Supreme Court gave a glimpse of what capitalism has in store for working people, a picture the opposite of the one painted these days by the U.S. capitalist rulers and their representatives.

## Democracy: for which class?

BY DOUG JENNESS

When Cuban President Fidel Castro was in Brazil this past week for the inauguration of Fernando Collor de Mello, 332 members of the Brazilian congress signed a petition urging the communist leader "to call with all speed, free and direct elections in Cuba, for all levels including the presidency of the republic."

The Social-Democratic presidents of Spain and Venezuela also pressed Castro to join the move for "democracy" in Latin America.

During the inaugural ceremonies much was made in the big-business press about the "new democracies" in Latin America from Chile to Nicaragua, while Cuba remains the last holdout for "dictatorship."

The main problem with all this talk about "democracy" and "dictatorship" is that these concepts are presented in a

## LEARNING ABOUT SOCIALISM

general way with no regard to the social classes involved. There is no such thing, however, as pure democracy that stands above classes and serves all classes.

The question must be posed: Which class is dominant in the democracy? In ancient Greece, there was democracy for the ruling slave owners, but not for the slaves. The democratic institutions in that society were used to perpetuate the domination of the slave-owning class.

In capitalist countries today the only democracy is bourgeois democracy, that is, a form of rule by the capitalist exploiting class. The most democratic bourgeois republic, with the most democratic parliamentary setup, is no more than a machine for suppressing working people by a handful of capitalist ruling families.

Workers on strike or farmers attempting to halt farm foreclosures have first-hand experience with this. The cops of the democratic republic protect scabs, not strikers; they frame up unionists, not bosses; and they arrest farmers, not bankers. And when the exploiters think their rule is really being shaken, the terror of their class dictatorship, even in the most democratic of republics, becomes ever more naked and merciless.

Capitalist democracy is an advance over rule by kings and the landed nobility, because its assumption that all citizens are equal under the law gives working people some basis to press for as much space as we can get to politically operate and organize.

But it is false to say that having the right to vote makes citizens full-fledged and equal participants in the administration and decision-making process of government.

Under capitalist democracy and its electoral and governmental system, working people — the vast majority of the population — are barred by thousands of devices from participating in political life. We are kept away from the machinery of government and are never permitted to decide really important questions that have a direct bearing on our lives.

When was the last time working people could vote on sending U.S. troops to invade and occupy other countries? When have we been able to participate in decisions that could result in hundreds of thousands of layoffs or in skyrocketing inflation?

Many of these decisions are not even made on Capitol Hill, but in the boardrooms and counting houses of the country's biggest banking families.

Congress and local legislative bodies are not institutions where working people feel comfortable or can be confident that the matters of concern to them are even discussed. They are alien bodies.

We vote once a year or once every few years for representatives to governmental bodies, and that is about all that parliamentary democracy intends for us.

The Brazilian legislators and all the others who promote the virtues of this kind of democracy have no intention of ever getting rid of capitalism and all the evils that flow from private ownership of basic production. The most they offer is fudging around with a few reforms. So, naturally, for them capitalist democracy seems best suited to society's needs.

But in Cuba working people got rid of the capitalist class by expropriating its holdings and establishing nationalized property relations 30 years ago. Why would they now want to introduce the government institutions most favorable to the domination of a handful of capitalist ruling families?

Cuba has an entire system of representative government called People's Power that has grown out of the experience of the revolution itself. It involves the election to municipal bodies of delegates who are subject to immediate recall by their constituents. These delegates elect delegates to provincial bodies who in turn elect representatives to the National Assembly. The goal is to bring working people closer to the machinery of government on all levels.

A discussion is now opening in Cuba on how these institutions can be improved. If democracy in Cuba is to be judged, it should be on the basis of how well these and other institutions in the country advance *workers' democracy*, not by how much it attempts to ape capitalist parliamentarism.

# Texas grocery strikers defeat 'part-time' scheme

BY SARAH RYAN

HOUSTON — A week-long strike by grocery workers at 73 Kroger stores in southeast Texas ended in victory recently, after a united fight by two union locals beat back the company's attempt to force a big increase in the use of part-time workers and other union-weakening measures.

The strike, which ended February 25, involved 7,000 United Food and Commercial Workers union members from Locals 408 and 455. The new contract includes raises for

## UNION TALK

some workers to 7 percent over the next three years, depending on job classification; increased employer contributions to the pension plan; and more money from profit-sharing.

The union took a cut in medical benefits, however, with the agreement that insurance deductibles would increase by \$100 on the average. This was one of the major issues in the strike.

Before the walkout, Kroger was pushing a contract that included no wage increases, medical benefits cuts, and a work reorganization scheme that would impose a ratio of 70 part-time workers to 30 full-time workers. Now the ratio is 60-40.

For many full-time employees, who now earn \$10.26 an hour after three years, this reorganization would have meant a drastic pay cut. They would have been forced to "start" at the base wage for part-time workers — \$4 an hour — and work a part-time schedule.

UFCW Local 408, which organizes Kroger's meat cutters, meat wrappers, and seafood clerks, voted to go on strike February 17. Part of the company's reorganization scheme was aimed directly at them. Kroger wanted to eliminate the classifications of journeyman and apprentice meat cutter, now full-time positions. The company claimed

the classifications were "obsolete" and that if they were eliminated, there would be enough money for a general wage increase. Meat cutters saw this as an attempt to drive down wages, fearing they would be training part-time workers to do the same job for half the pay. In the contract that was finally approved, Kroger agreed to retain the journeyman and apprentice classifications, jobs that have been eliminated at other grocery store chains.

Kroger cashiers, stockers, and clerks, who are in UFCW Local 455, voted to go on strike on February 18. The combined walkout of the two locals took the company by surprise.

Management had been forced to close the meat and deli departments at some stores on Saturday, February 17, and four Houston stores had to shut down until Monday morning as members of Local 455 walked off the jobs Sunday afternoon.

Kroger put half-page ads in major daily newspapers offering scabs \$4 to \$10.26 an hour to "replace striking Kroger employees." In an effort to entice customers into the store, Kroger offered special discounts. But the pickets — who were mainly Black and Latino workers, many of them young and female — kept Kroger parking lots noticeably less busy than usual. Union officials, aided by sources inside the stores, calculated that Kroger's sales dropped by 70 percent during the strike.

Members of the Teamsters union refused to make deliveries to Kroger stores, and Kroger delivery drivers refused to unload their trucks, forcing store managers to take the wheel, back the semis up to the loading docks, and unload the groceries themselves. Throughout the strike, Houston stores that are normally open 24 hours a day were closed from midnight to 7:00 a.m.

The union's 1987 contract with Kroger gave deep concessions in wages, averaging \$2.45 an hour. Since then, workers have lost holidays and the health insurance deduct-

ible has doubled. Kroger employees' take-home pay has been less in 1990 than it was in June 1983, the union's strike literature reported.

Kroger management claimed that this year's initial contract offer was necessitated by the cost of a \$4 billion debt the company incurred in 1988 in an "effort to fend off unwanted takeover bids." During the strike, Kroger officials threatened to pull out of Houston and southeast Texas unless their demands were met. Other cities affected by the strike included Austin, Beaumont, Galveston, and Nacogdoches.

Company attempts to intimidate pickets were unsuccessful and the strike remained almost 100 percent solid all week. Strikers also got support from members of their locals who work for the Apple Tree grocery chain.

At one Houston store, pickets were accused by security guards and store managers of slashing the tires of two cars belonging to scabs that were parked in the store's lot. The slashing occurred at night, when there were no pickets on duty. No charges were filed. Two days later, at the same location, the driver's seat of a striker's car was set on fire — while the guards were on duty. It took Houston police three hours to arrive on the scene, even though they patrolled the area regularly during the strike.

On February 22, a federal judge issued an injunction, limiting the number of pickets to 10.

Strikers were incredulous about the company's poverty plea and undaunted by its threat to pull out of the area. "They want us to pay that debt," said one picket. "We've got bills to pay, too. They have the money in their pocket to pay that debt. Why don't they pay it themselves?"

"It's because of people like them," said another striker, pointing to the store, "that we have people sleeping under bridges. We can't afford to pay our rent on what they want to give us."

*Sarah Ryan is a member of UFCW Local 408. She works at a meat-packing plant in the Houston area.*

## LETTERS

### Greyhound I

The March 16 *Militant* reported that Troy Gibson, a striking Greyhound worker, was hit by a scab-driven bus on March 5 in Washington, D.C. The article said that the scab driver was given a \$25 ticket.

In fact, the cops issued two tickets that night — both to striking Amalgamated Transit Union members, including Troy Gibson. The scab driver, who did not stop when exiting the station, was not cited as far as I know.

*Nancy Brown  
Washington, D.C.*

### Greyhound II

This is a postscript to the March 16 *Militant* article on the Greyhound bus strike. I, along with two other supporters of the paper, met Troy Gibson on the Amalgamated Transit Union picket line here in Baltimore. He was wearing a neck brace, still recovering from being hit by a scab-driven bus in Washington, D.C. Gibson explained that he was unable to scramble out of the way because the driver revved up the bus.

Later, as he was being treated for his injuries in the hospital, a cop tracked him down and handed him a \$25 ticket for obstructing traffic. Gibson asked the cop if the ticket was for picketing — or for lying in the street after being hit by the bus.

By the way, the *Militant* was well received by the ATU strikers. They read the strike coverage, named those in the photo, and warmly poked fun at Gibson. Three bought papers, and strikers took fliers for the March 24 demonstration against U.S. military intervention in Central America.

*Glova Scott  
Baltimore, Maryland*

### Eastern Europe

"Reform" is defined as "the improvement or amendment of what is wrong, corrupt, unsatisfactory."

The recent revolutionary upsurge in Eastern Europe can definitely be classified as aiming for much overdue reforms of a system that has groaned under the weight of a corrupt bureaucratic caste that has mismanaged the economies of these countries for its own benefit.

This "caste" of parasitic individuals has maintained its compara-

tively affluent standard of living at the expense of the working people of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

But, to imply — as the big-business media of the United States would have us believe — that "reforms" must include a reactionary return of ownership of the factories, mines, and collective farms to private, wealthy individuals would be a gross transgression of the facts.

Who can accurately describe the current decadent conditions in the United States as reformist economics: declining medical care and education for working people, a gross shortage of affordable housing, the highest per capita prison population in the world, and a government deeper in debt than any other country?

For the people of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union to throw away their socialist economic system, regardless of how badly it has been managed, where the workers actually own and operate the factories, mines, and farms and to turn backward to become the pawns of General Motors, Exxon, Pittston coal company, and Eastern Airlines would be insulting.

"Reforms" should be applied to "our" own United States of America. Yes, reforms are needed in many countries of the world. But none need reforming more than the United States.

*Ed Meredith  
Caneyville, Kentucky*

### Anti-Cuba slander

I had the opportunity to hear Carlos Moore speak at New York University on February 12. I was deeply angered by Mr. Moore's cynical and slanderous attacks against the Cuban revolution.

Like many young people, I am a supporter of Cuba because — for 31 years — the Cubans have set an example in the fight against racism, sexism, and imperialism; in the fight for socialism.

Cuba's record of internationalism and its unconditional solidarity with the struggling peoples of the world, from Vietnam to Angola, stands in living contradiction to Mr. Moore's lies. The revolutionary leadership and people of Cuba have earned the respect of liberation fighters, work-



Dean Masai

Hotel workers' Local 5 Secretary-Treasurer Tony Rutledge (with Mike) leads march of strikers and supporters in front of the Hilton Hawaiian Village.

### Hotel strike

About 7,500 members of Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Local 5 went out on strike at eight hotels on the island of Oahu and at three hotels on the outer islands of Hawaii on March 3. About 9,300 of the 37,000 rooms in Waikiki and 11,000 of the 70,000 rooms statewide are affected.

This is the largest hotel strike in Hawaii's history and the largest strike of any kind since the 1979 United Public Workers walkout.

Negotiations on the union contract began a few weeks before the February 28 expiration. The union

was asking for imposition of a 5 percent surcharge on hotel rooms, to be divided among employees receiving no tips, and a 15 percent surcharge on food and beverages, to be divided among employees who would customarily receive tips. The union maintains that many visitors from other countries do not tip.

The union also demanded an end to strip-searching of employees and protested an employer plan to promote on the basis of "qualification," not seniority.

Some 4,000 Local 5 members, retirees, and supporters marched

through Waikiki and rallied at Kapiolani Park February 28. The local's secretary-treasurer, Tony Rutledge, told workers to be prepared to strike.

The next day a "stop work" meeting was held to hear an update on the talks. After the meeting, union leaders urged workers to take a "holiday."

The largest group of pickets on the first day of the strike was at the Hilton Hawaiian Village, where a group of 150 marched back and forth in front of the main entrance.

*Marc Viglielmo  
Honolulu, Hawaii*

ers, and youth around the world.

At his talk, Mr. Moore established a climate of red-baiting, race-baiting, and intimidation, which made a democratic discussion impossible. And it is no wonder. He cannot substantiate his claims and cannot defend his venomous opinion in the face of facts.

His presentation actually inspired me to deepen my commitment to get out the truth about Cuba by distributing the *Militant* and similar publications. Mr. Moore's talk made me realize the kind of treachery that Cuba faces from U.S. imperialism and its spokesmen.

*Eva Braiman  
New York, New York*

### Candid approach

I am an inmate at North Carolina Central Prison and have been here for eight years. Recently, I saw a copy of the *Militant* which had been sent to another prisoner.

Since he is held in a separate part of the prison, it is difficult to trade or borrow newspapers, and I was wondering if there was some way I could receive the paper. I really enjoyed it and its candid approach to what's going on.

Thank you so much and I will let others read it as well.

*A prisoner  
Raleigh, North Carolina*

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, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014.

## S. Africa workers step up strikes

BY GREG McCARTAN

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — As 150 strikers at Leonard Brushware sang freedom songs at an early morning rally in front of the factory, Thelma, a strike activist, explained the goals of their fight. "We want benefits and our shop steward rehired," she said. "We want a 30 rand increase. And apartheid in the factory must stop."

"Since our one-and-a-half week 'lightening strike' for union recognition in 1987," she continued, "there has been no peace in the factory."

The central demand of the striking members of the Paper, Printing, Wood, and Allied Workers Union (PPWAWU) is for a wage increase of R30 a week (US\$12). Black workers at the plant currently earn the equivalent of \$33 for a 45-hour week. Management's final offer prior to the strike was for a \$4.25-a-week raise.

The PPWAWU is affiliated to the Congress of South African Trade Unions. COSATU, a nonracial organization, is the main labor federation in the country. The strike, which began March 12, is one of a wave of strikes, rallies, and protests by workers in manufacturing, mining, transportation, health, and education across the country.

Although the official inflation rate is 15 percent, workers say increases in the cost of basic necessities are even higher. This, combined with the historically low wages paid to Black workers, makes the need for hefty wage increases especially pressing.

The small number of workers at the plant who are white do not belong to the union,



Militant/Margrethe Siem  
"We feel more confident today," said one Leonard Brushware striker. A wave of workers' struggles is taking place in South Africa.

explained Olga, a shop steward. The union has not been able to find out how much the white workers are paid. White workers generally earn from three to 10 times what Blacks make.

Leonard Brushware maintains separate facilities for Black and white workers in the plant, Olga pointed out. "At this plant apartheid is too much," she said. "We are trying to get rid of the separate facilities but this

management won't give up easily. South Africa is our land, and we have to fight for our rights," she added.

"We feel more confident today than ever before," another worker commented. A number of strikers wore the buttons of the liberation organization, the African National Congress.

As the rally progressed, several police vans loaded with heavily armed cops pulled up to the factory. The strikers sang more loudly and workers from surrounding plants in the industrial area joined in.

"Mandela, Mandela, show us the way to freedom," the strikers sang, referring to ANC leader Nelson Mandela.

At the local union office, union organizer Peter Malebese said that the Brushware strike was one of six in the Roodespoort area, which is near Johannesburg. The union has 35,000 members across the country, he said.

"We have workers from two or three factories a week coming in to join the union," he explained.

At Sherlock Industries a strike broke out March 16 when workers informed the boss that they had all joined the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA).

"The boss called on one of the workers and demanded to know if he had joined the union," striker Mhulani Ncapayi said. "We told him we all joined the union and walked to one side of the plant to show him we were sticking together."

The national organizer for NUMSA, Enock Godongwana, said, "We have strikes on a daily basis — we can't keep track any more."

Many of the strikes include demands for wage increases. "But given the abnormal nature of our society with apartheid," the union leader explained, "there have been strikes and demonstrations against segregated facilities and a strike because of a racist remark by a white worker."

"The companies are saying, 'We are not going to have practices based on race' but we have to look at affirmative action," Godongwana said. Without changing entry requirements and applying affirmative action, "You will find our guys are denied entry into new skills and the same restrictions are still in force."

Tens of thousands of mine workers have been involved in "rolling strikes," marches, and sit-ins over the past two weeks, calling for an end to discriminatory practices by the mine owners. They are also demanding an end to the migrant labor system that forces

Continued on Page 16

## Mandela urges stiffer sanctions

BY MARGRETHE SIEM

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — Returning from his five-nation trip to several African countries and Sweden, African National Congress (ANC) leader Nelson Mandela demanded the government begin negotiations with the liberation movement. He told reporters, "The government knows very well it has met only one of our major preconditions." It has to move very fast with the remaining steps, Mandela said, "the return of the exiles, the release of political prisoners, the lifting of the state of emergency," and ending "political prosecution."

Mandela urged opponents of apartheid internationally to step up pressure for sanctions against South Africa and moves to politically isolate the apartheid government. He explained it is an erroneous impression that President F.W. de Klerk has done "something positive, something fundamental, which would require the world to review sanctions and other pressures."

Mandela confirmed that an ANC delegation, led by himself, would be meeting with de Klerk for initial talks on April 11.

Several union, community, and youth leaders explained here why sanctions must be stepped up. Patrick Lekota, publicity secretary of the broad anti-apartheid coalition, the United Democratic Front (UDF), said in an interview that "increased sanctions are needed to put pressure on the government because there is nothing the government has done so far which has not been as a result of pressure, both internal and external."

"Secondly," he continued, "we need to force the government to move a bit faster to begin negotiations. Unless the government feels, and the white South Africans feel, that apartheid is uncomfortable, they will not pressure the government to move."

Such pressure is also needed to "justify the movement moving away from the position of emphasizing the armed struggle," Lekota added. "The cutting, for instance, of diplomatic ties will obviously make it very urgent for the government to consider its position."

The UDF leader said, "We have made a call to the U.S. government to intensify its interaction with the liberation movement

whilst reducing its interaction with the government."

"The Lenasia Youth League agrees that sanctions are important. In fact this has become the cornerstone in our struggle," Anthony Moonsamy explained in an interview during an ANC mass rally in Lenasia, an Indian community near Johannesburg. He explained continued pressure on the Pretoria regime is still necessary, "because we have a situation where liberation is not yet won, and therefore, now more than ever, sanctions are needed."

In Alexandra, a poor Black township in northern Johannesburg, Mzwawele Mayekiso, organizer of the Alexandra Civic Or-

ganisation explained, "We are intensifying the campaign against apartheid, and we urge the international community to do so as well. The point here is that de Klerk wants to buy time and hold on to power. We feel sanctions have to be stepped up."

Franz Baleni, regional organizer for the National Union of Mineworkers, said sanctions are "the only peaceful way which can pressure the regime to meet the demands of the majority of the people." The union leader added that although the regime says sanctions hurt Blacks, "sanctions or no sanctions, we are suffering. We would rather suffer for a certain period knowing at the end of the day we will get what we want."

## Texas oil workers buy Mandela book

BY JON HILLSON

The ideas of Nelson Mandela are finding their way to workers in Texas, and distributors there of *The Struggle Is My Life* have begun to reorder the book of speeches and documents by the African National Congress leader.

The big majority of the nearly 60 copies bought there, out of an initial goal of 70, have been sold by workers at two oil refineries, a steel mill, and a sugar refinery, reports Allyson Merceau, who is heading up the campaign.

Some 30 copies have been sold at Lyon Dell Petrochemical, which employs 650 workers, including Merceau. The best seller is a woman who drives a truck and can "get around the refinery," Merceau, an operator, noted. A 10-year employee of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers-organized refinery, she "wears a Malcolm X T-shirt every day and lets people know about the book," Merceau said.

This salesperson has sold 24 copies of *The Struggle Is My Life* since the campaign began, in addition to 15 copies of Pathfinder's best-selling *Malcolm X: The Last Speeches*. Now, she wants to get the book in front of her

church congregation and convinced the Pathfinder Bookstore in Houston to order at least 25 more copies. "She asks everybody," Merceau says. "She inspires us."

Merceau's coworker already has a copy of *New International No. 5*, which features an article on the national, democratic revolution in South Africa by Jack Barnes.

Now, Merceau is rereading the Marxist journal, "so we can discuss it together and get it out to coworkers who want to strengthen their understanding of the South African revolution and what it means for working people in the United States."

The Los Angeles Pathfinder Bookstore

also plans to reorder *The Struggle Is My Life*. Distributors have almost sold out of their original order of 100, many of them at anti-apartheid events and to people who stop to look at an attractive window display. A number of Mexicans, Salvadorans, and other Latinos have bought copies after pausing to look at *Habla Nelson Mandela*, the Spanish-language version of the book.

Geoff Mirelowitz, a member of the International Association of Machinists at a McDonnell Douglas aircraft plant, has sold seven copies of *The Struggle Is My Life*. "If you show the book to people, it sells itself," he said.

Send me  5  10  15  20  Other copies of:

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