

Labor's stake in defending quotas

The labor movement, defenders of civil and democratic rights, and all working people have a big stake in defending affirmative action from the bipartisan assault now under way in Washington.

Far from standing aside to let the Democratic and Republican party politicians restrict the debate on affirmative action quotas to the halls of Congress, the issue is at the center of how the working class needs to

EDITORIAL

organize to fight the effects of the worldwide capitalist economic crisis.

This is true as well for the range of rights being chipped away at by the courts and the government.

What is at stake for labor in defending and advancing demands for affirmative action,

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U.S. study admits war's massive damage to Iraq



Impact Visuals/Rick Reinhard

Telecommunications building in Baghdad, hit on several days by allied bombers. U.S.-led bombardment left 80 percent of Iraq's electrical grid out of service, destroyed 40 major bridges, and totally incapacitated phone and other communications services.

BY SETH GALINSKY

Classified reports prepared for the administration of President George Bush confirm that Iraq has been devastated by both the 43-day U.S. and allied bombardment and the continuing economic embargo. The studies have not been released by the White House; their existence was revealed by the *New York Times* June 3.

In a series of interviews with the *Times*, Bush administration "analysts," who asked to remain anonymous, admit that the conclusions of a United Nations mission to Iraq in March are correct. That report said Iraq had been denied "most means of modern life support."

A sharp increase in diseases such as cholera, typhoid, and gastroenteritis — one result of the U.S. assault — may already have caused tens of thousands of deaths. A report issued by a Harvard University medical team that visited Iraq in late April and early May said that "the collapse of electrical generating capacity has been a crucial factor in this public health catastrophe" and could lead to the deaths of more than 170,000 children. (Major excerpts of the Harvard report are reprinted on pages 8-9.)

Aspects of the war's damage that were confirmed by the Bush analysts include the following:

- 80 percent of the power grid is out of service. The Iraqi government announced recently that eight-hour daily blackouts will continue even in major cities. Many small towns and villages are completely without electricity.

The daily blackouts are causing recontamination of some drinking water supplies and disrupting the ability of hospitals to function, where the refrigeration of drugs, vaccines, and blood is vital.

- 40 major bridges across the Tigris and Euphrates rivers were destroyed. Another 10 bridges were seriously damaged.

- Iraq's only tire factory, which supplied the whole country, has been idled since last year due to a lack of imported raw materials. Oil pumps, pipelines, and refineries are still in need of repair.

- Iraq's highway and rail system is riddled with bomb craters.

- The country's telecommunications system was the most severely damaged. "The Iraqis are going to have to completely rebuild the system," one analyst said.

Times reporter Alan Cowell saw firsthand the destruction in Basra, a city of 1.5 million inhabitants in southern Iraq. Basra was hit

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Bush, Congress take aim at quotas

BY JAMES HARRIS

In a bipartisan drive the Democratic and Republican parties are working to outlaw the use of employment quotas for women and oppressed nationalities. Quotas are the only viable means of enforcing affirmative action goals.

Debate between the Bush administration and the Democratic Party backers of the civil rights bill has centered on the quotas issue. In an attempt to show they are more against the use of quotas than the White House, the

bill's sponsors have included language in the act that not only prohibits the use of quotas, it also echoes reactionary arguments against affirmative action. Similar legislation, but without the antiquotas measure, was vetoed by Bush last year.

Even with these additions Bush vows to veto the bill. In numerous speeches and official statements he, along with other ruling-class politicians, has begun a slander campaign against affirmative action.

Affirmative action is a gain won by work-

ing people as a result of the civil rights and women's rights movement in the 1960s and 1970s. As part of pushing back discriminatory legislation, these movements demanded the preferential hiring and promotion of oppressed minorities and women to make up for the results of past and present discriminatory hiring practices. Such measures would result in greater equality in the workplace.

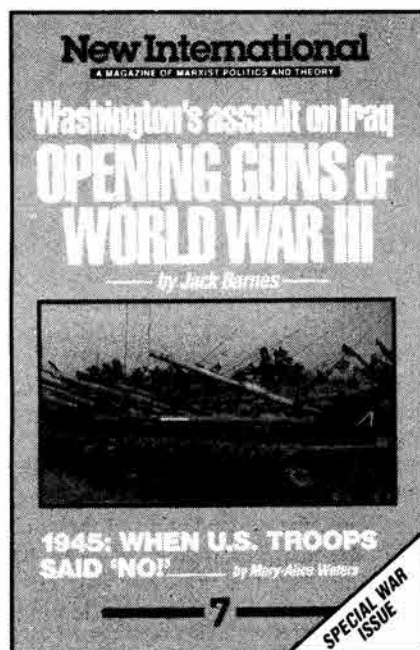
Numerical quotas are essential to the enforcement of affirmative action goals. They stipulate that a certain number of women or members of oppressed nationalities should fill new job openings or promotions. Without such measures employers are left to "voluntarily" implement hiring goals.

The need for affirmative action measures has not gone away. In March, the Labor Department reported that Black unemployment was nearly twice that of whites. And the U.S. Census Bureau reported that the median income of women was \$18,789, or 68 percent of the \$27,430 that men reported.

The Democrats initiated the civil rights bill to mitigate the impact of six Supreme

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Join the campaign against imperialism and war



Death and dislocation continue to stalk the peoples of Iraq and the whole Mideast region in the wake of the U.S.-led war. As the consequences of Washington's aggression unfold and its lies unravel, more workers, farmers, youth, and GIs are seeking an explanation of the roots of imperialism and war, and the system that breeds them.

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'Militant' supporters report best week yet in int'l circulation drive

BY RONI McCANN

Militant supporters on a special seven-week drive to win new subscribers to the socialist press achieved their best results yet during an eight-day blitz that ended June 1. In many cities supporters won more new readers than they had during the entire previous four weeks of the drive — a big boost to the international circulation effort that ends June 15.

Altogether 362 people signed up for the *Militant* in eight days — 100 more than any previous week. Supporters are over where they should be on the *New Internationalist* goal by 59 copies. Members of industrial unions sold 76 *Militant* subscriptions during the target effort.

"We did great!" said L. Paltrineri from Omaha. "We sent out several teams in the

region to meat-packing areas and rail yards. We went from 23 *Militant* subscriptions sold to 34 in one week."

"We had our best sales day yet last Saturday," said Don Mackle from Newark. "Calling back those who had expressed interest in subscribing and readers who needed to renew their subscriptions really paid off for us. One postal worker won four renewals during the week."

"We went whole hog!" said Kevin Dwire from Des Moines, Iowa. "We sold four subscriptions at the University of Iowa; one at the Excel meat-packing plant in Ottumwa; and four by calling back potential subscribers. In selling *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* subscriptions, we did in one week almost what we had done in the entire drive."

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New prime minister in France promotes protectionist policies

BY GEORGE BUCHANAN

Under the banner of "fighting Japanese protectionism," France's new prime minister is more openly and aggressively promoting protectionist policies for French and European industry than any such leader in recent decades.

French president François Mitterrand announced his appointment of the new prime minister, Edith Cresson, with the reminder that he had promised a "new spirit" in government following the war against Iraq. Paris reluctantly participated as part of the Washington-led "allies" after making several attempts to bring about a settlement with Saddam Hussein, with whom it had close economic and political ties.

Mitterrand's choice of Cresson was in line with recent decisions by the French government to beef up its military, in particular its independent military intelligence-gathering agencies and hardware, following its forced reliance on U.S. military intelligence during the Gulf War.

Cresson's statements of what course the French government will follow is one graphic example of how the imperialist war in the Gulf accelerated inter-imperialist competition. France, a weaker imperialist power, is under increasing economic pressure from its U.S., Japanese, and German rivals.

Until last October Cresson was minister of agriculture, industry and foreign trade, and European affairs. Before she left that post, she expressed regret that French imperialism "does not wage global economic war," by employing more protectionist measures, particularly against Japan.

Within hours of becoming prime minister, Cresson repeated the Japan-bashing for which she has made a name for herself.

She announced that Japan had taken over the world's photographic industry and destroyed the U.S. auto industry. Adding to a statement made last year that "Japan is an adversary who doesn't play by the rules and which has the absolute objective of conquering the world," Cresson described Japan as "an-

other universe which wants to conquer... that's the way they are."

She sees the dominance of Japanese computer components as a particular threat to the independence of European military forces.

The European Community (EC), which is dominated by the governments of Germany and France, has set the beginning of 1993 for the achievement of a single European market with no internal tariffs between the member countries. The EC's executive body has proposed that as of 1993 Japanese cars will be restricted to their current market share (10 percent), rising to only 16 percent by 1999.

The previous government of prime minister Michel Rocard criticized that proposal as too generous, and Cresson promises to take an even more restrictive stance. Because of French government quotas, Japanese autos currently occupy less than 4 percent of the French car market, in contrast with 15 percent of the German market, which is free of such restraints.

As well as speaking first and foremost for French capitalism, Cresson believes that, in order to compete with U.S. and Japanese rivals, Paris should promote French companies being part of giant European-wide enterprises. "We have to make European alliances, notably in electronics, information and communication, and perhaps, cars," she said.

Cresson also believes that, in order for the new Europe to be "balanced," the strength of French capitalism should match that of Germany. "I admire what the Germans do, but I know history, I know what the relationship of forces is, and I say: we have to be strong," Cresson declared.

France's rulers utilize the "socialist" name of Mitterrand's party to press their chauvinist course and protectionist measures. This policy is also promoted under the guise of "helping" the working class, of whom 2.6



French prime minister Edith Cresson

million are unemployed.

Thus, in her first major policy speech, Cresson declared that unemployment is "the primary cause of the inequalities in our society." However, the British *Guardian* noted that in the same speech she "gave no details of her plans to reduce unemployment."

Cresson could be faced with difficulties in the French parliament, because her Socialist Party is in a minority there. Her predecessor, Michel Rocard, survived 11 opposition no-confidence motions only by making deals with forces in the "center" of the French parliamentary spectrum.

But the French Communist Party may be able to guarantee her government's survival, as they hold enough seats to constitute a balance of power in the parliament. The CP has said it will give her government the "benefit of the doubt" rather than voting to topple it.

Echoing Cresson's own chauvinist themes, an article in the Communist Party paper *l'Humanité* stated: "Mrs Edith Cresson affirms that she wants to reduce inequality, train young people, strengthen industry, and defend France's place in the world. That's good, very good... So let's get on with it."

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Socialists in Philadelphia speak out against budget cuts

BY STEPHEN BRIDE

PHILADELPHIA — Linking this city's budgetary woes to "a broader crisis of this system of capitalism," Socialist Workers Party mayoral candidate Kathleen Mickells presented the party's slate for upcoming city elections here at a May 23 news conference.

Running with Mickells for three at-large city council seats are Francisco Picado, who works in the garment industry; Maureen Colletta, an auto worker; and Temple University student Stephen Frum.

"Crises like the one here are wracking numerous U.S. cities and more than 30 states," Mickells said. "They are brought on by the policies of the twin parties of the status quo," which are aimed at "solving the 'fiscal crisis' in the interests of the bondholders, bankers, and owners of big business."

"The 'leadership' and 'reliability' of my opponents," she continued, "are code words for their qualifications to carry out more cuts in social services, more taxes on working people, more union-busting, more police beatings, and more attacks on a woman's right to choose abortion."

Opposing Mickells in the mayor's race will be former Democratic district attorney Edward Rendell, and ex-mayor Frank Rizzo on the Republican side.

Joining Mickells at the news conference, socialist candidate Picado spoke of his recent tour of Cuba.

"I found a confident, highly motivated population that is informed about the strengths and weaknesses of their society, and takes an active part in shaping it," he said. "Tens of thousands of youth and workers are volunteering for production brigades that are central to the fight for food and self-sufficiency."

"It is that kind of participation," he said, "that has made their free health care and education comparable to what costs top dollar in the United States."

This has been achieved, Picado added, "despite new economic hardships stemming from the decline in trade with Eastern Europe



Militant/Michael Carper
Socialist candidate Francisco Picado

and the Soviet Union, the worldwide capitalist economic crisis, and the 30-year embargo imposed by the U.S. government."

The U.S. war on Iraq, Colletta told the news conference, "showed what capitalism has in store for working people around the world: devastation and social crisis, not peace and stability."

"The slaughter of tens of thousands of workers in and out of uniform, the uprooting of millions, the reinstallation of the corrupt and brutal Kuwaiti monarchy — all these expose the fact that this war was not for freedom and democracy, but for dominance and exploitation."

It was, she concluded, "the first of the wars that mark the period of capitalist decay and deepening crisis that was announced by the stock market crash of 1987."

To gain ballot status, the SWP candidates are required to obtain 3,804 signatures on nominating petitions. The party and its supporters, Mickells said, will soon begin a drive aimed at collecting 6,000 signatures.

Supreme Court presses assault on rights

BY PETER THIERJUNG

The justices of the U.S. Supreme Court handed down several rulings at the end of May driving ahead an assault on civil liberties that has marked the High Court's current term.

The new rulings undermine the right to equal protection under the law, safeguards against unreasonable searches and seizures by police, and the right to an impartial jury.

In previous rulings this year, the justices decided that confessions coerced by police can be entered as evidence in criminal trials, and materials secured by police while detaining someone without cause can be used in court as evidence against them.

They have strictly limited the right to appeal convictions or punishment, giving states a green light to step up executions of death row inmates; and approved the detention of individuals for 48 hours without an arrest warrant.

Abortion rights have been a particular target of the Court, which upheld government regulations barring employees of federally financed family planning clinics from any discussion of abortion with patients.

On May 28 the Supreme Court effectively ruled that Hispanics do not have the same rights to equal protection under the law as other citizens.

The Court said constitutional rights were not violated in a case against a Hispanic defendant where the prosecutor had individuals fluent in Spanish removed from the jury.

The Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund, appealing on behalf of Dionisio Hernandez, argued that excluding jurors who speak both English and Spanish was a pretext for racial discrimination that previous Supreme Court decisions had condemned.

Hernandez was tried and convicted on attempted murder charges. The main witness at the trial testified in Spanish. In the pretrial jury selection process, the prosecutor chal-

lenged two prospective jurors because they were conversant in both Spanish and English and had hesitated under questioning to say whether they would only consider the English translation of the courtroom testimony.

The prosecutor argued that the law requires jurors to base their deliberations on a common official record of courtroom proceedings, not on independent knowledge, linguistic or otherwise.

Justice Anthony Kennedy wrote that the prosecutor's explanation for his jury challenges were valid and said the constitution only bars intentional discrimination, not those that have discriminatory effects. He asserted that discrimination on the basis of language is acceptable if it is based on a "race-neutral" consideration, such as those presented by the prosecutor.

In a dissenting opinion, Justice John Paul Stevens said the prosecutor's arguments, even if offered in good faith, were insufficient to dispel charges of racial discrimination. He said the Court's ruling would "inevitably result" in a high proportion of Spanish-speak-

ing individuals being disqualified from juries.

Stevens said the concerns raised by the prosecutor could easily have been solved by allowing bilingual jurors to notify the judge of disagreements they had with official court translations.

The Supreme Court ruled May 30 that police do not need a warrant to search packages or luggage found in cars. In an opinion for the court majority, Justice Harry Blackmun said, "The police may search an automobile and the containers within it where they have probable cause to believe contraband or evidence is contained."

The decision reverses a 12-year-old precedent which required police to have a search warrant.

Justices Stevens and Thurgood Marshall wrote in their dissenting opinion that the court majority had reached beyond the court's constitutional boundaries to function as "a loyal foot soldier in the executive's [Bush administration] fight against crime."

Stevens and Marshall said the Court cre-

ated greater legal problems than the ones allegedly solved by the ruling. They explained the law prohibits the search of a briefcase while the owner is carrying it down the street, but the ruling allows it once the owner locks the suitcase in his car trunk.

In another ruling handed down May 30, the Supreme Court upheld a trial judge's decision preventing a defense attorney from questioning potential jurors about what they knew about a crime that was highly publicized in the press.

The defendant in the case was convicted of murder and sentenced to death. Eight of the 12 jurors said that they had been exposed to some pretrial publicity about the case.

Chief Justice William Rehnquist, writing for the majority, claimed the trial court's action was not a violation of the right to be tried by an impartial jury.

Justices Marshall, Stevens, and Blackmun dissented. They said the decision "turns a critical constitutional guarantee — the Sixth Amendment's right to an impartial jury — into a hollow formality."

Bush and Congress campaign against affirmative action employment quotas

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Court decisions in 1989 that dealt serious blows to affirmative action.

The rulings included:

- A 6-3 vote overturning a Richmond, Virginia, ordinance that channeled 30 percent of public works funds to Black-owned construction companies. The Court ruled the measure violated the constitutional rights of white contractors.
- The Court later reinforced this decision

by striking down a similar law in Michigan that required that a percentage of state contracts be awarded to minority- or women-owned businesses.

- A decision to end a 15-year-old consent decree mandating affirmative action programs in the basic steel industry.
- A ruling upholding the employers in a suit filed by Eskimo and Asian salmon canner workers in Alaska, which made it substantially easier for employers to defend themselves against being sued for discriminatory hiring and promotion practices.
- A decision to permit white firemen in Birmingham, Alabama, to challenge an eight-year-old affirmative action plan designed to remedy that city's refusal to hire Blacks as firefighters.
- And a ruling on the same day that said that three women telephone workers were too late in filing a lawsuit against a biased seniority plan that resulted in their demotions because they were women.

Unlawful employment practice

But along with language that is supposed to overturn these decisions by the Court, the bill wages an attack on the use of quotas in affirmative action.

The proposed bill states, "quotas deemed unlawful employment practice."

"(2) to require, encourage, or permit an employer to adopt hiring or promotion quotas on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin and the use of such quotas shall be deemed to be an unlawful employment practice . . ."

Supporters of the bill, in an effort to accommodate themselves to the employers, are tripping over themselves showing their opposition to quotas.

The Bush administration has, however, continued to label the bill a "quotas bill" and to utilize the propaganda campaign against quotas to attack affirmative action.

"It defines the 'Q' word so narrowly it would allow employers to establish personnel systems based on numbers, not merit," Bush said to graduates of the Federal Bureau of Investigation Academy in Quantico, Virginia, on May 30.

"Other sections rig the rules against employers. If their numbers aren't right the employers are essentially helpless to defend themselves in court," said Bush.

United States Attorney General Dick Thornburgh, carrying Bush's theme even further, attacked the bill because it would open the possibility that employers could be sued for not hiring "qualified people."

In a written statement he said, "The new language would only bar an employer from using a quota system that required the hiring of unqualified persons. The bill would permit an employer, however, to use a quota system in hiring of others so long as they met minimum standards. The new language therefore would protect the very kind of quotas that employers would be pressured to use in order to avoid the costly and time-consuming liti-

gation that this bill would foster."

Another major concession in the bill is the refusal to remove the cap on punitive damages that women can receive in cases of job discrimination. Under a law passed in 1866 during the Reconstruction Period after the U.S. Civil War, those who experience racial discrimination can sue and collect compensation for medical expenses and punitive damages.

But other who have suffered from discrimination, such as women, are not covered by this law. They are covered only by the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which only allows back pay and hiring or reinstatement.

Bill's language on quotas

Following is the section of the House Democrats' bill on civil rights outlawing quotas.

Sec. III. Voluntary and court-ordered affirmative action approved; quotas deemed unlawful employment practice.

(A) Rules of Construction. — Nothing in the amendments made by this Act shall be construed —

(1) to limit an employer in establishing its job requirements if such requirements are lawful under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; or

(2) to require, encourage, or permit an employer to adopt hiring or promotion quotas on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin, and the use of such quotas shall be deemed to be an unlawful employment practice under such title; provided, that the amendments made by this act shall be construed to approve the lawfulness of voluntary or court-ordered affirmative action that is —

(a) consistent with the decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States in employment discrimination cases; or

(b) in the absence of such decisions, otherwise in accordance with employment discrimination law; as in effect on the date of the enactment of this act.

(B) Definition. — For purposes of subsection (a), the term "quota" means a fixed number or percentage of persons of a particular race, color, religion, sex or national origin which must be attained, or which cannot be exceeded, regardless of whether such persons meet necessary qualifications to perform the job.

Machinists union defeats AMFA at Northwest Airlines

BY ELLEN BERMAN

ATLANTA — In the final results of a month-long election, mechanics, cleaners, janitors, and inspectors at Northwest Airlines voted overwhelming to remain members of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) rather than be represented by the company-minded, craft organization AMFA (Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association). The final tally was

4,157 for the IAM and 2,800 for AMFA.

At the maintenance hangar in Atlanta where a great many mechanics supported AMFA, several expressed surprise that the vote was not closer, but were not surprised that AMFA lost. As one AMFA supporter put it, "I thought AMFA was climbing a pretty big hill."

When asked how they felt about the outcome of the election, a typical response of AMFA supporters was, "that the majority had decided, and everyone should work with what we've got." One mechanic who voted for AMFA said he was surprised at some of the people who told him they were voting for the IAM. "I guess they just weren't disappointed enough," he said. This reflected much of the sentiment going into the election — many explaining that they were voting for AMFA because of anger and frustration at the IAM leadership for not organizing much of a fight to defend the union against company concession demands.

Many of the AMFA supporters were former Eastern strikers who felt the IAM leadership "turned their back on the Eastern strike." They supported AMFA because they felt it would be impossible to change the IAM. "You can't teach an old dog new tricks," insisted one 27-year IAM veteran. "What we need is a revolution and that's what AMFA represents."

Others understood that, despite their frustration with the IAM leadership, AMFA represented not a revolution but a step backward in the narrow, procompany, "divide and conquer" framework of craft unions.

At a victory celebration held at the Local 2665 union hall, many members and officials of the IAM expressed the opinion that AMFA had never had a chance because all they had was a lot of propaganda. Some thought the election would mean changes in the IAM — that the leadership would be more responsive to the ideas of the membership.

But many on the hangar floor, even those who voted for the IAM, did not agree. "They'll be back," explained one mechanic who campaigned for the IAM during the election. AMFA can file for another election in two years. "And whether or not they win depends on the contract." The IAM's contract with Northwest is up in 1992.

Washington reverses rule allowing people with AIDS into U.S.

The U.S. government reversed a plan to allow people infected with the AIDS virus to enter the United States.

Infection with the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) that causes AIDS is currently on the list of diseases that are grounds to bar a person from entering the United States. A new regulation, striking HIV from the list, would have gone into effect June 1. Bush administration and congressional officials announced in late May that the exclusionary policy will instead remain.

In 1987, Congress approved an amendment authored by North Carolina Sen. Jesse Helms that added HIV infection to a list of communicable and dangerous diseases that is used by immigration authorities to keep people out of the country.

An outcry and protests against the Helms amendment followed. The National Commission on AIDS, the World Health Organization, the International Societies of the Red Cross, groups active in the fight against AIDS, gay and lesbian activists, and civil libertarians were among those who denounced the policy as discriminatory and medically unjustified.

In January, the Department of Health and Human Services responded to a request by Congress to make a determination on the infectious diseases used by the immigration department to exclude people. Secretary of Health Louis Sullivan ruled that only tuberculosis was grounds for exclusion.

Ceremony in Cuba hails return of last troops from Angola

The final contingent of 119 Cuban internationalist volunteers arrived in Havana May 25 from Angola. "I can inform our people and our commander in chief [Fidel Castro] that Operation Carlotta is over," said Gen. Raúl Castro, head of Cuba's armed forces, at a ceremony outside Havana.

"Operation Carlotta" was the code name given to Cuba's airlift of combat troops in 1975 to defend the newly independent government of Angola from an invasion by forces of the apartheid regime in South Africa. The mission lasted 16 years and was concluded under the terms of a 1988 peace agreement.

"It was a resounding victory," Raúl Castro said, which preserved Angola's independence, contributed to the "historic victory" of Namibia's independence, and advanced the fight against apartheid, leading to the early release of Nelson Mandela.

"Angola is a legend, a watershed in history which will continue as an inspiration to the national independence and social emancipation of the peoples of Africa," Castro concluded.

NATO's military restructuring causes frictions among allies

Countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) agreed May 28 to reorganize their military forces, projecting a 50 percent cutback in U.S. troop strength in Europe. U.S. troops in Europe now number 320,000.

The agreement includes establishing a 72-hour rapid deployment force, a larger corps that could be dispatched in five to seven days, and seven main defense corps.

The new NATO military structure, officials said, comes as a result of the collapse of the Warsaw Pact. For years the imperialists claimed their massive troop, heavy armor, and nuclear arms deployment in Europe was necessary to deter a possible attack from the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries. While vaguely described in press reports the new force is designed to be used in countries where imperialist interests are threatened.

NATO officials reported that friction developed between Washington and Paris over who would control the new military force. France had proposed it be controlled by participating European countries.

U.S. Defense Secretary Richard Cheney insisted that "a rapid-reaction force that is created under the auspices of NATO ought to be subject to NATO control." The United States is the dominant military power in the NATO alliance.

Israeli peace activist challenges government's ban on PLO

Abie Nathan, a well-known 64-year-old Israeli peace activist, is conducting a hunger strike. He was jailed for four months by the Israeli government for meeting Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yassir Arafat two years ago.

Nathan held another meeting with Arafat last year and is again being prosecuted. "It is very painful for me that I am the one who is talking to them, and not the Israeli government," Nathan told the court.

Nathan launched his hunger strike at the end of April to press the Israeli government to change its policy of refusing to talk with the PLO. Weakened and in declining health, Nathan's protest has polarized public opinion.

On May 22, the speaker of the Israeli parliament, a member of the ruling rightist Likud Party, called on Nathan to stop his hunger strike. Nathan refused.

CMEA trade body dissolved

The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA), also known as COMECON, was formally dissolved May 20 by Soviet and Eastern European financial ministers. Founded in 1949, the trading bloc was composed of the Soviet Union, Eastern European countries, Cuba, Mongolia, and Vietnam. Economic relations between the former member countries will now be conducted bilaterally, much of it possibly on the basis of hard currency and current world market prices.

Support at Midwest Labor Jam for Mark Curtis defense case

BY NAN BAILEY

FORT MADISON, Iowa — The Mark Curtis Defense Committee got an enthusiastic reception from about 200 unionists attending the fifth Midwest Labor Jam held here May 11.

Curtis, a former meatpacker and union and political activist, is serving a 25-year sentence on frame-up charges of burglary and rape. He is a prisoner at the John Bennett Correctional Center, which is located within a mile of the site of the Lodi Center where the Labor Jam took place.

Defense Committee leader Maurice Williams, a member of United Food and Commercial Workers union (UFCW) Local 50N, addressed the crowd on Curtis' behalf. Williams, who had visited Curtis that morning, read the following greetings from the imprisoned activist:

"As a former meatpacker and UFCW member, I know the hardship the companies are forcing on us and why we have to fight together. The prisoners locked up here in the penitentiary are John Deere workers, former Rath packing plant workers, farmers, and farm workers — in other words, we are your brothers. Your fight and our fight for better conditions and democratic rights are the same and we must support one another.

"Thank you for your help in overturning the unjust frame-up of me for my union and political activities and for protesting the beating I received from the cops," Curtis wrote.

Williams appealed for unionists at the Labor Jam to join the letter writing campaign of the defense committee urging the Iowa State Board of Parole to parole Curtis.

Among those who agreed to send a message were Jill Baxter of UFCW Local 617 and Larry Ross of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 67. Baxter and Ross were the co-coordinators of the Labor Jam. Dave Dowling, president of USWA Local 67 in Granite City, Illinois, and Milton Ames, vice-president of UFCW Local 617 in Fort Madison added their names as well.

Lively discussions took place at the Curtis Defense Committee table throughout the day. Many looked at the photograph on display of Curtis after he had been beaten by Des

Moines police and said things like, "That's just like what they did to that guy in California." Several made financial contributions.

High school students

Darren, a 14-year-old high school student from Collinsville, Illinois, explained that his father and grandfather are steelworkers. He had seen the video on the Curtis frame-up produced by Nick Castle at a showing at his grandfather's house. "The law is wrong," he said, explaining why he supported Curtis. "The evidence they put up kept changing. It didn't come together as a case. The cops accused him of things he hadn't done."

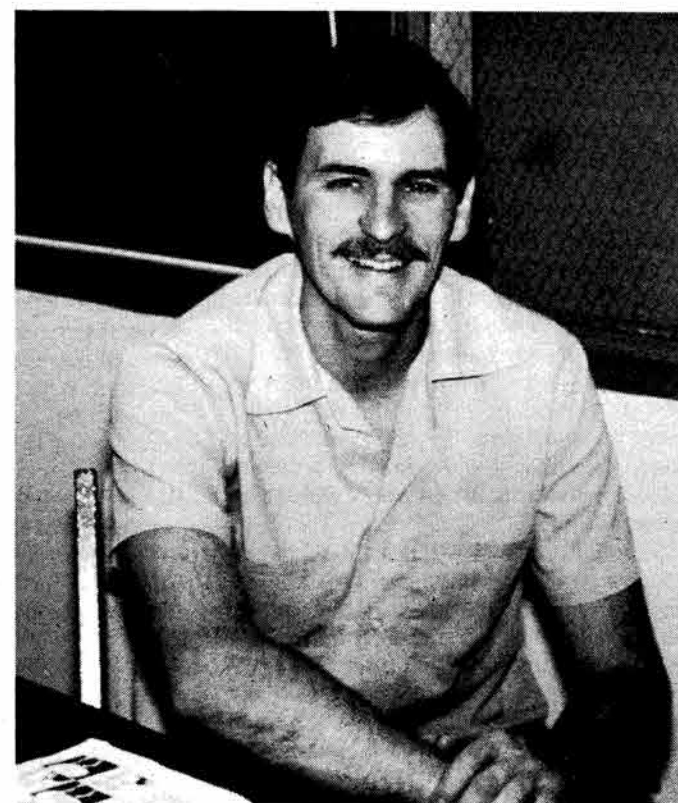
Ray, another high school student, put \$5 in the donation can. "He's a union activist and I'm for the union," he said.

Ray Graham of USWA Local 67 came up to the table and bought

six buttons. Another Steelworker shoved a financial contribution into the hand of a defense committee activist after hearing a presentation on the case.

Representatives of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) Local 1010 in Keokuk, Iowa, and members of USWA Local 5668 in Ravenswood, West Virginia, also addressed the Labor Jam. Raffles were organized to raise funds for both of these strikes.

IAM Local 1010 has been on strike since December 1, 1990. The strikers are employed by St. Louis Gear. "What it's about for him [St. Louis Gear boss Dan Hodges] is to break the union," one striker said in an interview. Hodges presented the union with an unac-



Militant/Margaret Jayko
Mark Curtis, a union and political activist, was framed in 1988 on rape and burglary charges. In greetings sent to Midwest Labor Jam, he thanked organizers for their support.

ceptable concession contract, which included company demands to allow management employees to do work previously done by union workers and requirements for an insurance plan requiring substantial payments from workers. The union has had a fully funded insurance plan for years. "That was too much to give up," said the striker.

USWA 5668 members have been locked out of the Ravenswood Aluminum Corporation plant in Ravenswood, West Virginia, for seven months. Charlie McDowell, who is chairman of the local, worked at the plant for 32 years. He spoke at the Labor Jam and appealed for solidarity with the locked-out workers. He explained that armed thugs and surveillance cameras are being used by the company to enforce their lockout. The company is trying to force concessions — like cancellation of cost-of-living raises and the right to contract out all work — down the workers' throats. McDowell said members of the union have traveled to Connecticut, Minnesota, and Indiana in recent weeks to win support, receiving a warm reception.

The jam featured musicians and singers who were rank-and-file unionists from around the Midwest. One song, dedicated to Mark Curtis, was about his case. Its words included:

"The prisons are overflowin' with fighters just like you, from the Massey mines to the Greyhound lines, and Leonard Peltier too.

"This time it was Mark Curtis, But it could have been you or me, Anybody who works for peace and a little dignity."

Curtis letter to Rodney King expresses solidarity, support

Rodney King, a union construction worker who is Black, was brutally beaten by four Los Angeles police on March 3, 1991. Below is a letter of solidarity sent to King by Mark Curtis. Curtis is a union and political activist who was framed on false criminal charges in 1988. He is serving a 25-year term in an Iowa state prison.

May 8, 1991

Rodney King
Los Angeles

Dear Brother King,

Like millions around the world, I watched with outrage the video recording of you being beaten savagely by the members of the Los Angeles Police Department. I think most people said the same thing to themselves as I did while I watched: "That could be me on the ground."

I want to extend my solidarity — and that of many of us here in the state prison in Fort Madison, Iowa — to the fight for justice in Los Angeles. Gates must go!

I know what you have been through. On March 4, 1988, I was arrested and brutally beaten in the Des Moines Police Station. The cops' beating sent me to the hospital covered with bruises, a smashed cheekbone, and a gash on my face that took 15 stitches to close.

The authorities in Los Angeles are trying to turn you into a criminal instead of the victim. They claim you provoked them after a harrowing "high speed chase." Des Moines cops accuse me of lunging for an empty gun holster and kicking at them while I was naked with my hands cuffed behind my back. The racist statements by the L.A. cops captured on the department's recorder show that your only "crime" was to be a Black person.

And it is becoming clearer every day that

you are far from unique, just one of their several targets each week.

I am a union and political activist who was fighting to strengthen my union and defend the rights of my immigrant coworkers. The cops in Des Moines called me a "Mexican lover" and a "colored lover" before they beat me, showing what they considered to be my real "crime." But they framed me up on fabricated charges of rape and burglary.

Both of us have filed lawsuits against our beatings, to fight to extract some justice. But I know that it will take a lot more than legal action to push the cops back.

You were right on when you said that the cops act like a family, and that the rest of us are in another family. Speaking as a member of your family, I stand with you 100% and join in demanding that justice be done. You deserve restitution and the cops who beat you must be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

I am inspired by the protests of thousands demanding that Police Chief Daryl Gates be forced out of office. A victory in this fight would not only be a victory for you, but would send a powerful message that violence against working people will not be tolerated. It would make cops in L.A. and around the country think twice about how far they can go in victimizing us.

Please accept my deepest solidarity, my hopes for your physical recovery, and my pledge of any assistance I can give you. Stay strong.

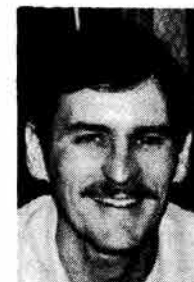
In solidarity,

Mark Curtis #805338
Box 316 JBCC
Iowa State Penitentiary
Fort Madison, Iowa 52627

from PATHFINDER The Frame-up of Mark Curtis by Margaret Jayko

This pamphlet tells the story of Mark Curtis, a unionist and fighter for immigrant rights, who is serving a 25-year sentence in an Iowa prison on trumped-up rape charges. 71 pp. \$5.00.

Order from Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. (Please include \$3.00 for postage and handling.)



Supporters report 'best week yet' in sales drive

Continued from front page

Militant supporters are using the sales drive to reach a broader number of workers and young people, introduce them to the *Militant*, and get out the facts about Washington's war against Iraq and the employer-government assault on the rights and unions of workers at home.

The *Militant's* defense of affirmative action, abortion rights, and unionists in struggle is particularly attractive to those who decide to purchase a single copy or to subscribe. Supporters are also meeting some young people who decide to join the Young Socialist Alliance, a revolutionary socialist youth organization.

Supporters plan to use the remaining weeks of the sales drive to fight to sell as many subscriptions to the socialist publications as possible.

A special three-day target effort is set for June 13-15 to make a final push in the drive.

'Disgusted by U.S. actions in Iraq'

Supporters in Austin, Minnesota, are at 88 percent of their *Militant* goal. Three subscriptions were sold during the target week in nearby Albert Lea, where many meat-packers live and work.

Gale Shangold said: "People are deeply interested in what we mean when we say the war against Iraq sounded the opening guns of World War III. They listen very carefully to what we say about the Harvard medical report documenting the devastation in Iraq."

"One worker I met at a plant gate during the target week said he was disgusted with what the U.S. did in Iraq. He said a GI who came back from serving there had showed him photographs of the devastation."

In Vancouver, Canada, *Militant* supporters began the target week by visiting nearby Chilliwack, site of a major Canadian armed forces base. Nancy Walker reported: "Troops stationed there will soon be going to Kuwait on a three-month rotation to clear mine fields. One soldier said, 'People are dying in Kuwait doing that work!'"

Another soldier decided to try a subscription to the *Militant*.

Supporters in Stockholm, Sweden, began one day of the sales blitz by selling the paper at a drilling machine factory. One worker bought a *Militant* and said the "whole country of Iraq has been destroyed in the war."

Later at a university they sold nine copies of the paper and two issues of *New Internationalist* no. 7.

In Britain supporters fielded several teams in the region. One went to Wales and sold nine subscriptions at a national *Eisteddfod*, a cultural festival for youth. Among those buying were high school students who wanted to know about the fight against the war; the differences between Cuba, the Soviet Union, and the Eastern European countries; and who Che Guevara was.

Supporters reported that previously, their combined total of subscriptions sold to the socialist publications and copies sold of *New Internationalist* was 41. During the target week alone they sold 56 more!



Militant/Steve Marshall

Selling the *Militant* in Kayenta, Arizona, during target week. Five union miners subscribed.

Cuban 'Granma' responds to Bush conditions for normalizing relations

BY PETER THIERJUNG

The Cuban Communist Party's newspaper *Granma* called U.S. President George Bush's May 20 radio broadcast to Cuba "cynicism, demagoguery, and mediocrity."

Bush demanded Cuban President Fidel Castro put "democracy to a test" and called the Cuban leader the "hemisphere's last dictator."

"If Cuba holds fully free and fair elections under international supervision, respects human rights, and stops subverting its neighbors," Bush said over Radio Martí, "we can expect relations between our two countries to improve significantly."

Washington has maintained a policy of quarantine against Cuba for many years, including a trade embargo, denial of U.S. citizens' right to travel to the country, and a host of other measures.

"What strange, divine mandate does the U.S. president have that allows him to set conditions for relations with Cuba?" *Granma* asked in a May 24 editorial, according to Reuters.

Granma pointed out that the U.S. government maintains relations with a variety of governments with both presidential and parliamentary systems, monarchies, emirates, and military dictators. "It is certainly odd that the only model that is incompatible for Bush with his freedom vocation should be the Cuban one," the paper noted.

Cuba's crime, the editorial said, was that it carried out a revolution in 1959 that toppled the U.S.-backed dictator Fulgencio Batista: "That's our heresy; promoting, maintaining, and defending our own political project, created by ourselves, outside and in opposition to U.S. tutelage."

The Cuban daily also ridiculed assertions by U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Bernard Aronson, who said the United States did not threaten Cuba or wish to dictate its affairs.

"If the U.S. does not threaten Cuba and does not wish to attack its revolution, why does it blockade the island, why does it need the Guantánamo Naval Base, why doesn't it dismantle the base now?" *Granma* asked. Washington maintains a naval base on Cuban soil in Guantánamo.

"What is perfectly clear is that Cuba does not threaten the U.S.," *Granma* said, pointing out that Cuba had neither the motivation nor the military ability to pose a threat to the United States.

The editorial said the United States held Cuba to the "very rigid rules" it reserved for the countries of Latin America. "Latin America is for the U.S. a private reserve, in which it would prefer to see a series of city halls instead of independent nations," *Granma* said.

The newspaper also criticized the timing of Bush's speech, the 89th anniversary of the installation of the first U.S.-dominated regime in Cuba. The date, *Granma* said, marked the conversion of the island into the "backyard" of the United States until the 1959 revolution that made Cuba independent.

On May 29, Cuba's ambassador to the United Nations, Ricardo Alarcón, appeared before the UN Economic and Social Council. He presented a draft resolution calling on the UN Commission on Human Rights to "consider, as a matter of priority, the adverse effects which the embargo and other aggressive and discriminatory actions taken against the Republic of Cuba by the Government of the United States of America have on the enjoyment of the Cuban people of their inalienable human rights."

Washington's more-than-30-year trade embargo has included the "total prohibition of trade in foodstuffs and medicines," the draft resolution said. It called the embargo "a flagrant and inadmissible violation of the rights of the Cuban people to achieve economic and social progress, improve their standard of living, and enhance their dignity and freedom."

Selling the press to unionists

Union	%Sold	Militant* (Goal)	Sold	New Int'l (Goal)	Sold
UNITED STATES					
ACTWU	22%	46	10	30	0
IAM	27%	143	39	87	3
ILGWU	15%	20	3	10	1
IUE	43%	42	18	25	7
OCAW	18%	50	9	55	4
UAW	38%	87	33	32	8
UFCW	40%	93	37	35	6
UMWA	106%	33	35	19	4
USWA	43%	90	39	50	6
UTU	57%	65	37	50	4
TOTAL	39%	669	260	393	43
SHOULD BE	71%		499		281
AUSTRALIA					
MTFU	50%	6	3	6	0
SHOULD BE	71%		4		4
BRITAIN					
AEU	13%	15	2	11	2
NUM	39%	18	7	15	4
RMT	50%	32	16	22	4
TGWU	50%	8	4	3	2
TOTAL	40%	73	29	51	12
SHOULD BE	71%		52		36
CANADA					
ACTWU	0%	7	0	2	2
CAW	44%	9	4	10	2
IAM	29%	14	4	8	1
USWA	6%	16	1	11	2
TOTAL	20%	46	9	31	7
SHOULD BE	71%		33		22
NEW ZEALAND					
NZEW	25%	4	1	3	0
NZMWU	50%	10	5	5	0
FTWU	20%	10	2	3	0
UFCW	71%	7	5	3	0
TOTAL	42%	31	13	14	0
SHOULD BE	71%		22		10
SWEDEN					
FOOD	0%	6	0	0	0
METAL	0%	5	0	3	0
TRANSPORT	0%	1	0	1	0
TOTAL	0%	12	0	4	0
SHOULD BE	71%		9		3

Sales Drive Scoreboard

Areas	The Militant			Perspectiva Mundial		New Int'l*		L'inter*		Total	
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
UNITED STATES											
Price, Utah **	50	28	56%	9	7	25	16	2	0	86	51
Austin, Minn.	50	26	52%	10	9	20	20	2	1	82	56
St. Louis	100	51	51%	5	0	48	29	2	1	155	81
Salt Lake City	105	52	50%	18	15	50	47	2	0	175	114
Seattle **	89	43	48%	33	10	75	60	3	0	200	113
Omaha, Neb.	65	31	48%	10	9	18	19	2	0	95	59
Phoenix **	30	13	43%	10	5	30	22	1	0	71	40
Birmingham, Ala.	85	36	42%	8	0	43	32	2	0	138	68
Miami	67	28	42%	25	5	45	37	15	3	152	73
Detroit	80	33	41%	8	3	40	35	2	1	130	72
Charleston, WV	60	24	40%	5	1	30	32	2	1	97	58
Los Angeles	150	60	40%	80	29	124	105	3	2	357	196
Des Moines, Iowa	98	38	39%	15	9	35	37	2	0	150	84
Philadelphia	60	22	37%	21	3	56	22	2	0	139	47
Twin Cities, Minn.	115	41	36%	15	12	53	47	2	0	185	100
Newark, NJ	110	37	34%	40	16	140	75	10	6	300	134
San Francisco	150	49	33%	70	24	110	106	5	0	335	179
Morgantown, WV	65	21	32%	5	0	40	18	2	0	112	39
Baltimore	66	21	32%	10	4	31	13	3	0	110	38
Chicago	130	41	32%	30	11	70	61	5	0	235	113
Washington, DC	80	25	31%	13	6	50	35	2	1	145	67
New York **	200	61	31%	75	43	200	119	15	2	490	225
Atlanta	70	19	27%	10	0	55	50	2	0	137	69
Boston	100	25	25%	25	8	50	38	10	4	185	75
Pittsburgh	75	17	23%	3	0	40	14	2	1	120	32
Houston	65	13	20%	20	3	35	12	2	0	122	28
Ft. Madison, Iowa	5	1	20%	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	1
Greensboro, NC	50	9	18%	10	3	34	22	2	0	96	34
Cleveland **	85	15	18%	10	4	50	36	2	0	147	55
Albany, N.Y.	15	2	13%	2	0	10	0	0	0	27	2
Louisville, KY	3	0	0%	0	0	4	0	0	0	7	0
U.S. TOTAL	2,473	882	36%	595	239	1,611	1,159	106	23	4,785	2,303
AUSTRALIA											
BELGIUM	10	8	80%	3	4	22	13	0	0	35	25
BRITAIN	1	0	0%	1	0	9	3	10	5	21	8
Manchester	50	32	64%	5	0	45	35	2	0	102	67
Sheffield	50	24	48%	3	1	75	66	2	0	130	91
London	100	40	40%	15	3	90	67	5	0	210	110
Other Britain	2	2	-	1	1	0	0	0	0	3	3
BRITAIN TOTAL	202	98	49%	24	5	210	168	9	0	445	271
CANADA											
Vancouver	65	37	57%	15	9	40	47	5	2	125	95
Montreal **	70	23	33%	15	12	75	58	35	9	195	102
Toronto	80	20	25%	30	7	50	54	5	0	165	81
CANADA TOTAL	215	80	37%	60	28	165	159	45	11	485	278
FRANCE											
ICELAND	5	0	0%	5	0	5	0	15	0	30	0
MEXICO	30	6	20%	1	0	12	0	1	0	44	6
NEW ZEALAND	0	0	0%	15	6	0	0	0	0	15	6
Other	6	6	100%	1	0	1	3	0	0	8	9
Wellington	53	38	72%	1	1	30	16	1	0	85	55
Auckland **	45	29	64%	3	1	45	30	1	0	94	60
Christchurch	43	26	60%	1	2	30	23	1	0	75	51
N. Z. TOTAL	147	99	67%	6	4	106	72	3	0	262	175
PUERTO RICO											
SWEDEN **	2	0	0%	10	2	1	0	1	0	14	2
	35	13	37%	20	7	20	30	3	1	78	51
TOTAL	3,120	1,186	38%	740	295	2,161	1,604	193	40	6,214	3,125
SHOULD BE		2,229	71%		529		1,544		138		4,439
DRIVE GOALS	3,225			725		1,950		200		6,100	

* Single copies of *New Internationalist*; subscriptions to *L'Internationaliste*

** Raised *New Internationalist* Goal

Cuba: a health system in workers' hands

BY WENDY LYONS

HAVANA — The employer at the meat-packing plant where I worked in St. Paul, Minnesota, tried to make us pay for our health care in the last union contract.

We were able to push back this concession demand, but other unionists have not fared as well. The majority of working people in the United States don't even have medical coverage to defend from profit-hungry bosses. With costs skyrocketing for just visiting a doctor, they go without care, except for emergency treatment.

Insurance companies, private hospitals, and drug companies are getting rich — making money on people's illness. Congress won't even consider a serious national health care plan.

On a recent tour of Cuba with a delegation of trade unionists from the United States, we got a chance to see how health care can be organized when workers and farmers take control of the government. Treating illnesses can cease being simply one more arena in which corporations can make big profits.

Begins before birth

Health care is free in Cuba and it begins before birth. As soon as a woman knows she is pregnant she gets a paid day off work each month to go to the doctor.

Maternity leave is 18 weeks with full pay. After that, a year's leave of absence can be requested — without pay but with a guarantee to return to your job. For the first year of the life of the child, workers receive a paid day off each month to take the baby to the doctor.

Large factories and construction sites have medical personnel available, as do the agricultural projects that are being built in the countryside to make Cuba self-sufficient in food.

All women in high-risk categories and ages receive mammograms every two years, with the mammography equipment brought to workplaces and neighborhoods.

Family doctors clinics dot many neighborhoods in Cuba. The one we visited was on the ground floor of an apartment building. Like many other clinics, it was built by voluntary construction brigades, along with the apartment building. Workers volunteered to leave their jobs to do the construction; their coworkers agreed to pick up the slack to free them up.

Anyone can go to a clinic, day or night. Doctors and nurses make many home visits to older or very ill residents. The clinic serves

120 families in the neighborhood. They meet periodically to evaluate the work of the clinic and make suggestions for improvements.

As someone who has had to take a day off work without pay to sit waiting for hours in a clinic back home, I couldn't help thinking about what such a meeting would be like in the United States!

The personnel in the Cuban family clinics go to conferences and lectures to keep up with the latest medical techniques. Specialists visit the clinics periodically to check on their progress. People with problems beyond the scope of the clinic are easily admitted to more advanced polyclinics or more well-equipped hospitals.

Unfortunately, the U.S. government's blockade against Cuba and the cutbacks in trade between Cuba and the Eastern European countries and the Soviet Union have resulted in shortages of building materials. The construction of the family doctors clinics, together with a massive housing construction program, has been curtailed. Scarce construction materials must now go

to build tourist hotels in order to bring in the convertible foreign currency that Cuba needs.

Treatment of mental illness

The treatment accorded to mentally ill patients follows the country's high overall standard of health care.

Our tour visited a major psychiatric hospital. The director, Bernabé Ordaz, fought in the July 26 Movement in the Sierra Maestra mountains against the U.S.-backed dictatorship in the 1950s. He requested to be assigned to the project of reforming the hospital right after the revolution triumphed.

Prior to the revolution inmates were often chained to their beds, half clothed, and fed food hardly fit for animals. Some opponents of the dictatorship were also locked up in the asylum.

Today the patients have their own track and baseball stadium. Those who can work outside are placed in jobs. Those unable to work outside have dignified work to do inside the institution.

The hospital has a farm whose products go to help feed the facility's population of 3,500. There are a multitude of workshops, from carpentry to art. Patients are given manicures and pedicures by trained manicurists — who are also patients.

As we went by the stadium our translator pointed out that the man coaching the hospital baseball team was Armando Capiró, a famous batter and former pro-ball player. We also saw pictures of the internationally known dance artist Alicia Alonso offering advice on the organization of the ballet classes used in therapy.

Something happens to people who practice medicine when health care ceases to be a commodity. The Cuban people receive the care they need from people whose main aim is to heal, not make money. And the doctors and nurses of Cuba have volunteered in their thousands to spend years, often living in the most difficult of conditions, in countries around the world to offer that same genuine care.

5,000 at Malcolm X rally hear Cuban

BY NELL WHEELER

WASHINGTON, D.C. — "I want to tell you that the workers in Cuba admire and respect Malcolm X," said Cuban trade union leader Joaquín Bernal Camero to a Malcolm X Day rally here May 19.

"We are with the struggle of Black people in the United States. We are with the African people in the struggle against apartheid. We are with the revolution of Ernesto 'Che' Guevara and Fidel Castro. We are with you, and together, we will fight against imperialism and its oppression of our peoples," Bernal declared to cheers and applause from some 5,000 participants in the event.

The Cuban unionist spoke at the invitation of Malik Edwards from the Malcolm X Day Committee and received a warm and enthusiastic introduction.

Bernal is a member of the National Secretariat of the Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions (CTC) and the head of international relations for the labor federation. He is on tour in the United States along with Luis Guillermo Abreu Mejías, the general secretary of Cuba's teachers union. Their month-long visit marks the first time in three decades that Cuban labor leaders have been allowed by the U.S. State Department to address audiences in the United States.

During the May 19-22 tour in this area, Bernal spoke with Latino workers, members of Congress, labor officials, and political activists. The tour here was hosted by the Ad-Hoc Cuba Labor Tour Committee.

A May 20 social event hosted by Arturo Griffiths, an organizer for the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union, was attended by 40 people, many of them hotel and restaurant workers or Cuba solidarity activists.

"We have difficulties resulting from the U.S. blockade and the events in Eastern Europe," Bernal told the mostly Latino audience. "But we are not dealing with this situation like capitalists, where the problems are placed on the backs of the workers. We have the participation of the entire population in solving these problems."

The trade unionist explained that in some countries electrical power for working-class neighborhoods is simply shut off to reduce consumption, leaving the people with no power for basic needs. In Cuba, however, the people voluntarily reduce their consumption in order to meet the needs of society.

Preparing for 'Zero Option'

When asked about Cuba's current relations with the Soviet Union, Bernal responded that "in the USSR, many enterprises think like capitalists, and will not send products to Cuba because they think it is inefficient." But the Soviet government, Bernal added, has assured Cuba that the island will receive what it needs to survive.

This year, the Soviet Union has agreed to send 10 million tons of oil, which Bernal indicated will meet the basic needs of the population even if it will not solve all the energy problems Cuba faces.

"But we are preparing ourselves for the 'Zero Option,'" he said. "That is, no oil from the Soviet Union, which would be difficult but the challenge would be met. Either you



Cuban union leaders Joaquín Bernal (center) and Luis Guillermo Abreu (second from left) at garment plant near Boston. Visit was first U.S. public tour for Cuban labor leaders in 30 years.

make the revolution or you don't; and capitalism only offers suffering and failure."

To prepare for such events, the Cubans are developing a tourist industry in order to gain convertible currency with which to buy oil and other needed materials. Building up the export of advanced vaccines and other pharmaceuticals is another way Cuba is gaining access to world markets. "Science and technology are the first priority in Cuba," Bernal stated.

Pam Vossenas, of the Labor Committee on Central America and the Caribbean, introduced Bernal at a meeting held at the headquarters of the International Association of Machinists May 21. More than 50 political activists and trade unionists attended.

Greeting were given by Damu Smith, of the National African-American Network Against Intervention in the Gulf. He lauded Cuba's principled stance against the U.S. war on Iraq. Brian Adams, of the local Hands Off Cuba Coalition, condemned the U.S. blockade and travel ban against Cuba. Hilda Mason, City Council member at-large, sent written greetings praising Cuba for its progress in health care and education.

"I am moved by the opportunity to share with you ways to advance the interests of working people," Bernal told the audience. He explained that Cuba's labor unions are independent. Each local funds itself without deducting dues from paychecks and without financing from any governmental or international organization.

Bernal also spoke about the history of union struggles in Cuba, noting that the union movement grew and became much stronger after the 1959 revolution because "our revolution is a workers' revolution."

Many participants in the meeting asked about Cuba's "special period during peace-

time." This refers to the austerity measures intended for wartime that have been adopted to meet the economic difficulties imposed on Cuba.

Impact on microbrigades

"The economic difficulties have made it hard to supply the microbrigades with the wood, steel and other materials they need," Bernal said. The microbrigades are volunteer contingents that have built housing, clinics, and child-care centers.

Construction of the facilities for the Pan-American Games is also being done through voluntary labor.

It is an example of the return to the course advocated by Che Guevara, a central leader of the revolution in its early years. "The work is being organized through the unions," Bernal explained, "because there are more who wish to participate than work to be done right now."

Bernal also spoke about the advances made by Blacks and women in the labor movement. "We are proud to say that many of our leaders are Black," Bernal said. He noted that women make up 49 percent of the trade union leadership at the local level. Steps are being taken to improve the participation of women in the national leadership of the CTC, where 27 percent of the elected leadership is women.

While in Washington, Bernal was able to meet with aides from the office of Congressman Ronald Dellums. Staff members from the offices of representatives Lee Hamilton and José Serrano and from the Congressional Hispanic Caucus talked with Bernal about the current economic situation in Cuba, President Bush's recent demand for "free elections" in Cuba, and the possibilities for Cuban-U.S. relations.

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Rebel forces take control of Ethiopian capital city

BY SETH GALINSKY

Columns of troops from rebel organizations entered the capital city of Addis Ababa May 28, putting an end to the government that had ruled Ethiopia since the 1974 overthrow of Emperor Haile Selassie.

The main group of rebels entering the capital were those of the Tigre People's Liberation Front (TPLF), which is based among the Tigre people in north central Ethiopia. A TPLF-led coalition then announced the formation of a provisional government.

Earlier in the week, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) won control of all of Eritrea for the first time since their guerrilla struggle for independence began in the early 1960s. The Oromo Liberation Front, which is demanding a referendum on independence for the southern part of the country, also participated in the overthrow.

The Ethiopian army command told its troops to surrender their weapons to the rebel forces. Recognizing that the army had disintegrated under the impact of the insurgents' advance, Washington shifted its earlier call for a cease-fire and instead tried to maintain some credibility by "inviting" the rebel forces to take control.

The Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), the coalition of groups led by the TPLF, increased its collaboration with Eritrean rebels in recent months. Meles Zenawi, chairman of the supreme council of the EPRDF and the central leader of the Tigrean forces, said the goal was to set up a "broad-based" transitional government.

The coalition, said Meles, will support holding a referendum on independence for Eritrea and respect its outcome. Independence has been a central demand of the Eritreans. The Tigrean leader immediately appealed for worldwide aid for an estimated four million Ethiopian peasants who face starvation in the coming months.

Coalition troops of the EPRDF, on entering the capital, ordered residents to stay inside for 24 hours.

Year-long rout of army

The toppling of the government of Lt. Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam, who fled to Zimbabwe May 21, is the culmination of widespread advances for the liberation organizations in 1989 and 1990.

In August 1989 the TPLF wrested control of Tigre province and then defeated a December counteroffensive by the Ethiopian Army. The EPLF won control of 85 percent of Eritrea during the same period. The two groups began to organize joint actions against the government.

The government of the Soviet Union, the main backer of the Mengistu regime, cut back its military and economic aid in 1989 and 1990. More and more isolated internationally, and with the rebel forces coordinating their actions and increasing their support, the Mengistu regime's days were numbered.

Emperor overthrown in 1974

Mengistu had emerged as the central leader of the Ethiopian government that arose after the overthrow of Emperor Haile Selassie in 1974. Selassie's semifudal regime was one of Washington's closest allies in Africa.

At the time of Selassie's overthrow, 90 percent of Ethiopians were engaged in small-scale agriculture or nomadic livestock raising. About half of all peasants were tenants or sharecroppers and had to pay between one-half and three-fourths of their harvest to landlords in rent. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church owned up to one third of the land.

In many cases peasants were forced to build houses and barns for landowners and work as their servants.

Children under the age of one year were dying at a rate of up to 300 per 1,000. Average per capita income in the late 1960s was only \$66 a year.

The social crisis deepened with the 1973 famine, in which at least 100,000 died. While people were starving, the landlords took advantage of the situation to buy land at a fraction of its value.

In February 1974, huge demonstrations by taxi drivers, teachers, and students began. Within weeks strikes erupted in major cities and towns and peasant occupations spread in

the countryside. Muslims, soldiers, and women began marching for their rights. A deep-going revolutionary struggle was under way against the backward, repressive regime. Finally, a group of junior army officers known as the Dergue overthrew Selassie in September 1974.

Elimination of landowning aristocracy

Faced with demands to abolish the semifudal social and economic relations maintained under Selassie, the new government adopted some far-reaching reforms. The Dergue's measures struck at the heart of the existing semifudal relations and structures. It began a land reform program, confiscating land from the landlords and distributing it to peasants. It cancelled the debts of tenant farmers and sharecroppers. Church and state were separated and the old landowning aristocracy eliminated.

At the same time, the Dergue moved immediately after taking power to ban strikes and demonstrations and arrested some trade union leaders.

The Dergue maintained the reactionary war of the deposed emperor against the Eritrean people. Bordering the Red Sea, the former Italian colony of Eritrea had been annexed by Selassie in 1962. The Eritrean people continued their struggle for self-determination once Selassie was gone. The prosecution of the war became a political catastrophe for Mengistu.

Mengistu urged the army to resist the Eritrean and Tigrean "barbarians" and "bandits." He warned the citizens of Addis Ababa of the rebels coming from "the barren stones of Tigre."

Bombing of Eritrea and Tigre became so intense that the rebels were forced to build entire complexes of factories and schools underground.

Like many regimes that emerged in Africa as a result of successful anticolonial struggles, the Dergue leaders claimed that they were Marxist-Leninists. But this was just a masquerade to help keep the workers and peasants in check by claiming to recognize their aspirations.

Washington, while hostile to the revolutionary advances opened by the overthrow of the monarchy and the anti-imperialist stances taken by the Mengistu government, did not end all aid to the Dergue at first. But in February 1977 as it became clear that the new government could not control the liberation movement in Eritrea or stabilize the country for imperialist interests, Washington cut back aid. The Dergue responded by shutting down U.S. offices and military installations and turned to Moscow for assistance.

In 1984 another famine swept the region. Washington tried to lay blame for the catastrophe, in which 300,000 Ethiopians died, on the Mengistu government.

The famine in Ethiopia, like other parts of Africa, was caused by imperialist domination, which was not broken under the Mengistu government. Peasants were driven

off their parcels or forced to end traditional rotation of crops and fields for subsistence agriculture. Instead, cash crops, like coffee, were intensively planted for the world capitalist market and destructive farming methods implemented. In Tigre, for example, thousands of acres of once-rich farmland are now severely eroded.

Eritreans fight for independence

Eritrean guerrilla organizations have been fighting for independence since 1960. The EPLF, formed in 1970, has an estimated 30,000-70,000 fighters and militia members. A *New York Times* reporter who recently traveled through Eritrea noted that the EPLF has armed people throughout the territory, including school teachers.

The Eritrean fighters have tried to advance women's rights. Many of its fighters and some commanders are women.

In Eritrea, like many areas of Africa, excision of the clitoris and infibulation, the stitching of the female genitals to ensure chastity before marriage, are common practices. The guerrilla movement trained local women to educate against this practice and teach nutrition, hygiene, and family planning, according to a report in the *Wall Street Journal*.

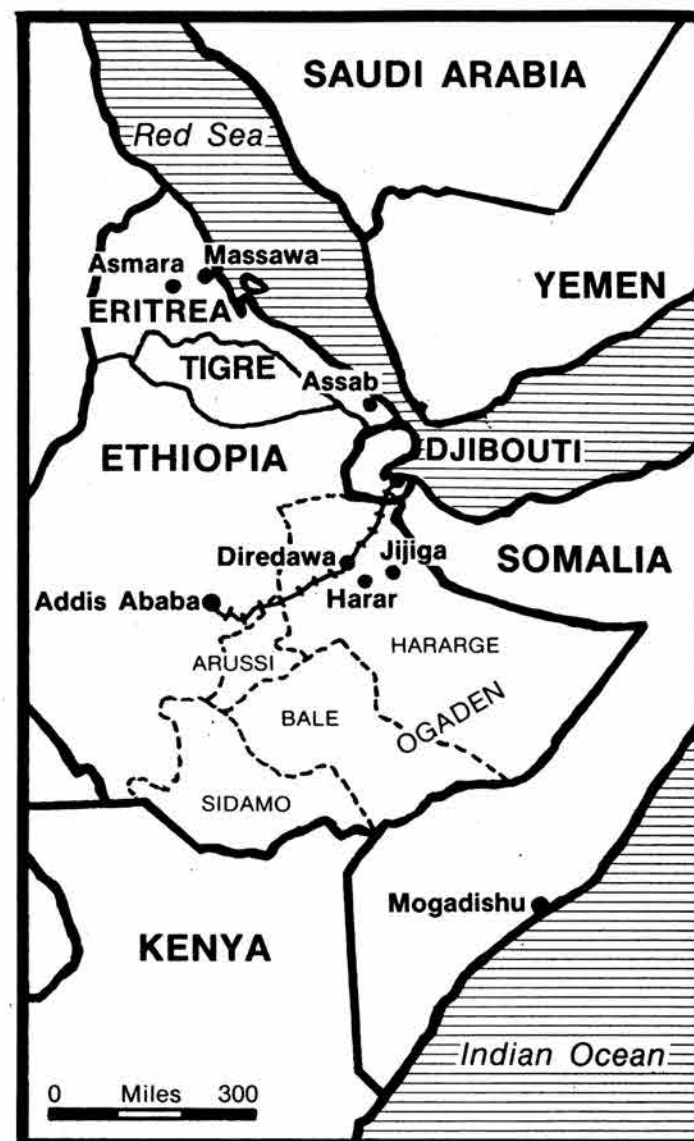
One woman trained in the program had never heard of contraception before. "It really surprised me that you can have a break between children," she said.

Eritrean view of new gov't

The EPLF announced May 29 that it would not participate in the new provisional government being set up by the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front.

Instead, the Eritrean group has formed a provisional government for Eritrea that it promised would cooperate "in economic and other sectors of mutual interest" with the new government in Addis Ababa. In a radio broadcast from Eritrea, the front assured the Ethiopian people that "you can use the two Eritrean ports, Massawa and Aseb, as a corridor for any goods and relief foods donated to your affected citizens by the international community."

Although Washington is opposed to self-determination for the peoples of Ethiopia, it



has apparently changed its initial hostility to the EPLF and TPLF in recent years and has held extensive meetings with leaders of both groups.

Tigre front for multiparty system

The Tigre People's Liberation Front, formed in 1975, has 70,000 fighters; as many as a third are women. At one time the TPLF leadership looked to Stalinist Albania as a model. Now Tigre leaders say they are for a multiparty system.

The Tigre province was even less developed than other regions of the country during the reign of Haile Selassie. After winning control of the province in 1989, the TPLF began moving to topple the Mengistu government.

The coalition the Tigreans lead, the EPDRF, adopted a program in January that includes provisions for:

- The right to self-determination for all nationalities within Ethiopia, including the right to secession;
- Nationalization of all land, providing it to "all those who want to use it, free and on the basis of equality";
- Freedom of speech and the right to form independent political parties;
- A "strong popular army" and militia;
- A "mixed" economy.

Final months of regime

As the international isolation of his regime grew, Mengistu grasped at any straw possible to hold onto power. The false image of socialism was downplayed and Mengistu sought to improve relations with Washington, unreservedly backing the U.S. war moves in the United Nations Security Council leading to the bombing and invasion of Iraq.

Mengistu had restored diplomatic relations with the Israeli government in 1989. As part of the deal, Israel agreed to provide financial aid to the ailing regime and Mengistu promised that thousands of Ethiopian Jews, known as *falashas*, would be allowed to emigrate to Israel.

Tel Aviv hoped to use the image of Black Jews arriving in Israel as a public relations ploy to show that in spite of Israeli repression against of Palestinians, the Zionist regime was still an attractive pole in the world.

But many of the 8,000 *falashas* who arrived in Israel over the last two years are living in poverty, treated with racist scorn by the Israeli government.

In the last days of the Mengistu regime, a special airlift was agreed upon to fly 14,500 remaining *falashas* to Israel. Supposedly worried about being infected by the *falashas* with communicable diseases, the Israeli government covered all the plane seats and floors with thick plastic. Israeli personnel attending the flights wore rubber gloves to avoid touching the Black Jews directly.

Some facts on Ethiopia

With 51 million people, Ethiopia is one of the most populous countries in Africa, ranking after Nigeria and Egypt. The capital city of Addis Ababa has a population of 3 million.

Ninety percent of the people depend on farming for subsistence. Coffee is the main cash crop, but sugar, corn, sorghum, wheat, and barley are also grown.

Bordered by Sudan, Kenya, Djibouti, and Somalia — Ethiopia is about the size of Texas, Oklahoma, and New Mexico combined, some 472,000 square miles. Because of its size, its location close to countries with important reserves of copper, oil, and cobalt, and its proximity to the Red Sea, U.S. imperialism has big stakes in political developments there.

From 1930 until 1974 Emperor Haile Selassie ruled the country. His U.S.-backed semifudal regime was one of the most backward and reactionary in all of Africa.

In Ethiopia, there are at least 70 ethnic

groups and 100 languages. The main ethnic group, the Oromo, make up 40 percent of the population. The Amhara, with 25 percent, were the dominant group in the previous government. Tigreans make up 12 percent of the country.

Italy, which had ruled Eritrea as a colony since 1890, invaded Ethiopia in 1935 during World War II and was expelled in 1941. Selassie forcibly incorporated Eritrea into Ethiopia in 1952. Eritrean guerrillas have been fighting for independence since the 1960s.

Selassie was overthrown in 1974 by junior military officers responding to a massive upsurge in struggle by workers and peasants. At the instigation of the U.S. government, Somali troops invaded Ethiopia in 1977. The invasion was defeated with the help of Cuban troops. While aiding Ethiopia in defeating the imperialist-backed attack, the Cubans refused to support the Mengistu government's war on the Eritrean people. S.G.

Text of Harvard report details growing Iraqi health disaster from war, embargo

Reprinted below are major excerpts of the first comprehensive on-site study of the impact of Washington's economic embargo and war against Iraq on public health in that country.

Compiled in late April and early May, the "Harvard Team Study Report: Public Health in Iraq after the Gulf War" is based on research visits to numerous cities in Iraq.

Team members included medical doctors, medical students, and experts in public health Elisabeth Benjamin, Julia Devin, Steven Donziger, Najib Armijo-Hussein, A. Rob Moodie, Roger Normand, Christopher af Jochnick, Megan Passey, James Thompson, and Sarah Whitson. The study's findings have been reviewed and accepted by a number of internationally recognized public health specialists.

In the overview of their findings the team members conclude that the "study documents a public health catastrophe. Specifically it projects that at least 170,000 children under five years of age will die in the coming year from the delayed effects of the Gulf Crisis."

The team concentrated its study among children but noted that "a large increase in deaths among the rest of the population is also likely."

Water-borne infectious disease in combination with severe malnutrition is the immediate cause of death in most cases.

"This study finds an extraordinary prevalence among children of severe acute malnutrition, including marasmus [emaciation] and kwashiorkor [swollen belly disease]. The rise in infant and child malnutrition is primarily due to severe food shortages and a consequent tenfold or more increase in the price of food."

* * *

I) MORTALITY AND MORBIDITY

This study documents an emerging public health catastrophe in Iraq today. It concludes that infant and child mortality will double and that at least 170,000 children under five will die during the coming year as a result of the delayed effects of the Gulf Crisis. This conclusion is based on six factors.

First, mortality data, gathered in hospital visits, document a two to threefold increase in infant and child deaths.

Second, morbidity [the relative incidence of disease] data, gathered in visits to medical facilities, document the sudden onset of epidemics of gastroenteritis, cholera, and typhoid throughout Iraq during early 1991.

Third, the incidence of these water-borne diseases typically peaks during the hot summer months of June and July, so that the epidemics which began months earlier will most probably worsen.

Fourth, severe malnutrition, previously uncommon, is now widespread in pediatric wards in all regions of the country.

Fifth, the health system is operating at a fraction of its pre-Gulf Crisis capacity. Many hospitals and community health centers have closed, and there are acute shortages of medicine, staff, and equipment.

Sixth, basic infrastructure in water purification, sewage treatment, and electrical power generation operate at substantially reduced levels. Many facilities appear to have been damaged beyond repair and will have to be entirely rebuilt.

A) Mortality Data

Mortality data for children were gathered at four different hospitals.

At *Saddam Central Teaching Hospital for Children* in Baghdad, for January and February of 1990, child mortality was 3.9% of admissions; for the same months in 1991, it was 13.3%.

At *Basrah General Hospital's* pediatric ward, from January to April, the mortality rate among admitted patients was 6.8% in 1990 and 12.3% in 1991. At Basrah, the hospital statistician supplied the data.

At *El Qadisia Hospital* in Baghdad, for the same four month periods, the mortality rate for patients under three years was 3.2% in 1990, but increased to 9.7% in 1991.

At the *Erbil Pediatric Hospital*, the director, Dr. Jamal Jaafar, reported that the rate of children dying in the hospital itself rose from 56 per month in April, 1989, to 150 per month in April, 1991. Pediatricians interviewed at Erbil stated that, since the Gulf War began, most children have died at home rather than at the hospital. Thus, the figures for deaths at Erbil Hospital in 1991 may greatly understate the total number of deaths, both at home and the hospital.

B) Morbidity Data

Morbidity data for gastroenteritis, cholera, and typhoid were gathered from hospitals and community health centers in all regions of the country. Morbidity is almost certain to worsen during the warmer summer months.

1) Gastroenteritis

At *Saddam Central Teaching Hospital for Children* in Baghdad, the percentage of admissions suffering from gastroenteritis was



Rob Moodie
Two-year-old Iraqi child diagnosed with gastroenteritis and malnutrition.

17.3% during April of 1990 and 33.9% for a comparable period in 1991. These data were gathered by a physician member of the study team, Dr. Megan Passey. At *Saddam Central*, Dr. Passey also conducted a ward prevalence survey and determined that the prevalence of gastroenteritis among ward patients was 38.2%.

Saddam Central is a teaching hospital and the most advanced children's medical center in Iraq. The hospital ordinarily treats highly complex and specialized cases. The fact that such a high proportion of its patients are being treated for gastroenteritis reflects the remarkable incidence of the disease among children under five.

In *Erbil Pediatric*, *Kirkuk Pediatric*, and *Sulamaneiya Pediatric Hospitals*, the prevalence of gastroenteritis among admitted children patients was respectively 84%, 78%, and 91% during study team visits in early May of 1991.

Ms. Benjamin, Dr. Moodie, and Dr. Armijo-Hussein visited *Saddam City Community Health Center* in Baghdad on two occasions. Before the Gulf War, a special system for monitoring infectious disease was established at this health center with the assistance of the United Nations Children's Fund. The study team members examined the monitoring records and found a fivefold increase in gastroenteritis from March and April of 1990 to March and April of 1991.

At the outpatient center of *Kirkuk Pediatric Hospital*, the percentage of gastroenteritis among all cases presenting increased from 17.7% in April of 1990 to 55.2% in April of 1991.

2) Cholera

Although cholera is endemic to Iraq, prior to the Gulf Crisis its incidence was insignificant. Cholera has now reached epidemic proportions.

Saddam Central Teaching Hospital for Children in Baghdad reported to the study team 30 new cases in the last three weeks of April.

Al Qadisia Hospital in Baghdad reported 30-35 cases of cholera a week in April, 1991, compared to 2-3 per week at the same time last year. Several weeks before the study team's arrival, this hospital opened a special isolation ward for suspected cholera cases, reflecting the striking increase in the number of cases.

Saddam City Community Health Center in Baghdad reported 17 cases of cholera in April of 1991, whereas ordinarily there would be few if any reported cases for this period. Because these cases were being treated on an outpatient basis, the study team was unable to verify this report.

Kerbala Hospital reported 10 confirmed cases of cholera and 10 suspected cases for the same period. At Kerbala, Dr. Moodie and Ms. Benjamin were also able to confirm these reports through clinical visits. Dr. Moodie stated that the appearance and odor of the pediatric ward strongly resembled similar wards during the 1985 cholera epidemic in the Sudan.

Basrah Hospital reported suspected cholera cases but was unable to confirm them because supplies for laboratory tests were unavailable. This same unavailability of tests for cholera was reported by *Rusallah* and *Al Shahid Khais Community Health Centers*. The fact that hospitals and community health centers are unable to perform the standard laboratory test for cholera reflects the acute shortage of hospital supplies.

The Arabic-speaking physician member of the study team, Dr. Armijo-Hussein, was told that physicians were unable to treat suspected but unconfirmed cases of cholera with antibiotics. This departure from established medical practice also reflects the shortage of medicines.

Governments are frequently loath to report cholera because its existence may reflect an inability to meet basic health and sanitation needs. The study team believes that it was denied access to the *Ebnil Qatib Infectious Disease Hospital* in Baghdad because the government did not wish the team to observe cholera cases of epidemic proportions. The study team therefore suspects a high degree of underreporting of cholera by all other medical facilities where the team was granted access to interview staff and to examine medical records.

3) Typhoid

Typhoid is endemic to Iraq but, since the Gulf Crisis, has also become epidemic throughout the country. The study team directly observed and confirmed numerous cases in Baghdad, Basrah, Erbil, Kerbala, Kirkuk, and Sulamaneiya.

At the *Sulamaneiya Pediatric Hospital*, Dr. Moodie and Ms. Benjamin examined hospital admission records and documented a dramatic rise in the number of children admitted with typhoid during April and early May of 1991. Their figures record the onset of an epidemic.

Dr. Moodie visited the infectious diseases ward of the *Erbil Pediatric and Obstetric Hospital* where a total of 63 children were being treated for typhoid. The overflow of typhoid patients was placed in a general ward rather than isolated from other patients.

Physicians in every region of the country report a shortage of chloramphenicol, the standard typhoid medication. In addition, these physicians report that because of supply shortages they were forced to discharge typhoid patients who were not yet cured and thus remained infectious. This practice increases the likelihood of the disease spreading among the general population.

4) Morbidity Will Worsen This Summer

The increase in morbidity rates for cholera, typhoid, and gastroenteritis during March, April, and May of 1991 is especially ominous. Generally, water-borne diseases peak in June or July with the onset of hot summer weather. This study documents a sudden rise in the incidence of these diseases, due to contaminated water and untreated sewage, well before the effects of summer heat. Morbidity, and hence mortality, will most probably worsen during the summer.

C) Malnutrition

Iraqi physicians interviewed at 15 hospitals and seven community health care centers stated that severe malnutrition was uncommon in Iraq during the last decade.

To assess the level of malnutrition today, Ms. Benjamin, Dr. Moodie, and Dr. Passey conducted cross-sectional studies in general pediatric wards. At *Saddam Central Teaching Hospital for Children* and at *Erbil Pediatric*, *Kirkuk Pediatric*, and *Sulamaneiya Pediatric Hospitals*, the prevalence of malnutrition was respectively 32%, 57%, 52%, and 48%.

The prevalence of acute severe malnutrition was so high as to suggest the real possibility of famine in Iraq if conditions do not substantially change. Hospitals today are unable to adequately treat malnutrition because of acute shortages of food and infant formula. Most of these children will die from gastroenteritis, cholera, or typhoid in combination with malnutrition.

D) Conservative Nature of the Estimate that Child Mortality Will Double

This study concludes that the child mortality rate today is at least double and that at

U.S. study admits war's damage in Iraq

Continued from front page

much more severely than Baghdad by the allied bombing raids and then it was ravaged again when the Iraqi government crushed the Shiite rebellion. Raw sewage is seeping into the streets and contaminating drinking water there, Cowell reports.

Before the war, malnutrition levels were relatively low in Iraq. Dr. Aldo Benini, a representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross, told Cowell that now 11 percent of the children in poor towns on the outskirts of Baghdad are malnourished.

To avoid a catastrophe, massive amounts of aid are urgently needed. The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, the *Times* reports, estimates that Iraq needs \$30 billion dollars to repair the war damage.

But because of the embargo, Iraq is not allowed to import even chlorine to purify drinking water, nor has it been able to sell any oil since August 1990, due to the embargo.

Among food shortages is that of baby formula. The price of the smaller amount of formula that is available has skyrocketed, putting it out of the reach of many.

During the air war, U.S. bombers destroyed a baby formula factory in Baghdad, claiming it was a chemical-weapons site. This claim was discredited by spokespeople of New Zealand's Dairy Board, an organization that helped operate the facility prior to the war.

Washington is pushing for Iraq to pay war reparations. United Nations Secretary General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar recommended May 31 that once it is permitted to sell oil, Baghdad pay up to 30 percent of its annual oil revenues as reparations for the invasion of Kuwait.

Capitalist banks and governments are also insisting that Iraq make payments on its foreign debt of \$42 billion. This would consume another 22 percent of Iraq's yearly oil

earnings, leaving only 48 percent for all imports.

Iraq has requested a five-year moratorium on reparations payments in order to rebuild its shattered economy.

Meanwhile, in spite of the immense human suffering, Washington and London have pushed to maintain sanctions against the Iraqi people, except for the most meager amount of food and medicine.

While the effects of the economic embargo continue to wreak havoc on the people of Iraq, more information is also surfacing on the number of casualties during the shooting war.

According to the *Times*, Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf told members of the U.S. Congress in a private briefing that 100,000 Iraqi soldiers were killed by the allies during the bombing and four-day invasion. The figure is considered to be the minimum number by most news sources.



Rob Moodie

Children wash in contaminated water. Study says 170,000 more children will die due to war.

least 170,000 children will die in the coming year from the delayed effects of the Gulf Crisis.

The most recent available estimate of Iraq's pre-Gulf Crisis child mortality rate is 52 per thousand. United Nations Children's Fund and World Health Organization, 1990 *National Survey on Vaccination, Diarrhea and Child and Maternal Diseases in Iraq*, (1990). Doubling that figure produces a post-Gulf War mortality rate of 104 per thousand.

Applying this derived mortality rate to the 3.3 million Iraqis under five, this study estimates that 55,000 additional deaths of children under five have already occurred. Applying this mortality rate for the coming year, this study projects at least 170,000 additional child deaths because of the delayed effects of the Gulf Crisis.

The conservative nature of this figure of 170,000 additional child deaths can be understood by focusing on gastroenteritis. Before the Gulf Crisis in 1990, about 50,000 children a year in Iraq died from gastroenteritis. Current hospital data show a twofold to tenfold increase in the number of children admitted with this disease. These data also show more than a doubling of the rate of child death in hospitals from all causes, including gastroenteritis.

In other words, at least twice as many children are admitted to hospitals with gastroenteritis, and of those admitted, at least twice as many die as before. Therefore, since there were 50,000 child deaths each year from gastroenteritis before the Gulf War, four times as many, or an additional 150,000 child deaths from this disease can be expected in the coming year, unless conditions change.

To repeat, this figure of 150,000 additional deaths is for gastroenteritis alone. This figure does not include deaths from malnutrition, respiratory disease, or other common child illnesses. Hence, the estimate of 170,000 additional child deaths is probably low.

II) FUNCTIONING OF THE MEDICAL SYSTEM

A) Before the Gulf Crisis

As of 1990, Iraq had a nationwide network of 131 hospitals and 851 community health centers which provided comprehensive health services to both urban and rural populations. This health care system reached more than 90% of the population. United Nations Children's Fund and World Health Organization, 1990 *National Survey on Vaccination, Diarrhea and Child and Maternal Diseases in Iraq*, (1990).

B) The Medical System Today

The study team estimates that the Iraqi health system currently functions at a fraction of its capacity before the Gulf Crisis.

Iraqi physicians reported that many hospitals and community health centers were severely damaged either in the Gulf War or during the civil uprisings that followed. These reports were confirmed by the study team's own on-site inspections of medical facilities in Al Najaf, Basrah, Kerbala, and Kirkuk.

For example, in Erbil, only five out of 42 community health centers are presently functioning and, in the Sulamaneiya, only six out of 20. In Basrah, only five out of 19 community health centers functioning before the Gulf crisis are open today.

Those community health centers that are open are flooded with an unusually high

number of patients. For example, physicians at *Al Batein Community Health Center* in Basrah reported that their facility, which normally serves 40,000 people, now serves 150,000. This overcrowding is due to the closure of other facilities, combined with the increases in gastroenteritis, cholera, typhoid, and malnutrition.

Hospitals and community health Centers also lack reliable clean water, sewage disposal, and electrical power. Of the 16 functioning hospitals and community health centers that the study team surveyed, 69% have inadequate sanitation because of the damage to water purification and sewage treatment plants. There is not enough electricity for operating theaters, diagnostic facilities, sterile procedures, and laboratory equipment.

Staff at every health facility visited reported severe shortages of anesthetic agents, antibiotics, intravenous fluids, infant formula, needles, syringes, and bandages. Existing stores of heat-sensitive vaccines and medicines have been depleted by the loss of electrical power for refrigeration.

* * *

Many facilities experience severe staff shortages. *Erbil Pediatric Hospital* has lost two-thirds of its doctors and one-half of its nurses. The study team observed that Iraqi health care providers work under extremely difficult conditions with limited resources and diminished capacity to provide care while morbidity rates soar throughout the country.

III) SANITATION: WATER PURIFICATION AND SEWAGE TREATMENT

The mortality and morbidity patterns described in Section One and the deterioration of the medical system described in Section Two reflect the breakdown of sanitation in two key areas: water purification and sewage treatment.

A) Water Purification

Iraq's entire system of water purification and distribution relies on electricity. Electricity is necessary to power water treatment plants and to pump water throughout the country. With the destruction of the country's electrical power plants in the Gulf War, Iraq's water purification and distribution system came to a virtual standstill. While some water purification facilities are now operational, much of Iraq still lacks clean drinking water.

B) Sewage Treatment

Like the water purification system, Iraq's system of sewage treatment is entirely dependent on electrical power. Sewage plants pump wastes from homes and factories, treat the raw sewage, and discharge the treated sewage to rivers for disposal. With the incapacitation of the electrical system, raw sewage either backs up in homes and streets or flows into the Tigris, Euphrates, and other rivers.

In Baghdad, there are two sewage treatment facilities that serve Baghdad and the surrounding areas. A law student member of the study team who speaks Arabic, Ms. Sarah Leah Whitson, visited these facilities and interviewed sanitation engineers.

During the first week of the Gulf War, both plants ceased operation due to the lack of electricity and resorted to discharging raw sewage directly into the Tigris River. Later during the war, one of the two facilities was bombed and completely destroyed. With the

resumption of some electrical generating power, the surviving plant, which treats about 50% of the area's sewage, resumed operation. Much of Baghdad's raw sewage continues to be discharged into the Tigris, polluting the drinking water of densely populated areas of Southern Iraq.

In Baghdad, Basrah, and Kirkuk, the study team observed neighborhood streets filled with foul-smelling and unsanitary sewage and other wastes. Children walked and played in stagnant, waste-contaminated pools of water. Garbage collection also ceased due to a shortage of fuel for trucks, and consequently streets are littered with rubbish.

IV) ELECTRICAL POWER AND PUBLIC HEALTH

A) The Destruction of Iraq's Power System

Virtually all of Iraq's electrical power is supplied by 20 generating plants. These plants are connected through a network of 400 kilovolt transmission lines. Before the Gulf War, Iraq's total electrical generating capacity was about 9,000 megawatts.

This system was incapacitated by bombing during the Gulf War. Within the first days of the war, 13 of Iraq's 20 power generating plants were incapacitated or destroyed. By the end of the war, only two of the country's power stations, generating less than 4% of Iraq's prewar output, were in operation. Even today, months after the war is over, electrical output is still roughly only 22% of the prewar level, despite the priority given to restoring the electrical generating system.

Iraqi engineers predict that little additional electrical power will be restored over the next year. Many generating facilities were destroyed beyond repair and will have to be entirely rebuilt. Damaged facilities can be repaired only through cannibalization of parts from other electric power plants, because sanctions prevent the import of spare parts.

B) The Link Between Electrical Power and Public Health

There is a link in Iraq between electrical power and public health. Without electricity, water cannot be purified, sewage cannot be treated, water-borne diseases flourish, and hospitals cannot cure treatable illness.

Therefore, the increased incidence of mortality and morbidity (Section One), the deterioration of the medical system (Section Two), and the incapacitation of water purification and sewage treatment systems (Section Three) are all linked to the destruction of Iraq's electrical power system in the Gulf War.

* * *

V) METHODS TO ASSURE INDEPENDENCE AND RELIABILITY

A) Independence from Iraqi Government

Mindful that previous foreign visitors were often guided by officials from the Iraqi government, the study team implemented safeguards to ensure independent data collection. Before entering Iraq, the study team

requested and received assurances that it would not be subject to the restrictions imposed on foreign journalists and would be able to move freely around the country without government escorts.

With two exceptions, the study team proceeded without government interference or supervision. First, in Basrah, local authorities required official government escorts, although the study team continued to decide what to see and where to go. Dr. Passey, who was visiting Basrah, was told that escorts were required for her own safety. Second, as noted earlier, access was denied to the Ebnil Qatib Infectious Disease Hospital in Baghdad.

Otherwise, the study team was able to move unescorted and unrestricted, choosing the sites it wanted to visit and arriving unannounced to conduct interviews and make observations. In addition, the study team used only independent, non-governmental interpreters and drivers.

B) Methodologies for Assessing Mortality, Morbidity, and Functioning of the Medical System

Prior to arriving in Iraq, the study team developed a number of optional methodologies. Because of the extremely limited opportunity to communicate with people within the country prior to arrival, and the general conditions within, it was impossible to determine in advance which methods to use.

1) Mortality and Morbidity

The study team visited 19 health facilities in Baghdad, Kerbala, El Zubayr, Erbil, Kirkuk, Mosul, and Sulamaneiya. In each of these cities, the study team interviewed hospital administrators, physicians, staff, patients, and patients' families. The study team also used hospital records, patient case histories, questionnaires, and its own observations to assess mortality and morbidity. Whenever possible, data gathered by one method was verified by another.

The study team also conducted its own ward prevalence surveys in four hospitals. Each patient was examined. Age, sex, weight, admissions diagnosis, and whether the patient was suffering from severe acute malnutrition was recorded. In *Sulamaneiya Pediatric Hospital* and *Kirkuk Pediatric Hospital*, the study team assessed all the children in the hospital; in *Erbil Pediatric Hospital*, all the children in three of five general pediatric wards; in *Saddam Central Teaching Hospital for Children* in Baghdad, every fifth child in the wards.

There were a number of difficulties in obtaining data. Although staff in most of the facilities were extremely helpful, they were not always able to furnish medical records. Many records were lost as a result of looting and damage during the civil unrest. In addition, the quality of recordkeeping was often poor. For example, diagnoses of typhoid, cholera, and malnutrition frequently were not separately recorded but simply lumped under more general headings. Moreover, malnutrition was generally not recorded at all so that its prevalence was consistently understated in hospital records.

SWP to hold 36th convention

BY GREG McCARTAN

The Socialist Workers Party has announced it will hold its 36th convention in Chicago June 26-30.

Attending the event will be communist workers who belong to industrial unions, members of the Young Socialist Alliance, students active in political struggles, international cothinkers of the SWP, and other party supporters and special guests.

SWP leader Ernie Mailhot said in an interview that the convention will discuss "why Washington's war against Iraq showed that in the years ahead working people will have to confront more such brutal imperialist assaults around the world and deeper attacks on our rights, living standards, and organizations at home."

Recent court rulings and government legislation aimed against hard-won democratic rights — such as those against abortion rights and affirmative action — the continued concession demands by the employers, and the

accelerating conflicts between Washington and its imperialist rivals — are just a few indications of the course of the ruling rich in the United States, Japan, Germany, Britain, and elsewhere, Mailhot said.

He explained the working-class has its own line of march to aim to take power out of the hands of the war-makers and establish governments of workers and farmers that can lead the fight for socialism.

At the center of the meeting's discussion will be how the party can build on its successes in campaigning against imperialism and war since last fall. Delegates will discuss the next steps in constructing a party of communist workers in collaboration with other such parties around the world.

Mailhot encouraged fighting workers, unionists, youth, farmers, and students to attend the convention.

For information on attending the convention call the number in the city nearest you listed on page 12.

Lessons from wartime course of Iranian communists in 1980s

BY GEORGE BUCHANAN

On Sept. 22, 1980, the Iraqi government of Saddam Hussein invaded Iran, seizing 4,000 square miles of territory within a few weeks. Working people in Iran mobilized to resist the aggression.

Eight years and several hundred thousand deaths later, a cease-fire was signed that left valuable Iranian territory still in the hands of Iraq's rulers. Only following its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait did the Iraqi regime finally cede back all of the seized Iranian territory.

An organization of communists in Iran — the Workers Unity Party (HVK — Hezb-e Vahdat-e Kargaran) — saw Iraq's attack as an imperialist-inspired move against the Iranian revolution that had toppled the shah in February 1979. They adopted and circulated resolutions pointing the way forward for workers and peasants in Iran faced with this situation.

These documents, together with an introduction by Samad Sharif, who helped lead this work in Iran, make up section 3 of *New International* no. 7, the latest issue of the Marxist magazine, which focuses on Washington's murderous war against the people of Iraq.

As the magazine's introduction explains, "The toilers of Iraq had no communist vanguard that voiced their class interests and pointed the way forward in solidarity with their brothers and sisters in Iran. The nucleus of an internationalist, communist leadership did exist in Iran, however, at the time Baghdad launched its counterrevolutionary war in the early 1980s. Resolutions of this communist organization in 1980 and 1982... are of lasting political value to revolutionists, anti-imperialist fighters, and communists everywhere."

The first section of the magazine, "Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's Assault on Iraq," deals with the U.S.-led war and the international fight against it. The two articles in the section are by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party.

Section 2 of the magazine, "Communist Policy in Wartime as Well as in Peacetime," features articles by *New International* editor Mary-Alice Waters and excerpts from a 1969 resolution of the Socialist Workers Party. These explain the course fighting workers and youth took in earlier wars and imperialist militarization drives.

Issue no. 7 of *New International* is a source of many rich political lessons for working-class and anti-imperialist fighters across the globe. Its attractive full-color cover, plus a price of \$12 for the 336-page publication, will help the magazine get around.

The Iranian revolution of 1979

The overthrow of the monarchy in Iran in February 1979 was the biggest blow to Washington's power in the Middle East in decades.

Jack Barnes explains the significance of this event in "The Working-Class Campaign against Imperialism and War," in section 1 of the magazine:

"Prior to the overthrow of the shah, Iran had been one of Washington's most reliable client states. In the configuration of imperialist props in the region, the shah's 'peacock throne' had formed the third leg of a tripod. The other two were Israel—by far the strongest leg, in its capacity as a massively armed junior imperialist power—and the Saudi and Gulf state monarchies, the weakest.

"For more than ten years the U.S. rulers have been trying to recoup some of what they lost with the overthrow of the monarchy in Iran. For much of the past decade they did so by providing encouragement to Saddam Hussein's war against Iran and supporting the course of their imperialist allies, especially the French government, in supplying arms to Iraq for the war effort."

Washington eventually intervened directly on the side of Iraq in the war, sending the U.S. Navy to the Arab-Persian Gulf, where it harassed Iranian shipping and caused the world's sixth largest air disaster when a U.S. warship shot down an Iran Air jetliner, killing all 290 people on board.

For its part, the Hussein regime in Iraq saw the weakening and eventual smashing of the shah's regime as an opportunity to seize some valuable territory. Hussein also

"feared the political example of the Iranian revolution on workers and peasants in Iraq and its destabilizing impact on capitalist-landlord regimes throughout the region," explains Sharif.

There is a direct continuity between the 1980 attempt by Baghdad's capitalist rulers to grab territory and resources from Iran and its seizure of Kuwait for exactly the same goals 10 years later.

The first of the HVK resolutions printed is "War, Revolution, and the Fight for a Workers' and Peasants' Government." It was written shortly after the start of the invasion launched by the ruling Baathist party.

Imperialism behind Iraq's invasion

The resolution explains that the hand of imperialism was behind the Iraqi invasion. Understanding this threat, masses of Iranian workers and peasants enrolled in the armed forces and called for other measures to defend Iran.

"Because of the war, the Iranian revolution has entered a new stage," the document explains. "Workers, peasants, women, oppressed nationalities, and tribal people view this war as their own; they see that safeguarding their gains and freedom is dependent on victory in the war."

This was happening despite the fact that the new government was not one based on workers and peasants but was a capitalist regime in the process of consolidating itself through a series of efforts to demobilize the working people who had come into the streets to overthrow the monarchy.

Workers' factory committees formed in the 1978-79 upheaval, known as *shoras*, were still in existence despite government attempts to declare them illegal. The resolution explains how the shoras began coming to the fore after the invasion, calling for and helping organize "centers for resistance and preparedness" in the factories.

Kurds and other oppressed nationalities in Iran were also suffering repression from the Iranian government, but many moved to defend the revolution against the inva-

sion of Saddam Hussein, who was at the same time waging a war against the Kurds in the north of Iraq.

The enthusiastic mobilizations by workers and youth were not welcomed by the Iranian government, as the resolution explains: "The unprecedented determination and militancy shown by the people in defense of the Islamic Republic has not met with a positive reaction from the government... The widespread slogan 'Give us arms' is not welcomed by the government."

Masses open to working-class solutions

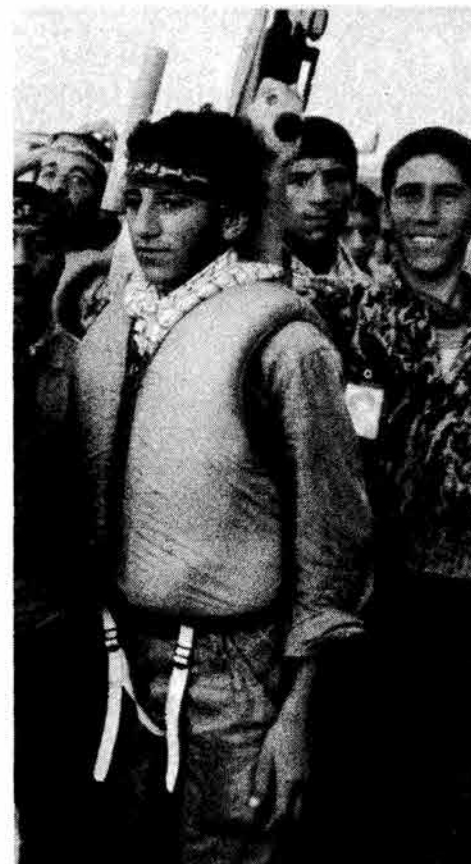
"At this new stage of the revolution, the masses look to the leaders less and less," states the resolution. "For a victory in the war, the masses are more open to listening to working-class and anti-imperialist solutions. There are tremendous possibilities for a revolutionary workers' party."

The perspective the resolution sets out is for the workers and peasants to mobilize and defend the revolution from the Iraqi threat, while at the same time pressing forward their demands on the Iranian landlords and capitalists, who were either standing aside from or sabotaging the defense efforts.

The resolution views the war as an intensified class struggle where the "political preparations of the working class for the creation of a workers' and peasants' government are being carried out in the midst of this war and by participation in these struggles."

The document calls on the members of the HVK to base themselves in the industrial centers and working-class neighborhoods, and participate in the resistance through the shoras and other workers' organizations.

As Samad Sharif recounts, this meant that "HVK members were among the draftees and volunteers who fought and died to defend the revolution against the Iraqi invasion. Some HVK members were excluded by the authorities from serving at the front because of their political views. These revolutionary workers joined volunteer production brigades in the factories to meet pressing war needs."



Iranian youth mobilized to defend revolution against Saddam Hussein's imperialist-backed invasion.

The second resolution was written two years later, when the Iranian war mobilization had driven Saddam Hussein's forces back across the border into Iraq.

Titled "Workers and Peasants in Iran and Iraq Have Identical Interests," it explains that the war remained a defensive one imposed on Iran, despite the reverses suffered by Iraq's forces.

These documents are worth studying. They give a unique picture of what the Iranian revolution signified, the nature of the Baathist regime in Baghdad, and the continuity between its invasions of Iran and Kuwait.

They provide an example of what a communist leadership could do to point workers forward while mobilizing to resist an imperialist-inspired invasion, and at the same time maintaining their political independence from the capitalist government.

Government spied on miners union

Continued from Page 16

plication was that although he wasn't pocketing the money himself, he was using it for his own political ends.

Scargill and Heathfield have repeatedly explained that the steps they took were needed to protect strike support money from

New revelations show how frame-up of miners' leaders was concocted.

being seized by the government. In the case of the Soviet miners' donations, Scargill explained that Soviet Union officials insisted the money go into an international, rather than an NUM, account.

The NUM and IMO amicably resolved the matter. The NUM leaders refuted each allegation directed against them and the union successfully fought off the broader attack.

Revelations back union leaders' account

The new revelations give further backing to Scargill and Heathfield's account. According to the *Guardian*, the decision to place the money from the Soviet Union into an IMO fund "was taken at the highest level of the Soviet Communist Party central committee."

Guardian journalists Seumas Milne and Paul Brown write: "It was the Soviet authorities, not the NUM, which ordered the money to be sent to a solidarity fund, now controlled by the International Miners Organisation. The aim was to protect Mikhail Gorbachev's relationship with the British government."

In December 1984, Gorbachev "came to Britain with the aim of improving Anglo-Soviet relations," say Milne and Brown. "It has been confirmed that Mrs. Thatcher raised the issue of Soviet financial support for the miners."

"After the Gorbachev visit, Soviet trade union officials made it clear... that the money could not now be paid to the NUM

exclusively and could only go to a fund for the benefit of miners anywhere in the world, including Britain," the article says.

This new information, concludes the *Guardian*, "contradicts findings by Gavin Lightman in an inquiry last year that £1 million of Soviet money belonged to the NUM alone and was diverted by its president, Arthur Scargill, and a French miners' leader, Alain Simon, partly to create a fund which they could use for their own political advantage."

Payoffs

The investigation has shed more light on how the frame-up of Scargill and Heathfield was put together. The "reporting" techniques of *Daily Mirror* journalist Terry Pattinson

and Central TV's Roger Cook — the two people who fronted the initial allegations against Scargill and Heathfield — have been exposed as having nothing to do with serious investigative journalism.

The initial articles in the *Daily Mirror* took the form of reports of allegations by former NUM chief executive Roger Windsor. But the investigation has confirmed that Windsor was paid £80,000 for his story, and that a further £50,000 was paid to former NUM driver Jim Parker for additional material.

Pattinson and Cook were both protected by their employers from the attempts of the *Guardian*/'Dispatches' investigators to interview them. The *Mirror's* editor also refused to be interviewed.

CALENDAR

ARIZONA

Tempe

Report Back from Cuba. Slide presentation; discussion with Karen Ray, member Socialist Workers Party. Sat., June 15, 5 p.m. 309 Beck. Buffet; music by Gonzalo Sepúlveda. Donation: \$5. Tel: 279-5850.

CALIFORNIA

San Francisco

Class Series on Socialism. Every Tuesday, 7 p.m. 3284 23rd St. (near Mission). Sponsor: Young Socialist Alliance. Tel: (415) 282-6255.

NEBRASKA

Omaha

Young Socialist Discussion Series on Cuba. "Revolutionary Cuba's Role in World Politics Today." Sun., June 9, 5 p.m. Pathfinder Bookstore, 140 S 40th St. Tel.: (402) 553-0245.

NEW YORK

New York

Young Socialist Alliance BBQ. Sun., June 9, 2 p.m. Prospect Park, Brooklyn (D line). \$5. Tel: (212) 675-6740

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

How to Fight for a World without War and Racism. Class series. Every Thurs., 6:30 p.m. 1906 South St. Sponsor: Young Socialist Alliance. Tel: (215) 546-8218.

CANADA

Toronto

Educational Tour to Cuba. Aug. 4-18, 1991. (For residents of Canada.) Sponsor: Canada-Cuba Cultural Interchange and the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples. Price: \$916 includes airfare, accommodation, and meals. Applications and deposit due now. Tel: Toronto, (416) 533-1225, 658-1561; Montréal, (514) 270-0197; Vancouver, (604) 873-8898, 595-3991.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

Introduction to Socialism Discussions. Every Tues., 6:30 p.m. 157a Symonds St. Sponsor: Young Socialists. Tel: (9) 793-075.

Teams reach new readers from Canada to Colorado

Supporters of the *Militant* have been campaigning to get out the facts about Washington's vicious assault on the Iraqi people and the continued devastation wrought by the U.S.-backed embargo.

From the coalfields of West Virginia to Native American lands in

1987 strike at Morrell was the high-point of his life, he said. "I loved being out there in front of the plant." But, he added, the workers "shouldn't have gone back when the judge put an injunction on us. What was he going to do? Garnish our wages?"

copy of the *Militant* and took a subscription card in case he decided to get it regularly. He wanted to discuss the war and questioned why the U.S. government was there.

A *Militant* supporter from Charleston, West Virginia, writes: "At the portal of the Elkay mine in the coalfields of Logan County we sold a *Militant* subscription to a miner who recognized us from a recent labor rally in support of striking Steelworkers.

"He had picked up a single copy there and remarked that *Militant* supporters had been on the Pittston strike picket lines and at the mine portals. Recently he had seen news coverage about the Socialist Workers Party election campaign. Just two weeks ago we sold our first subscription at the mine portal after having regular sales for several months.

"After the portal sale we went to a trailer park in nearby Ethyl to talk with some miners from Québec who work nonunion, clearing land for strip mining."

One of the miners is a subscriber to *L'Internationale*. He renewed his subscription and also purchased a copy of the French-language Marxist magazine *Nouvelle Internationale*.

On May 10-12 some 500 people participated in an international conference on Native rights in London, Ontario. Many people stopped by a Pathfinder literature table there. Several commented about the link between the Canadian army's actions against the Mohawks and the sending of the Canadian troops to join the assault on the Iraqi people. Two participants bought subscriptions to the *Militant* and one to *Perspectiva Mundial*. One person returned after buying a single copy to sign up for a subscription.

At Massey University in Palmerston North, New Zealand, *Militant* supporters sold 16 subscriptions to students while visiting there May



Militant/Margrethe Siem

Workers, youth, and GIs have bought subscriptions to the *Militant*.

5-6. One student who had purchased a single copy of the *Militant* months before decided to subscribe.

Supporters also introduced the *Militant* to workers at a textile mill there. One worker bought a copy of the *International Socialist Review* supplement published in the *Militant* in April that contained the United Nations report on the devastation of Iraq. She was opposed to the U.S. bombing of Iraq, saying she had been a victim of bombing in London during World War II and knew what it meant for ordinary people.

In Christchurch, New Zealand, a young soldier who bought a subscription during the war decided to renew it. He took extra subscription cards and planned to show the *Militant* to some of his friends.

Lorraine Starsky reports from Pittsburgh that seven workers bought copies of the *Militant* at the contract and strike vote of United Food and Commercial Workers members at Giant Eagle grocery stores. At a May 4 solidarity rally in support of the strikers, *Militant* sup-

porters sold 22 copies of the paper and two subscriptions.

On May 18-19 *Militant* supporters from Phoenix, Arizona, Salt Lake City and Price, Utah, traveled to Kayenta, Arizona, which is on the Navajo Nation. At sales at two portals 30 miners bought the *Militant* and three subscribed. The team also met with United Mine Workers of America officials about the overturning of the reactionary "right-to-work" law there. Two officials renewed their subscriptions to the *Militant*.

In Craig, Colorado, supporters introduced the paper to UMW members on strike against Cyprus Empire and sold four subscriptions.

Matilde Zimmermann from Omaha, Nebraska; Linda Joyce from Charleston, West Virginia; Michael Jarvis from Wellington, New Zealand; Joan Phillips from Christchurch, New Zealand; Lorraine Starsky from Pittsburgh; Ellie Beth Brady from Salt Lake City and Sherrie Love from Price, Utah, contributed to this article.

GETTING THE MILITANT AROUND



Canada, supporters are finding workers and young people interested in reading about and discussing the results of the war and the continued offensive against working people at home. Many purchase individual copies or a subscription to the *Militant* and other socialist publications. The paper's supporters are aiming to win thousands of new readers by June 15.

This past week many supporters sent in reports on their experiences at plant gates, mine portals, college campuses, and working-class neighborhoods.

"*Militant* campaigners from Omaha, Nebraska, and Austin, Minneapolis, and St. Paul, Minnesota, teamed up over Memorial Day weekend May 25-27 to sell a dozen subscriptions and more than 50 single copies of the paper to meat-packers," writes Matilde Zimmermann.

"A highlight of the weekend was the sales of 16 copies of the paper to workers coming off the swing shift at 2:00 a.m. at the huge John Morrell plant in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. The workers who stopped their cars to talk with salespeople came from all over the world—Romania, Mexico, the Soviet Union, Afghanistan, and Ethiopia, as well as South Dakota."

One young man said he had worked there since graduating from high school five years earlier. A

Seven subscriptions were sold going door to door in Sioux Falls the next day. The majority were purchased by Morrell workers. One worker who subscribed had recently moved to the area from Mississippi. He said there was still a lot of discussion in the plant about the 1987 strike. Another subscriber explained how conditions at the plant had gotten worse in the three years he worked there. He had heard about the frame-up case of unionist and packinghouse worker Mark Curtis and asked how Curtis was doing.

Workers at the Iowa Beef Processing (IBP) plant in Sioux City, Iowa, bought one *Militant* subscription and four to *Perspectiva Mundial*. Many were angry because in their last contract they had agreed to take shares in the company instead of a wage increase. They had recently received their "share"—an IBP jeans jacket. Their contract is up July 28. Some thought they would be forced to strike again, as they have for every contract since 1969.

On May 25 *Militant* supporters in New York mobilized and fanned out to working-class communities throughout the city. Melissa Harris reported she met a GI who was wearing an Operation Desert Storm T-shirt. He explained he was wounded in combat in the Gulf, where he was stationed from November to February. He bought a

North Korea to apply for United Nations seat

BY PETER THIERJUNG

The government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK—North Korea) announced May 28 that it "has no alternative but to enter the United Nations at the present stage as a step to tide over the temporary difficulties caused by the South Korean authorities."

The announcement by the foreign ministry in Pyongyang to seek UN membership represents a major policy shift, one that the DPRK said it was compelled to make in light of South Korea's taking advantage of "rapid changes in the international situation."

The North Korean government has consistently opposed separate membership in the United Nations for North and South. Each side currently has observer status, with no voting rights.

In an April interview with the Japanese newspaper *Mainichi Shimbun*, North Korean President Kim Il Sung explained that "to enter the UN separately before reunification means in the long run opposition to her [Korea's] reunification and an attempt to finalize the division of the country."

Kim reiterated his government's proposal that North and South share a single seat in the UN, even prior to resolving the division of the country, as a means of advancing reunification.

The U.S.-backed regime in Seoul, South Korea, has, however, rejected Pyongyang's initiatives and earlier this year announced it was ready to submit an application to become a full voting member of the UN. "UN membership for us will turn the screws on the North," a South Korean official told the *Christian Science Monitor*.

"The South Korean authorities insist on

their unilateral membership," the DPRK foreign ministry said in its statement. "If we leave this alone, important issues related to the interests of the entire Korean nation would be dealt with in a biased manner on the UN rostrum, and this would entail grave consequences. We can never let it go that way."

Washington's 'two Koreas' policy

Since the end of World War II in 1945, U.S. imperialism has been the main beneficiary of the division of Korea and the exploitation of the South. Washington fears any movement toward reunification would challenge its domination in the South and has therefore advanced a "two Koreas" policy to bloc reunification.

The centerpiece of the U.S. policy has been the garrisoning of 45,000 troops and 1,000 nuclear weapons in the South to shore up the Seoul regime and Washington's unremitting efforts to politically and economically isolate the North. An adjunct has been Washington's efforts to win a UN seat for the Seoul regime, which recently gathered new life.

The South's last application to join the UN was made in 1948. The Soviet Union used its veto power in the UN Security Council to deny Seoul's request and maintained that position until Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's April 1991 summit meeting with South Korean President Roh Tae Woo, the first visit ever by a Soviet leader to either part of Korea.

Gorbachev announced that the Soviet Union endorsed the South's application for a UN seat and Roh pledged to increase economic trade with the USSR tenfold, amount-

ing to \$10 billion by the mid-1990s.

The Soviet policy reversal followed Moscow's opening of diplomatic relations with Seoul in September 1990, a move North Korean officials termed a "betrayal" of the fight to unify Korea. North Korean officials also for the first time publicly pointed out Moscow's complicity with Washington in dividing the Korean peninsula in 1945.

Of the five permanent members of the Security Council that must approve the admission of new UN members, China is the only country that has not indicated how it would vote on South Korea's membership bid. China is also the only Security Council member that does not have full diplomatic relations with Seoul. Britain, France, the United States, and now the Soviet Union recognize Seoul and will vote for giving South Korea a UN seat.

Early last month, Chinese Premier Li Peng visited Pyongyang to meet with government leaders. More than 500,000 Koreans in the North greeted the Chinese premier. Li told his Korean hosts that "the Chinese [Communist] Party and government highly value every reasonable suggestion on peaceful reunification" advanced by the DPRK, but made no public mention of South Korea's UN maneuver.

A major article in the May 9 *Far East Economic Review* reported that when Seoul approached Beijing last year Chinese officials told South Korea not to apply for UN membership "this year," implying that it should wait another year. The article then quoted Richard Solomon, U.S. assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, who confidently said "China would not like to be put in a position of having to veto."

In January, the Chinese government gave South Korea the nod to open a trade office in Beijing, which is staffed by a high-ranking South Korean diplomat. In the late 1980s, trade between China and South Korea boomed, reaching \$3.5 billion last year and making Seoul China's seventh largest trade partner. Trade between the two countries is now double that between South Korea and the Soviet Union.

Tokyo sets preconditions

The DPRK decision to seek a seat in the UN also followed the collapse on May 22 of a third round of talks between Pyongyang and Tokyo on normalizing diplomatic relations.

The talks began last September when a delegation from the two major political parties in Japan, the Liberal Democratic Party and the Japanese Socialist Party, visited North Korea, a blow to Washington's efforts to isolate the DPRK.

The collapse of the latest round of talks came on the heels of a campaign by Washington to label the DPRK a potential nuclear threat. Leslie Gelb, a pundit for the big-business media, asserted in an April opinion column in the *New York Times* that North Korea was "the next renegade state," after Iraq, and called on Tokyo to bring increased pressure on Pyongyang by suspending all trade with that country.

The campaign was quickly echoed during the Soviet-South Korea summit, when Gorbachev joined with South Korea's Roh in demanding international inspection of electrical-generating nuclear facilities in the North. Leading Soviet officials also threat-

Continued on Page 12

Harassment unleashed on Rodney King

Continued from Page 16

"The sound of the batons was 'like bones being cracked, like being beat, loud thumps, gushy sounds,'" the report quotes Allen as saying.

As the Los Angeles city government and the police push to retake political space they have lost because of the campaign to oust Gates, the forces fighting against police abuse are discussing the next steps to take in pushing back police brutality.

One proposal is to involve fighters against police abuse in a recall campaign aimed at getting Gates out of office. This effort was initiated by Kerman Maddox, a candidate in the primary elections in the city's eighth district. It is backed by the Brotherhood Crusade, Mothers in Action (MIA), Mexican-American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Association of Mexican-American Educators, along with other community groups.

In order to successfully put the issue on the ballot 63,818 signatures of registered voters must be collected on petitions by August 9. Supporters of the petition effort say their goal is to collect 125,000 signatures to insure it will appear on the ballot.

The petition reads in part: "It is abundantly clear that despite an obvious lack of confidence on the part of the very people that he is charged to protect and serve and despite the fact that he has shown himself to be unfit to lead this city's police force consisting of over 8,000 officers, the vast majority of whom bring credit to the uniforms they wear, he will not be fired.

"Consequently we are left with no choice but to seek to remove Daryl Gates from his post as Chief of Police of the Los Angeles Police Department."

Bennie Benjamin, the chairwoman of MIA, said of the petition campaign, "We are not asking people to spend any more time than it takes to back up their talk for the firing of Daryl Gates with their signature on a petition."

The recall effort is being put forward as the central campaign for those who want to oust Gates — including by the Coalition for Justice and an End to Police Brutality, which has been a main organizer of protest activities to oust Gates.

Eli Green, a participant in the Coalition for Justice and the Socialist Workers candidate for Los Angeles City Council District 10, disagrees with this approach.

"This recall effort moves away from what the unions, working people, students, and all opponents of police violence should be doing," said Green in an interview. "It diverts energy and time away from the major tasks that the movement should be about — reaching out and educating broader and broader layers of people on the facts of this fight and building public protest actions in the streets.

"The cops and the city government want nothing more than to get people demobilized and direct us into the arena of electoral politics and the courts," the socialist candidate said. "We should be continuing to build on the massive outpouring of sentiment we have seen in this city against police brutality.

"We should be reaching out to the unions, students, community organizations, and civil rights groups in this city, nationally, and internationally. The referendum narrows our focus to Los Angeles politics and limits our ability to gain allies," he said.

"We also must remember that everyone is not convinced that Gates should go. We still have a lot of work to do," Green said. "Simply getting the issue on the ballot does not solve that question. Convincing more and more people and mobilizing them in the streets is the way to bring the massive amount of pressure on the city administration that is needed to get rid of Gates."

'Militant' Prisoner Subscription Fund

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.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

ALABAMA

Birmingham

Revolutionary Cuba Today. An Eyewitness Report. Speaker: John Hawkins, Socialist Workers candidate for mayor, member United Mine Workers of America Local 2368. Sat., June 15, 7:30 p.m. 111 21st St. S. Donation: \$3. Tel: (205) 323-3079.

Che Guevara, Cuba, and the Road to Socialism. Classes. Sat., June 15; Sun., June 16, 4:30 p.m. 111 21st St. S. Donation: \$2.50. Tel: (205) 323-3079.

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Portrait of Teresa. Cuban film on challenges facing women in Cuba. Sat., June 15. Program, 7:30 p.m.; dinner, 6:30. 2546 W Pico Blvd. Donation: \$3. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

FLORIDA

Miami

South Africa: The Fight against Apartheid. Speaker: Peter Seidman, Socialist Workers candidate for city commission. Sat., June 8, 7:30 p.m. 137 NE 54th St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (305) 756-1020.

The Free Trade Agreement: What Stand Should Working People Take. Speaker: Becky Ellis, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., June 15, 7:30 p.m. 137 NE 54th St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (305) 756-1020.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

Washington's Assault on Iraq. Speaker: Andrea Morell, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., June 8, 7:30 p.m. 605 Massachusetts Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

MICHIGAN

Detroit

Why the Campaign against the Free Trade Bill Does Not Advance the Labor Movement. Panel discussion. Sat., June 8, 7:30 p.m. 5019 1/2 Woodward Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (313) 831-1177.

N. Korea applies for UN seat

Continued from Page 11

ened to stop deliveries of nuclear supplies and cooperation with North Korea, if Pyongyang did not comply.

Tokyo's negotiators followed up by demanding international inspection as a precondition for diplomatic relations. The North Korean delegation made clear that in the absence of any commitment by the United States to withdraw its 1,000 nuclear weapons from the South it would not submit to these demands.

The May 28 announcement by the DPRK

MINNESOTA

Austin

Why the Fight Against the Free Trade Bill Does Not Advance the Labor Movement. Speaker: Héctor Marroquín, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Des Moines City Council, member International Association of Machinists. Sat., June 8, 7:30 p.m. 407 1/2 N Main St. Donation: \$2.50. Tel: (507) 433-3461.

MISSOURI

St. Louis

Che Guevara, Cuba, and the Road to Socialism. Speaker: Dave Sandor, Socialist Workers Party, member United Food and Commercial Workers. Sat., June 15, 7:30 p.m. 1622 S. Broadway. Donation: \$2. Tel: (314) 421-3808.

NEBRASKA

Omaha

Revolutionary Cuba Today. Eyewitness Report and Slide Show. Speaker: Elizabeth Hamel, recently returned from Cuba, Young Socialist Alliance National Committee. Sat., June 8, 7 p.m. Translation to Spanish. 140 S 40th St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (402) 553-0245.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Che Guevara, Cuba, and the Road to Socialism. Speakers: Francisco Picado, Socialist Workers Party, member Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union; Wendy Lyons, Socialist Workers Party, member United Food and Commercial Workers Union. Speakers recently returned from trips to Cuba. Sat., June 8, 7:30 p.m. 191 7th Ave. Donation: \$4. Tel: (212) 675-6740.

PENNSYLVANIA

Pittsburgh

Supreme Court Decision: Blow to Abortion Rights and Free Speech. Speakers: Kathy Toulson, Planned Parenthood of Western Pennsylvania education department; Mary Litman, acting director Women's Reproductive Health Services; Marian Damick, American Civil Liberties Union; Sarah Button, Young Socialist Alliance, member International Association of Machinists Lodge 1044. Sat., June 8, 7 p.m. 4905 Penn Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (412) 362-6767.

foreign ministry called the separate applications by North and South Korea for UN membership an abnormal situation and "another big difficulty in the way of achieving national reunification."

"The present-day situation in which the North and South of Korea have to apply for UN membership separately must never remain unchanged permanently.

"We will remain invariable in our hope that the North and South will occupy one seat at the United Nations with a single nomenclature."

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WEST VIRGINIA

Charleston

Abortion Rights Under Attack. Speakers: Karen Hannah, executive director West Virginia National Abortion Rights Action League; Kristin Meriam, Young Socialist Alliance. Video: *Abortion Denied*. Sat., June 8, 7:30 p.m. 1586 E. Washington St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (304) 345-3040.

Freedom Struggle in South Africa. Speakers: Rev. Ronald English, First Baptist Church, participant in 1989 delegation to South Africa; Kevin Kellogg, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., June 15, 7:30 p.m. 1586 E. Washington St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (304) 345-3040.

BRITAIN

Doncaster

Yorkshire Miners Gala. Forum with refreshments. "War and Depression: the Challenges Facing Miners Today." Speakers: U.S. trade unionist; representative National Union of Mineworkers; representative Communist League. Sat., June 15, 3 p.m. Women's Centre, Bolsover Street.

London

Famine in Africa, Deaths from Typhoon in Bangladesh: Natural Disasters or World Order in Crisis? Speaker: Paul Davies, Communist League, member Rail Maritime Transport union. Fri., June 7, 7:30 p.m. 47 The Cut, SE 1. Donation: £1. Tel: 71-401 2409.

Malcolm X: Fighter against Racism, Imperialism, and War. Video: *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. Fri., June 14, 7:30 p.m. 47 The Cut, SE 1. Donation: £1. Tel: 71-401 2409.

Manchester

Why Was Arthur Scargill Framed? Speaker: representative Communist League. Fri., June 7, 7:30 p.m. Unit 4, 60 Shudehill. Donation: £1. Tel: 061-839 1766.

Sheffield

The Fight Facing Workers Today. Speakers: Ted Milward, secretary Maltby branch National Union of Mineworkers. Fri., June 7, 7:30 p.m. 2A Waverley House, 10 Joiner St. Donation: £1. Tel: 0742-729469.

CANADA

Montréal

South Africa: The Struggle Continues. Sat. June 15, 7:30 p.m. 6566, boul. St.-Laurent. Donation: \$3. Tel: (514) 273-2503.

Vancouver

Che Guevara, Cuba, and the Road to Socialism. Speaker: Colleen Levis, Communist League. Sat., June 8, 7:30 p.m. 1053 Kingsway, Suite 102. Donation: \$3. Tel: (604) 872-8343.

SWEDEN

Stockholm

Can the United States and Israel Crush the Intifada? Speaker: Inge Hinnemo, Communist League, member Metal Workers Union. Sat., June 8, 3 p.m. Vikingagatan 10. Tel: (08) 31 69 33.

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SWEDEN

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

"A: Put your head upside the club..." — LOS ANGELES — "Police Chief Daryl Gates said that the public can do more to eliminate



Harry Ring

excessive force in encounters with police officers and endorsed the creation of a training program for citizens." — News item.

Educating Continental — Based on a terse business section item, we reported Continental Airlines fired a Boston ticket agent for

refusing to wear makeup but then reversed itself. Now, a few added details: The airline backed off after agent Teresa Fischette went to the American Civil Liberties Union and the National Organization for Women, and appeared on the Oprah Winfrey show. And also, after Jay Leno did a skit about it on the "Tonight" show.

Shut it down — "Arizona's gas chambers cannot be used until the Department of Corrections gets a permit to release cyanide gas into the air after each execution." — News item.

And no one realized it was a typo — A *Los Angeles Times* correction: "Due to a typographical error, a report about United Nations

action on post-Gulf War reparations wrongly stated that U.S. officials were urging action against Iran. The country in question was Iraq."

The last supper? — Dozens of Atlanta residents swear they see an image of Jesus shrouded in pasta and tomato sauce in a billboard ad for Pizza Hut spaghetti. A Pizza Hut ad spokesperson insisted they were merely seeing things, "unless Jesus looks like a Muppet."

Sounds reasonable — In New Jersey, a federal judge ruled that barring the homeless from libraries because they loiter or have body odor violates their First Amendment rights. "If we wish to shield our eyes and noses from the homeless," the judge observed, "we should revoke

their condition, not their library cards."

Avoid being born with silver spoon in mouth? — We had read that it's dangerous to use expensive leaded glasses and decanters because they leach lead. Now we learn you should also avoid lead crystal baby bottles.

Good question — In Atlanta, it was discovered that cops had been given a master key to Techwood, a public housing project, supposedly to check vacant apartments. Tenants charge cops have used copies of the key to illegally enter people's homes. An American Civil Liberties Union spokesperson suggested asking the police chief if he would

want his cops to have keys to his home.

They got nerve — Century 21, a California-based real estate chain, dumped the gold blazers sported by company agents and decided to ship the 80,000 jackets to the needy in Soviet Armenia. But the company is having problems with the "impenetrable" Soviet bureaucracy. Like, they want the blazers dry-cleaned first.

Possibly, possibly — U.S. business failures jumped 58 percent in April over the same month last year. Every major industry, and all but six states, reported bankruptcy increases. Dunn & Bradstreet saw this as evidence that the recession is continuing.

Monfort Pork lays off 900 in contract dispute

BY TED LEONARD

ST. JOSEPH, Missouri — Two days after the expiration of the contract between Monfort Pork and United Food and Commercial Workers Local P58, the company announced it was laying off all 900 of its production and maintenance employees here indefinitely.

Monfort, a subsidiary of ConAgra, one of the three largest meat-packing companies in the country, cited "economic reasons" for the layoffs.

Prior to May 12 the company and union had been holding contract negotiations. Monfort was demanding workers agree to a wage freeze and to pay \$2 a day toward their family health care insurance. If the union had agreed to the proposal, it would have meant a reduction in take-home pay of 35 cents an hour.

Pointing to lower wages at IBP, another of the big three packinghouse chains, Gene Meakins, Monfort's vice-president of public relations, told the *St. Joseph News-Press/Gazette* that the wage freeze should be kept in place until Monfort's competitors reach the same wage level.

"We've been paying more for live hogs than we've been getting back from the sales of our products. It's gone on for some time," Meakins told the *News-Press/Gazette*. "The plant has consistently lost money month after month for three years. It's been a blood bath. We are losing money on every hog we kill. It had to be stopped."

Meakins denied that the layoff announcement was a lockout, had anything to do with contract negotiations, or with rumors of an impending strike.

"We could have done this before the contract expired. We are not doing anything differently than we would have done," Meakins claimed.

"The employees at Monfort have been expected to endure poor working conditions, such as extreme heat and cold, long hours, crippling carpal tunnel syndrome and other serious injuries and disabilities," 137 workers wrote in a letter to the *News-Press/Gazette*. "The danger risk is high and the wages are low compared to other major corporations in the area."

The workers wrote that they "believe the company has not lost money. In fact much money has been spent on construction and remodeling within the plant. Where has this money come from? Why is this renovation even necessary for a company who is losing so much money they can't even keep their doors open?"

The workers concluded: "We need your support. We must all join together to stop corporations such as Monfort/ConAgra from destroying our community."

Gary Grubb, president of UFCW Local P58, explained to the *News-Press/Gazette* that he had never heard the company claim it was losing money until an April 24 contract negotiation session. At that point Meakins said the company had lost \$13.5 million in the last 22 months, Grubb said. At a later meeting Meakins upped the figure to \$22 million in the last three years, Grubb added.

Monfort Pork has slaughtering plants like the one in St. Joseph in Worthington, Minnesota; Marshalltown, Iowa; and Louisville, Kentucky. Monfort purchased the Louisville facility from the John Morrell packing company within the last 60 days.

"If the market is so bad, why would Monfort have recently bought the Louisville plant where they pay \$8.75 an hour?" Grubb pointed out to the newspaper.

UFCW Local P58 member Joe Earhart



Meat-packers at work. Monfort Pork demanded union agree to wage freeze prior to shutdown.

said in an interview that he did not believe the company's claims of poverty. "Just recently the company gave a reward to workers in the ham boning department for setting a U.S. record for production in a 8-hour shift," Earhart said.

"It's not true that this has nothing to do with the contract," one Black worker said. "I've been working here for seven years. I can't see taking a wage freeze for three years — I'll be making the same amount of money after all those years."

Brian Gilley, another union member, said, "They'll change the name of the place, bust

the union, and we'll have to start over."

Monfort and the UFCW originally agreed to negotiate the contracts for the St. Joseph plant and the Worthington, Minnesota, facility at the same time. The Worthington plant contract expires June 23. Also observing the contract negotiations was the president of the UFCW Local at the Marshalltown, Iowa, plant. The Iowa contract does not expire until the end of 1992.

Ted Leonard is a member of UFCW Local 50N at Monfort's pork production plant in Marshalltown, Iowa.

Striking miners seek support

BY SHEILA OSTROW

CRAIG, Colorado — On May 13 at 12:01 a.m., picket lines organized by United Mine Workers Local 1799 went up at the Cyprus Empire mine here. The union has declared an unfair labor practice strike.

In a leaflet put out to nonunion Cyprus miners in the Craig area, the union explains: "During contract negotiations, the company unlawfully declared impasse; they packed up their books and walked away from the table after only 11 meetings before the issues were fully addressed." The company's "last best offer" came two days before the expiration of the contract.

The offer seeks to replace the 100 percent medical and dental plan the union has had with a plan requiring workers to pay 20 percent of the costs. According to a company spokesperson, the plan has maximum out-of-pocket expenses per individual of \$500, or \$2,000 for a family of four or more. At other Cyprus nonunion mines, the deductibles have periodically gone up. In addition, the company wants to impose a new attendance program which would drastically reduce paid time off.

The local has been organizing its members since last summer into a "Mobilization Team." They organized mine-gate rallies, wearing UMWA sweatshirts and T-shirts and took collections for UMWA members locked in a continuing fight at the Decker and Big Horn mines in Montana and Wyoming. Sev-

eral weeks prior to the contract expiration, the Mobilization Team leafletted the Cyprus stockholders meeting in Denver.

The *Northwest Colorado Daily Press*, the local daily, reported that a caravan of vehicles paraded in front of a mine superintendent's house May 13, signalling the start of the strike. A letter authorizing the strike from UMWA International President Richard Trumka was presented to the superintendent.

The local has put out a newsletter, *Hard Times*. The union has also put out a leaflet on the strike, taking up the company's argument that it wants to bring Empire workers' coverage in line with that of its nonunion mines (which already have the 80-20 plan).

"As for Cyprus' other mine workers, the union agrees that there is a disparity between their health-care coverage and the UMWA members' coverage," the leaflet says. "If the company feels this is unfair, the union will be glad to bargain for those workers as well. But the UMWA does not believe that the lowest-common-denominator approach is any more fair. In fact, that type of 'solution' is nothing more than an assault on the living standards of all Cyprus employees and their communities."

Posters supporting the strike are up in the windows of many of the stores in Craig. Miners from the Peabody Seneca Mine in Hayden, Colorado, stopped by the picket to show their support.

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—



FRANKFURT, West Germany — An unexpected number of students — some 2,200 — turned out for a conference on Vietnam organized by the Socialist Students of Germany at Frankfurt University, May 22.

The conference was followed by a march through Frankfurt in which about 4,000 participated. At a subsequent open-air meeting, the crowd was estimated at 6,000.

The conference, the march, and the meeting were all militant in character, openly defending the social revolution in Vietnam and demanding the withdrawal of American troops.

A huge banner was carried by eleven people: "No German participation in genocide" and "Amis [Yanks] out of Vietnam."

Groups of Iraqi, Iranian, Greek and other foreign students participated in the march, despite the fact that the secret political police of their respective countries is keeping them under close surveillance, in collaboration with their German counterparts.



June 14, 1941

The right to strike — the sacred right which was won by struggles of millions of workers over a period of decades, by struggles in which thousands of workers gave their lives — has been taken away. On Mon-

day that right was taken away by force of arms from the United Automobile Workers at the North American Aviation plant.

A precedent has been set by the use of the Army against the North American Aviation strikers. From now on the employers will sit back and stall on the legitimate demands of the workers.

In his "fireside chat" of May 27th, [President Franklin] Roosevelt called upon "both" employers and workers not to interfere with "national defense" by stopping production. In a tone of impartiality he cautioned both labor and capital.

But against whom was the army called out? The army was called out against the workers. The plant was temporarily taken over to break their strike. The employing corporation gleefully welcomed the army.

All Roosevelt's pressure, all his force, were used against the strikers. Roosevelt did not exert any pressure nor any force, nor did he use the Army, against the bosses. This is the naked fact and it cannot be contradicted by the apologists for Roosevelt.

These apologists will eagerly seize tomorrow upon some minor action of Roosevelt and offer it to the workers as proof that Roosevelt is after all a "friend of labor."

Roosevelt would never have dared send the Army against the strikers if the strikers had been supported by the top leadership of the trade union movement. A labor leader who approves the use of the army to break a strike — he is a traitor to his class. And that is what these leaders have done.

The bosses carry on the class struggle in the factories with redoubled intensity when the labor leaders declare a no-strike policy. They seize upon that to grind the workers down. The workers must inevitably resist, whether the labor leaders agree or not.

Imperial demands on Cuba

With imperial arrogance, U.S. President George Bush has warned Cuba that unless it holds elections, "under international supervision," Cuba-U.S. relations cannot be expected to improve. Bush branded Cuban President Fidel Castro the "hemisphere's last dictator" in a broadcast to Cuba May 20.

Since the Cuban people threw out the U.S.-backed dictator Batista in a massive popular struggle in 1959, they have strived to establish their national sovereignty and conduct relations with other nations based on mutual respect and equality.

Responsibility for poor Cuba-U.S. relations rests entirely with Washington, which, with bipartisan backing:

- Has maintained a blockade of Cuba for three decades, including restricting the right of U.S. citizens to visit Cuba and judge it for themselves;
- Tightened this embargo as recently as October 1990;
- Maintains a U.S. naval base on Cuban soil at Guantánamo, in defiance of Cuba's wishes;
- Carries out regular practice invasions of Cuba and other provocations, including radio and television propaganda programs beamed on Cuba's domestic broadcast bands in defiance of international law.

Bush postures as if "good relations" depend on whether reforms are carried out in Cuba and elections as specified by him are held there. This stands in marked contrast with Washington's attitude towards other governments in the region and beyond.

Washington, in fact, has more than once helped organize the overthrow of elected governments in Latin America and their replacement by brutal military regimes, notably in Chile in 1973 and Guatemala in 1954. It carried out a contra war against the Nicaraguan people in the 1980s and invaded both Grenada and Panama.

What Bush and the U.S. ruling class consider "normal"

relations between U.S. imperialism and semicolonial countries is economic and political domination by Washington. This relationship has brought upon tens of millions of working people wars, economic devastation, and denial of full national sovereignty.

Despite the hostile measures against them, the Cuban people have refused to bow to Washington's dictates. They have not only sacrificed to develop their country and take it out of the hands of imperialist domination, but send volunteer doctors, teachers, soldiers, and others to aid those fighting for national liberation around the world as well.

Cuba also refused to bend its knee and voice support for Washington's bloody Middle East slaughter. At times Cuba was a lone voice in the United Nations challenging Washington's Mideast war.

Working people and unionists in the United States in particular should call on Washington to end its criminal embargo. This is doubly necessary because of the economic hardships the Cuban people face today in the "special period in peacetime" that has brought major shortages of key items, such as oil.

Only the ruling rich have an interest in maintaining the embargo, travel restrictions, and military pressure against Cuba.

Working people have an interest in extending solidarity to fellow toilers in Cuba and establishing the best relations possible with that revolutionary country.

Recent tours by unionists, both to Cuba from the United States and from Cuba to the United States, have helped show how much workers in both countries have in common — including a common enemy, Washington and the employing class it represents.

End the blockade and provocations against Cuba!

Stop cop abuse of Rodney King

The Los Angeles Police Department is making a second attempt to lynch Rodney King. As when they beat him nearly to death, this assault is in full public view — this time purposely so.

The police harassment of King, the threat of revoking his parole, and the nearly unanimous decision by the Los Angeles city administration to keep Gates as the cops' commander signals that ruling-class forces in the city are on a counter offensive.

Working people and those opposed to police abuse should defend King and answer these attacks.

Far from exonerating the cops, the internal police report on the King beating has revealed to an even greater extent the racist anti-working class nature of the police force.

The beating of King was not an exception, but a routine event for the LAPD as well as for other police departments across the country.

Numerous victims of police abuse have since stood up and spoken out about other times when the cops turned their clubs, electric prods, and guns against working people. In the wake of the television broadcast of the cop assault on

King, they provide eloquent testimony to the fact that the police have nothing to do with justice.

Police are not neutral enforcers of "law and order." Their random violence, meted out on a daily basis, seeks to enforce passivity amongst working people. Their violence, more often than not, is as arbitrary as it is brutal. King's only crime was to be in the wrong place at the wrong time.

The open harassment of King is a calculated warning to those who would demonstrate and speak out against police abuse. The message is: "Sit down and shut up or the same thing will happen to you." By smearing the victims of their brutality the cops and the ruling-class figures behind them hope to recoup the image of the LAPD. Any future victims will also know that they too risk being turned into criminals in the media if they protest cop violence.

Working people and all those opposed to police abuse should rally to the defense of Rodney King. The best way to press the fight for Gates' ouster is to continue public mobilizations in the streets — reaching out to and involving broader layers in the fight.

Labor's stake in defending quotas

Continued from front page
enforced by quotas?

As long as the employers can deny jobs to some workers because we are Black, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Asian, American Indian, foreign-born, or female, they can keep our class divided and weaken our ability to protect the jobs, wages, and working conditions of all workers.

Racial and sexual discrimination is institutionalized in capitalist society. Moreover, the very way that capitalism operates day in and day out constantly reproduces and thus reinforces these inequalities, to the benefit of the employers. Left to their own devices, the capitalists will never enforce measures to insure equality in the job market and in the workplace. They will back every discriminatory practice inside the labor movement itself.

The labor movement can combat the inequality that the bosses use to divide and weaken our class only by demanding such mandatory quotas. Under capitalism, "voluntary affirmative action" is a contradiction in terms.

Special measures are also needed to overcome sex divisions in the working class. Most importantly, we need to fight to tear down the employment barriers of sex segregation that block women from the only jobs that can raise the value of their labor power over time and close the income gap with men.

We must demand quotas for hiring women into industrial jobs, as well as preferential training and upgrading in the workplace. Only in this way can women's powerful numbers be brought into the industrial unions. Only in this way will the average pay of working women begin to be raised, boosting the wage level for the entire working class.

Affirmative action measures are especially needed to defend the unity of the working class when large-scale layoffs begin. Otherwise workers hired through affirmative action programs are more likely to be laid off than other workers, deepening divisions in the working class at the very moment

when our unity and thus fighting capacity is most needed.

To counter this sapping of labor's strength, the unions must wage a fight to structure the seniority system in such a way that when layoffs hit, the percentage of workers who are Black, Latino, and female does not decline. Past gains in hiring and upgrading must not be permitted to erode during recessions. Otherwise, every step toward equality will turn out to be a cruel illusion.

The recent round of Supreme Court rulings undermining civil liberties and abortion rights and the bipartisan congressional effort to harpoon affirmative action quotas are part and parcel of the overall employer offensive against the unions and standard of living of working people.

It is an offensive being carried out against working people and toilers worldwide, above all shown by the recent brutal U.S. imperialist war and ongoing embargo against the Iraqi people. The rulers view all working people as less than human, and what they are capable of doing abroad is simply an extension of what they are driving on here at home. The rulers do not have one standard of conduct in Iraq and another one in the United States.

The U.S. rulers are not completely united in how best to drive against these hard won rights of working people. Some fear the response to the assaults could be more politically costly than any progress made in dividing and weakening the labor movement.

The labor movement and its allies have the organization, potential power, and numbers to rebuff this assault against affirmative action, as well as other rights under attack by the government, and the courts.

Moreover, such a course that can draw working people together, based upon a recognition that our common interests are the opposite of those of the employers and their government, would strengthen the kind of organization and unity of the working class needed in the future battles with the employers.

Is there to be a Star Chamber in the White House?

BY DOUG JENNESS

As opposition mounted in the early 1600s against monarchical rule in Britain, James I and Charles I used the Court of Star Chamber to harass and repress political dissidents.

Set up in the 15th century, this institution was not bound by common law but drew its authority from the sovereign power and privileges of the monarchy, which over time declared its divine right to rule. The court, which met in a room decorated with stars — thus its name — was made up of judges and prosecutors from the king's royal council. It dispensed with juries both for indictments and verdicts and could haul a "suspect" in for interrogation simply upon the complaint of an individual. The court had arbitrary power that was governed by no law in meting out penalties — including imprisonment, the pillory, whipping, branding, and mutilation.

LEARNING ABOUT SOCIALISM

The Star Chamber was widely used against opponents of the king's absolute power, many of whom expressed their opposition in the form of religious dissent. Moreover, any action that could be construed as a breach of peace was a target of this instrument of repressive rule.

It is no wonder then that when the momentous social and political revolution against monarchical rule and feudal privileges began in 1640 one of the first acts of parliament was to abolish the Star Chamber court.

Today, President George Bush proposes that his own version of the Star Chamber be established in proceedings against immigrants living in the United States. Under his new crime bill, presented to Congress on March 11, the government could refuse to publicly reveal any evidence it deems confidential and that it seeks to use to deport a citizen from another country who is allegedly involved in "terrorist activity." This evidence cannot only be kept from the public but hidden from the accused themselves, thereby depriving them of any chance to defend themselves.

If this secrecy provision is adopted it would undermine the right of everyone in this country to a public trial. This right was won in struggle by working people and is incorporated in the Sixth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

The Bush administration hopes by targeting noncitizen residents or visitors and raising the bogeyman of "terrorism" that it can soften more people up to accepting this assault on democratic rights.

Moreover, the interpretation of "terrorism" by police agencies is very wide and is used selectively against those holding views the government finds undesirable. A case in point is the four-and-one-half year drive to deport seven Palestinians and one Kenyan, living in Los Angeles, because of their alleged membership in the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and raising funds for it. The PLFP is an affiliate to the Palestine Liberation Organization.

If Bush gets his way, the Immigration and Naturalization Service could hustle the Los Angeles Eight, as they have come to be known, out of the country without ever revealing what, if anything, there is to the "terrorist" charges. Like in the Star Chamber court, this approach is based on arbitrary authority rather than due process of the law.

This issue was also posed during the legal proceedings the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance brought against the FBI, INS, and other federal police agencies between 1973 and 1987. On the eve of the 1981 trial of the socialists' lawsuit against FBI spying and disruption, FBI agent Charles Mandigo submitted an affidavit listing the alleged illegal activities by SWP leaders that necessitated secret police surveillance.

Some of the evidence, Mandigo claimed, was classified and could not be mentioned in public. This deprived the SWP from openly answering this "evidence" publicly in court and in front of the working class. A big part of the government's intent was to cast a shadow over the SWP, creating the impression that there were skeletons in its closet.

Government lawyers did offer to reveal their secret evidence "in camera," that is privately, to Judge Thomas Griesa. Griesa at first refused, but was convinced by SWP attorneys to look at the affidavit. The SWP was confident that it could refute any scrap of evidence the FBI dredged up, if indeed, it had anything at all. Nothing was ever heard of this secret affidavit again.

Griesa ruled in favor of the SWP on the basis of the totality of evidence presented at the trial, including the Mandigo affidavit. "In the case of the SWP . . ." he ruled, "there is no evidence that any FBI informant ever reported an instance of planned or actual espionage, violence, terrorism, or efforts to subvert the governmental structure of the United States."

The attorney general's office did not get away with using concealed evidence in the SWP case, but that is precisely what the White House wants to make legal in its new crime bill. It would behead the Bill of Rights and restore King Charles I.

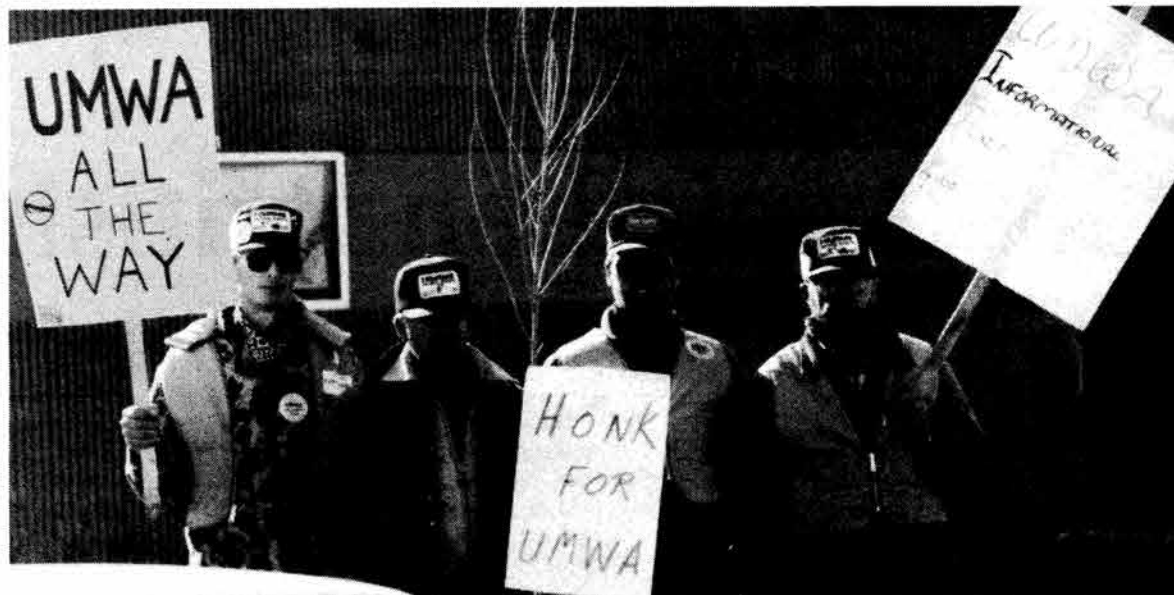
Decker miners win solidarity in Salt Lake City

This column is dedicated to reporting the resistance by working people to the employers' assault on their living standards, working conditions, and the unions.

Working people around the world are involved in skirmishes over speedup, forced overtime, layoffs, or attacks on health and safety benefits. Some unionists faced with steep takeback de-

ation of Machinists (IAM), United Steelworkers of America (USWA), Communication Workers of America, the building trades, teachers, and many other unions. It also included a contingent of USWA members from the FMC Trona mine near Rock Springs, Wyoming, who just concluded a strike last week.

While in Salt Lake City, the Decker miners spoke to member-



Militant/Steve Warshell

Decker miners' 1987 informational picket at Kiewit corporate headquarters in Sheridan, Wyoming. Kiewit is part owner of Decker mine.

ON THE PICKET LINE

mands, lockouts, and union-busting moves by the employers have gone on strike to force the bosses to back down.

We invite you to contribute short items to this column as a way for other fighting workers around the world to read about and learn from these important struggles. Jot down a few lines to let other *Militant* readers know about what is happening at your workplace or in your union. If there is an interesting political discussion going on at work, we would like to hear about that, too.

Fifteen members of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) from the Decker mine in Montana, along with dozens of union members from Salt Lake City and Price, Utah, picketed the May 15 PacifiCorp Annual Shareholders Meeting in Salt Lake City.

The miners went on strike in October of 1987, against union-busting concession demands of the mine's owners. About 80 miners have since returned to work after a Labor Board ruling in favor of the union, but the company has stalled on recalling another 152 miners.

NERCO, a subsidiary of PacifiCorp, has joint ownership of the Decker mine together with Peter Kiewit Sons' Inc. construction company. A leaflet distributed by the miners demanded, "PacifiCorp's executives should stop allowing the company to be led by the nose by Peter Kiewit Sons' and force a settlement" to the dispute.

In addition to the striking miners, the picketline of 150 included UMWA District 22 officials and rank-and-file miners from Price, Utah; Ed Mayne, President of the Utah AFL-CIO; members and officials from the International Associ-

ation of Machinists (IAM) Local 568, USWA Local 8319, and Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 2-578.

Members of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) who work for BethEnergy Mines in West Virginia and Pennsylvania have been attending strike training school. They are responding to BethEnergy's attempt to transfer its coal reserves to nonunion subsidiaries.

BethEnergy is owned by Bethlehem Steel Corporation, the third largest steel producer in the United States. Over 1,000 UMWA members work at six BethEnergy mines in West Virginia and Pennsylvania.

In 1987, BethEnergy signed an interim agreement with the UMWA, pledging to abide by the terms of the Bituminous Coal Operators Association contract which was negotiated that year. The agreement recognized miners' panel rights. Panel rights guarantee that laid-off union miners will be offered jobs at other Bethlehem mines before the corporation can hire new employees.

However, the agreement did not cover Bethlehem's coal reserves. Last year, Bethlehem began transferring ownership of its reserves to three holding companies: PennAcres in Pennsylvania, PrimeAcres in West Virginia, and KenAcres in Kentucky. In turn, the holding companies began selling the reserves to nonunion operators. The UMWA claims these are "dummy" corporations which are actually controlled by Bethlehem.

In the meantime, BethEnergy began laying off hundreds of union miners.

"It's a paper shuffle," one BethEnergy miner said in an interview.

"They are trying to get rid of the union."

The UMWA recently beat back a similar attempt to go nonunion by Arch Minerals.

The UMWA has said it may strike the company June 24 if its demands are not met.

About thirty Fieldcrest Cannon textile workers went to a stockholders' meeting in Greensboro, North Carolina, April 30 to protest the company's pension cuts and refusal to grant a wage increase. Workers involved in the protest are members of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union employed by Fieldcrest Cannon at textile mills in Eden, North Carolina; Fieldale, Virginia; and Columbus, Georgia.

When Fieldcrest Mills bought Cannon Mills in the 1980s, workers retained separate Fieldcrest and Cannon pension plans. Now Cannon claims its pension plan is broke, and a bankruptcy court has ordered a 30 percent cut in the pensions Cannon retirees are receiving. Fieldcrest Cannon is refusing to do anything to guarantee the pensions, saying it's not their responsibility.

The April 30 protest was important because the workers at former Cannon Mills plants are nonunion; only the former Fieldcrest Mills are organized. Therefore, the protest was in solidarity with the nonunion brothers and sisters.

The protest also stems from the fact that the company is a year and a half behind in giving workers a scheduled pay raise. In previous years, when the company was making a profit, it told the union it would give small pay raises — so it could still give a pay raise when times got tough. They now claim that workers have shown no indication that they want a pay raise.

After picketing at the entrance to the Fieldcrest Cannon headquarters as the stockholders drove in, the workers tried to enter the meeting and raise their concerns. The union had proxy cards for fourteen workers.

Company security, however, refused to let any workers in. The workers then pushed through the door and into the building. Even then, only three were admitted into the meeting, and they were not able to speak.

After the meeting, Fieldcrest Cannon CEO Jim Fitzgibbons came out and spoke to the workers, but this discussion produced no concrete results.

The protest was a good opportunity for ACTWU members from different Fieldcrest Cannon mills to meet and get to know each other. It also generated discussions in the mills about how to fight and win against the company.

Some 170 production and warehouse workers struck the Rainier Brewing Co. in Seattle May 23 after

the company refused to meet their demands for a wage increase. The workers are organized in Teamsters Locals 117 and 174.

Strikers are picketing the brewery around the clock and report that production has been totally halted. A few truckloads of already-bottled beer have been moved out by management personnel.

Rainier is owned by Wisconsin-based G. Heileman Brewing, which is now in bankruptcy proceedings.

"We voted to accept a wage freeze in the last two contracts to help the company," one striker said while on picket duty. "They said we'd get paid back in a couple of years, but now they're not offering anything. We haven't had a wage increase in six years and we can't take it anymore."

The pickets waved enthusiastically to the many drivers of trucks and cars who blew their horns in support as they drove down the busy street in front of the brewery.

"I'm glad we walked out," another striker said. "It's the first time in 113 years there's been a strike here, and I don't think the company expected it. But we're showing them that this is a union town."

Bill Arth from Salt Lake City; Clare Fraenzl from Morgantown, West Virginia; Naomi Craine and Tony Prince, members of ACTWU Local 385T in Eden, North Carolina; and Harvey McArthur from Seattle contributed to this week's column.

LETTERS

Marine Corps Brig

We are writing this letter out of grave concern for all of the Conscientious Objectors at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, Marine Base. We are concerned about their basic freedoms as Americans and their right to humane treatment and dignity. We are not expecting preferential treatment. However, we are seeking FAIR and EQUITABLE RIGHTS OF THE DUE PROCESS OF THE LAW.

Our son, James E. Summers, Jr., and our "adopted" son, Dometrio Perez, surrendered themselves voluntarily to their Marine Reserve Unit on December 26, 1990. They were claiming their right to file for Conscientious Objector status. Since that time, they have been subjected to incessant harassment, degradation and humiliation.

The C.O. hearings have been scheduled three times and all have been postponed at the last minute. This is a tremendous emotional and financial burden to the families involved. They travel great distances from all over the U.S. and then have to leave with nothing accomplished. This seems to be a part of the general harassment.

As far as we know, NOT ONE

C.O. application has been approved by the Marine Corps as yet. However, other branches of the service have expeditiously discharge their C.O.'s. Thus far, the Marines have proven to be unduly harsh and cruel in comparison.

The most blatant and severe example of this mistreatment took place on March 8, 1991. Our son, L/CPL J.E. Summers, was illegally and violently placed in the Marine Corps brig. He was not informed as to WHY or WHAT the charges were. He was not permitted to call his attorney or his family. He was forced to sign a paper stating that he WAS given all his legal rights. He was then placed in ISOLATION, in a MAXIMUM SECURITY CELL. The cell had no windows. He was never allowed out except for five minutes per day to shower. He was placed in LEG-IRON SHACKLES and handcuffed. Exercise was forbidden and punishable in the cell.

He was instructed to sit at "attention" in a chair from 5:30 a.m. until 9:00 p.m. When we saw him in the brig, his arms were chained down to his sides. They said he was a SECURITY THREAT because of a RUMOR that he MIGHT GO AWOL (Absent without Leave). Im-

mediately his lawyers called for a special magistrate hearing. After six days and nights in solitary, he was determined to be UNNECESSARILY AND ILLEGALLY CONFINED.

Please try to shed some light on this darkness. Why should these honorable young men have a FELONY charge? Because their consciences would not allow them to participate in WAR?

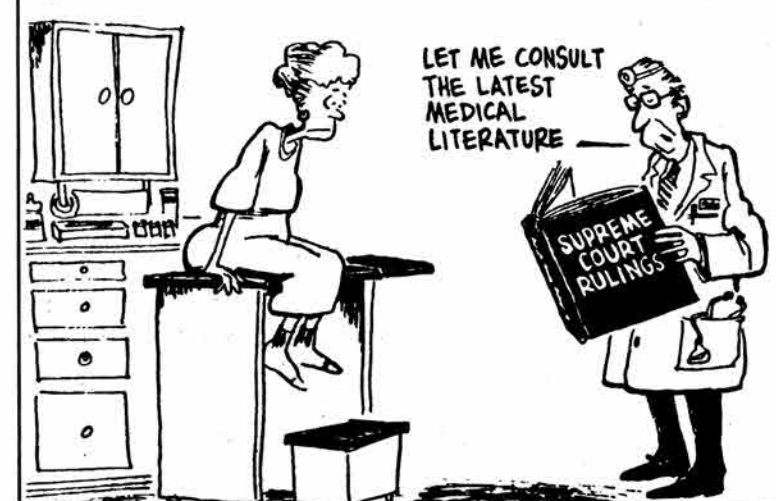
J.E. Summers Sr.
B. Summers

Strikes in Spain

It was a welcome feeling of déjà vu. On May 20, while walking through the international airport in Madrid, I suddenly was participating in a strike "walk-through" of 1,500 workers. It looked remarkably like the walk-throughs during the strike at Eastern Airlines in the U.S. The workers were some of the 20,000 employees of the state-owned airline of Spain, Iberia. This was the first day of their 3-day strike.

On May 24, they would go back on strike, joining other striking workers from the national phone company, passenger rail service, gasoline distribution, and others. All were to rally in a massive labor

AT THE FAMILY PLANNING CLINIC...



Wasserman

demonstration in Madrid.

In a bustling strike center in the terminal, adorned with posters against the Arab-Persian Gulf war, Fernando Ruiz González, a union leader, explained the strike to me. In contract negotiations, the unions had demanded a 9 percent increase. Citing weak tourism and higher fuel costs as a result of the imperialist war against Iraq, which the Spanish government of Felipe González supported and sent troops to, Iberia airlines has proposed a wage freeze.

They say they will grant a wage increase only in exchange for reductions in benefits and a relaxation in contract work rules.

Marty Anderson
Brooklyn, New York

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

Gov't spied on British miners' union

June 17 hearing aims to discredit NUM leaders; unionists plan protest

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON — British and U.S. secret services used a European-wide computerized phone tapping system to spy on the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) during the coal miners strike here in 1984-85. The spying continued for some years afterward.

This is the conclusion of a major investigation carried out by the *Guardian* newspaper, a London-based daily, in cooperation with Channel 4 television's "Dispatches" program. Articles that arose out of the investigation were published in the May 22 issue of the newspaper and televised on the "Dispatches" program the same evening.

According to the *Guardian*, spying facilities set up during the Cold War were used to monitor international banking transactions of the NUM throughout Europe. The U.S. National Security Agency (NSA) and Britain's General Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) based at the Cheltenham spy station jointly conducted the surveillance. NSA listening posts in Europe and a British listening post in Cornwall monitored the transactions.

During the Watergate revelations in the United States in the 1970s, the NSA and the Cornwall station were exposed for monitoring telephone calls of U.S. civil rights and anti-Vietnam War activists while they were on a European tour. Both the NSA and the GCHQ were subsequently prohibited from operations against domestic targets.

The use of the British secret services against the NUM comes as little surprise to miners here. In the course of their 1984-85 strike against pit closures and job loss, miners faced government seizure of their union's assets, police occupation of mining villages, mass picket line arrests, and a daily media barrage attacking the strike.

The NUM set up a series of protected bank accounts to shield strike support money from being seized by the police or the courts after the union apparatus was placed in the hands of a government-appointed receiver.

The revelation that foreign governments so feared the power and example of the miners strike that their agencies collaborated with British cops against the miners union is new. It shows the lengths they were willing to go to try to shut the union down during the strike. It also sheds light on the origins of the smear campaign against the NUM and its central leaders, Arthur Scargill and Peter Heathfield, who were falsely accused of missing funds.

'Get Scargill' operation

A May 22 article in the *Guardian* notes that, given the prohibition on domestic spying by the GCHQ, the "Get Scargill" operation would therefore have been illegal unless authorized by Mrs. Thatcher in the belief that national security was involved.

"It is known," the article continues, "that GCHQ gave technical advice on how to monitor the NUM's communications during the strike. . . . Banks involved in the complex issue of NUM attempts to avoid sequestration [of funds] have expressed surprise at the speed at which officials chasing the money appeared to have obtained details of accounts."

According to the paper the snoop operation used satellite telephone taps and computers that picked up on key words to identify telephone calls and transactions of the miners union.

Upcoming court hearing

Scargill, Heathfield, and the rest of the union's executive body will be in court June 17 facing charges related to this period: failing to submit proper accounts for 1984 as demanded by the 1974 Trade Union and Labour Relations Act.

The court action is the latest in a campaign by the government, the Labour Party leadership, and the media to unseat Scargill and Heathfield and discredit the class-struggle methods used by the miners during their



Miners' support march during 1984-85 coal strike against pit closures. New revelations expose U.S. and British electronic surveillance against strike.

hard-fought battle of 1984-85.

Maureen Stubbings, national secretary of Women Against Pit Closures, said the June 17 hearing will be met by a protest lobby of miners and supporters outside the Sheffield

Magistrates Court. Publicity for the protest has been circulated through miners union branches in Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, Lancashire, Durham, and Staffordshire.

"Let's show the witch-hunters where we

stand," Stubbings said, encouraging attendance at the protest.

The witch-hunt against the NUM, Scargill, and Heathfield was launched in March 1990 by press baron Robert Maxwell. The *Daily Mirror*, Maxwell's paper, carried articles alleging that Scargill and Heathfield used monies donated to striking miners for their own personal benefit.

These original charges against the NUM leaders were quickly pushed back, but the union's opponents then seized on the findings of a union-commissioned report by lawyer Gavin Lightman to continue the smear operation.

Lightman's report cleared Scargill and Heathfield of the original charges of misappropriation of funds, but claimed that the NUM leaders were nonetheless guilty of shady financial practices.

Lightman centered his charges on the decision by the union's national officers to establish some 17 different bank accounts in a number of countries, and to move money through them to stop the government from seizing the strike funds. Lightman further suggested that Scargill and Heathfield diverted money given to the NUM by miners in the Soviet Union into what was effectively a bogus fund of the International Miners Organisation.

Scargill is president of the IMO. "The im-

Continued on Page 10

Los Angeles cops, city officials open drive to harass, smear Rodney King

BY JAMES HARRIS

LOS ANGELES — The city government, courts, and Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) are conducting a campaign of harassment and vilification against Rodney King, the Black construction worker nearly beaten to death by the cops March 3.

These forces are working to reaffirm the "right" of the cops to act with impunity on the streets; to prevent the ouster of the cops' commander, Police Chief Daryl Gates; and to justify the brutalizing of King.

Twenty-seven police officers were caught on videotape participating in the savage beating in which King was clubbed and kicked 56 times.

The televised example of the routine cop violence against working people fueled widespread demands for the removal of Gates and the prosecution of all the officers involved. Gates has thus far refused to resign — with the backing of the city council, Mayor Thomas Bradley, and other prominent officeholders. Indictments have been made against only four of the officers involved.

Since his release from the hospital, King has been detained twice by the LAPD. In the first incident he was stopped for an alleged traffic violation. No charges were filed.

On May 28 King was arrested and held for seven hours in an incident played up in the national media. Two undercover cops said they approached his car in an alley after he solicited a prostitute. King then tried to run the two plainclothes officers down with his car, they claimed, injuring one policeman's leg.

At first, the police said King was stopped by a patrol car as he was speeding away from the scene. But King explained he thought the plainclothes cops were robbers and that he flagged down the patrol car moments after the incident. The cops later admitted King hailed their car. Again, no charges were filed.

Responding to questions as to whether the police are singling King out for harassment Commander Rick Dinse said, "I can tell you right now that we are definitely not doing that. There are not enough police officers or

time or interest in following Mr. King or anybody." Dinse is in charge of the internal police investigation of the March 3 beating.

State prison officials said they were considering revoking King's parole as a result of the cop allegations. State Department of Corrections officials say only a "preponderance of evidence" is needed to end King's parole.

Internal cop report

The cops are also on a campaign to slander King as a violent person who uses drugs.

In a recently released 314-page LAPD Internal Affairs report, this is taken to a ludicrous extreme.

The report states that Sgt. Stacey Koon, one of the four cops indicted for the King beating, "was very concerned for his safety, the officers' safety and the community's safety [during the beating]. King posed an immediate danger since he appeared to be under the influence of PCP and was not complying with . . . orders to stop and lie down."

King "had a blank stare, like he was spaced out, and he looked right through Koon, with a glazed look in his eyes," the report says.

Recalling stories of extraordinary "strength exhibited by PCP suspects. . . . Koon felt King's size and his PCP intoxication made him a far greater threat because King could, in a moment, turn into the 'Hulk.'" The Hulk is a television character who, when angered in a human state, becomes transformed into a not-so-human creature with enormous physical strength.

The internal report contains testimony not only from the cops who beat King, but also from other cops, hospital personnel, and civilian witnesses. Some parts provide vivid testimony on the brutality of the police that night. The report was obtained by *Los Angeles Times* reporter Richard Serrano and was published in part in the May 21 *Times*.

Lawyers defending the four indicted cops claim that the rights of their clients have been violated by media coverage, including the release of the internal report. They are at-

tempting to use this to change the location of the trial to a site outside the city. While not changing the trial's location, the district attorney's office did give this line of argument some credence by warning the prosecutors assigned to the case not to read the report.

In another move to keep the results of the report under wraps, Judge Bernard Kamins slapped a \$1,500-a-day fine on reporter Serrano until he releases the name of the person who gave him the report. Serrano must appear in Kamins' court every morning, where he is asked to reveal his source. So far, Serrano has refused to answer.

Kamins fined Serrano despite a California law protecting reporters from contempt of court citations for not revealing their sources. To get around the law Kamins said he did not find Serrano guilty of contempt. The fine, according to the judge, is a sanction against Serrano for failing to tell who violated his court order that the cop report remain secret. (The judge dropped the daily fine May 31 and gave Serrano until June 10 to appeal.)

'Like they were having a party'

The report cites testimony from Eloise Camp, a civilian witness to the beating: "The circle around King seemed to open and Camp then saw that King was lying very still on his face on the ground. He was 'hog-tied' with his hands behind him and his feet tied up in the air. Camp thought they had killed him since he was not moving then. She remembered shouting to the others she was with, 'Oh my God, they killed him!'"

"The ambulance arrived and the officers were looking like they were having a party," the report says. They were grinning and smiling at each other. "They dragged King face-down by the ropes and his feet were tied. She could see King's face touching the ground and the blood on it."

Bryant Allen, a passenger in King's car that night, was being handcuffed while King was beaten. Unable to see what was happening, Allen nevertheless heard the assault.

Continued on Page 12