

THE MILITANT

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Zoë Baird affair
keeps repeating itself

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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Clinton plans attack on Social Security

BY PAUL MAILHOT

Social Security has moved to the center of the chopping block as President Bill Clinton's calls for "shared sacrifice" begin to take shape. The new White House administration is preparing to unveil its overall economic plan on February 17 and Clinton is giving fair warning that working people should expect budget cuts and tax increases in order to reduce the budget deficit. While there are some disagreements among Democratic and Republican politicians over how to cut social programs for retired workers, all agree that it should be done.

See editorial, page 14

"The Clinton Administration is headed in the right direction," commented a *New York Times* editorial. "No deficit-reduction package will sell politically unless it distributes the pain widely and fairly, and the elderly must be part of that calculus."

The *Washington Post* is also pleased with the message coming out of the White House. "Who more than grandparents wants to reduce the future burdens on today's grandchildren?" a guilt-baiting editorial against old people asks. "There is no easy or equitable way to move the deficit out of the danger zone without including Social Security. . . . Cut its cost, and you open the way to making similar cuts in other major programs."

Two proposals are being weighed on how to cut into Social Security, which is part of the social wage that working people earn during the course of their entire working life. The first plan calls for suspending the cost-of-living increase retirees count on to keep up with the high cost of living. The second formula would make Social Security benefits subject to more taxes.

While Clinton has shied away from directly proposing the cuts himself, members of his administration and Democratic Party lawmakers have made clear the direction of his policies. Leon Panetta, Clinton's budget director,

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Militant Labor Forum

The Clinton presidency: Challenges facing youth and trade unionists

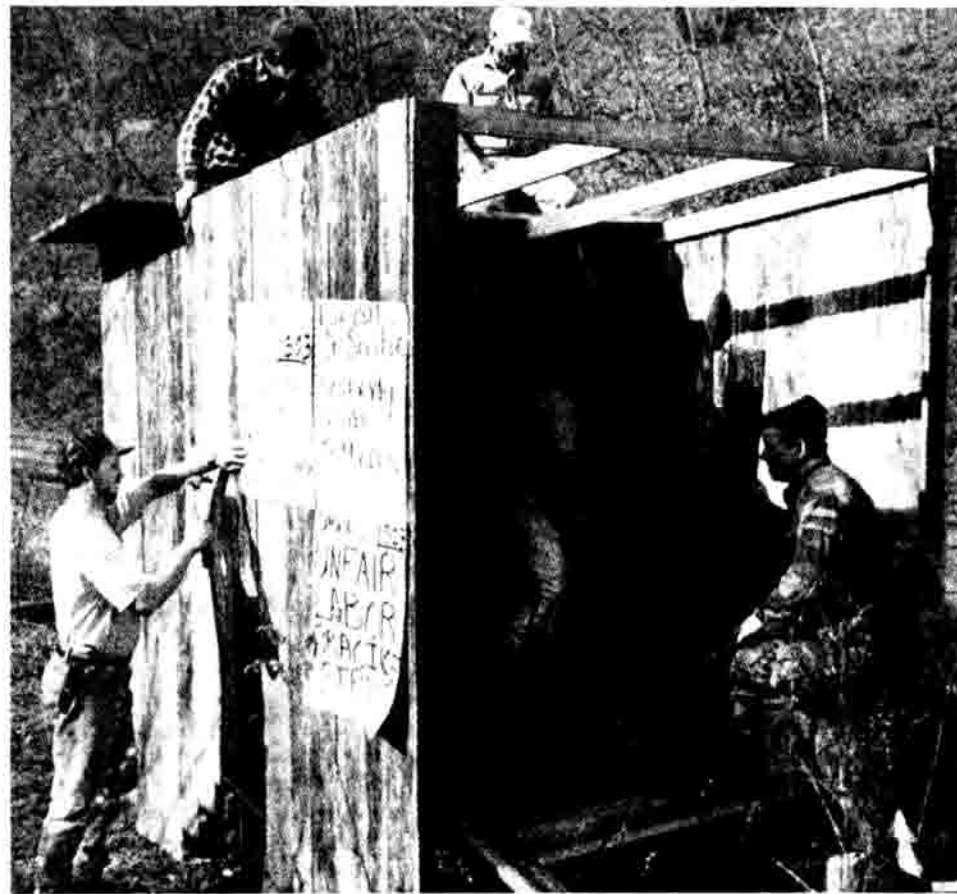
These forums will take place in conjunction with national meetings of socialist trade unionists in the United Auto Workers and the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union. Speakers: representatives of the Socialist Workers Party.

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Miners in Madison, West Virginia, construct picket shack.

Thousands of coal miners strike against Peabody

BY JOHN HAWKINS
AND PAUL MAILHOT

PITTSBURGH — Coal miners in West Virginia, Kentucky, Illinois, and Indiana set up picket lines February 2 against Peabody Holdings Co., the nation's largest coal producer. Some 7,000 members of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) are involved in the strike. Peabody is part of Hanson Industries, a widely diversified U.S. subsidiary of Hanson P.L.C. of London.

The UMWA struck Peabody after negotiations broke off with the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA), which represents 12 of the largest coal producers in the United States. Most U.S. coal companies sign agreements patterned on BCOA contracts. Some 60,000 miners and 150,000 retirees were covered by the 1988 BCOA agreement, which expired February 1.

In the days leading up to the strike UMWA negotiators tried to avert a walkout by offering four major BCOA companies — Consolidation Coal Co., Peabody, AMAX Industries, and Arch Mineral — a 60-day extension, provided they would bring representatives of their parent holding companies to the bargaining table. Peabody and other BCOA members "refused to respond to even the most simple information requests," said UMWA president Richard Trumka.

Peabody is strike target

Many coal companies, including Peabody, use an antiunion practice called "double breasting." Through this tactic, new coal mines are opened under concealed ownership. The operators then hire nonunion miners while laying off at union-organized mines. This procedure directly

contradicts a clause in the 1988 contract that requires coal companies to hire laid-off UMWA members for three of every five jobs in nonunion mines owned by BCOA companies.

Peabody was targeted because of the company's continued refusal to provide the union with information about its extensive holdings and leases to mine coal. Sam Shiflett, president of Peabody Coal Co., said his company rejected the union's demand because it "would result in a radical restructuring of the labor agreement." The three other major BCOA companies eventually agreed to go along with the union's request.

"We're in a fight for our lives," said Bethel Purkey, president of UMWA Local 1751 at Pittston Coal's Wade Eagle Mine, discussing the importance of the strike. "It's part of a last ditch effort by the coal operators to break us."

Bosses also look for concessions

Although negotiations have stalled over the issue of company holdings, "BCOA members want the union to make concessions on health-care benefits and work rules," said an article in the February 4 *Charleston Gazette*. The January issue of industry magazine *Coal* states, "Coal analysts say . . . the UMWA must make concessions if the union hopes to stem the tide of coal companies forming non-union spinoffs that cost union miners their jobs."

The article continues, "The UMWA may be asked to give up the union's prized health plan, which requires no co-payment, in favor of the more typical plan in which work-

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New round in currency crisis hits Europe

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

PARIS — Pressures from the intensifying competition between Washington, Bonn, and Paris and the high cost of German reunification led to another currency crisis in Europe last week. The business press here was filled with news stories on the fresh wave of monetary gyrations, focusing on the threat to the European Monetary System.

"Road to Monetary Union Gets Bumpier by the Day," read a front-page headline of the Paris edition of the *International Herald Tribune* February 3. London's *Financial Times* summed up the week with a February 6 column titled "Shoot-out at the currency corral." Reports of rising unemployment across Europe and mounting conflicts between European Community (EC) members accompanied these stories.

Passport checks and several trade barriers between EC members were eased January 1. This marked the first phase in a series of steps that are supposed to eventually bring economic and political union. The recent monetary turmoil indicates that renewed conflict between the capitalist classes in Europe, not a closer union, is on the horizon. The British Parliament has yet to discuss the

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UN mediators seek NATO warplanes to enforce partition of Bosnia

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

Former U.S. secretary of state Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen of Britain have urged the U.S. government to support the use of NATO war planes to impose their plan for partition of Bosnia over the heads of the warring factions. After the collapse of the Balkan peace talks in Geneva January 30, Vance and Owen moved their operations to the United Nations headquarters in New York.

The proposal by the UN mediators, already rejected by the Bosnian government of Alija Izetbegovic and the Serbian regime in Belgrade, has spurred new fighting over boundary lines in Croatia and Bosnia.

The cochairmen of the Balkan talks also asked Washington for modern satellite communications for the 25,000-member UN force they envision will be needed to enforce their so-called peace plan. In addition, Vance and Owen called on the Clinton administration to provide troops for their UN enforcement army.

U.S. president Bill Clinton, however, criticized the Vance-Owen proposal publicly February 5. At a joint press conference with Canadian prime minister Brian Mulroney, Clinton said "the United States at the present time is reluctant to impose an agreement on the parties to which they do not agree." He also said that the agreement "cannot be enforced externally."

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Pressure on Zaire's Mobutu

As fighting between rival military factions continued in Kinshasa, the capital of Zaire, the governments of the United States, France, and Belgium called February 3 for Zairian president Mobutu Sese Seko to yield power. They blamed the current economic and social disorder on Mobutu's failure to transfer authority to the transitional government headed by his rival, Prime Minister Étienne Tshisekedi. The three governments said Zaire is at "the brink of political and economic collapse."

Zairian soldiers have attacked merchants and other civilians, raiding Kinshasa's central market and other areas. An estimated 300 have died in the rioting that began when soldiers refused to accept payment in new currency.

Kenya president blocks parliament

Kenyan president Daniel arap Moi suspended the country's parliament January 27, one day after members of opposition parties took their seats in the body. Opposition spokesmen said the move showed Moi's fear of open discussion on his record of 14 years in power.

Opposition groups won 88 of 200 parliamentary seats in the December 29 election, the first multiparty vote in Kenya in 26 years. Moi was reelected as president in that vote. Moi's aides said he would provide a new date for the opening of parliament.

Deportees reject Israel's offer

Tel Aviv offered February 1 to allow 100 of nearly 400 deported Palestinians to return to Israel. The Palestinians, accused of supporting the organization Hamas, were deported December 17 to an Israeli-occupied strip of southern Lebanon. They rejected the plan and demanded they all be allowed to return immediately. Israel made the offer under pressure from several governments, including Washington, and following a threat of United Nations-imposed sanctions. The plan would allow 100 deportees to return immediately and cut the exile period for the others from two years to one.

FBI monitors Palestinian funds

The Federal Bureau of Investigation is



Taxi drivers, upset over police harassment, surround cop during clashes in Johannesburg. Two people have been killed and at least 13, including 9 cops, have been hurt.

intensifying its monitoring of Palestinian groups in Dallas, Chicago, Detroit, Arizona, and Virginia. The government agency is tracing funds raised in the United States by these groups and sent to Palestinian organizations; it accuses some of the groups of raising money for Hamas. FBI officials said they will investigate whether Palestinians had violated the Foreign Agents Registration Act or Treasury Department statutes that regulate the export of funds over \$10,000.

The issue has drawn more attention since Israel arrested three Palestinian-born U.S. citizens in the occupied West Bank, accusing them of planning to turn over \$650,000 to Hamas. The men's families deny the allegations.

\$7 million for wrongly jailed pair

Clarence Chance and Benny Powell were granted \$3.5 million each for serving more than 17 years in prison for a murder they did not commit. The January 26 settlements of two \$50 million lawsuits filed by the men

were the largest such awards ever paid by the city of Los Angeles.

The pair were released in March 1992 after it was revealed that Los Angeles County police, investigating the murder of an off-duty sheriff's deputy, fabricated evidence. The cops had forced several people to claim they saw Chance and Powell kill the officer.

Togo troops shoot protesters

Angry youths erected barricades in sections of Lomé, the capital of Togo, and called on residents to observe a 48-hour general strike starting January 26. The day before, police killed at least 12 people at an antigovernment demonstration. Following the shootings, more than 50,000 people fled Lomé.

The military head of state, Gen. Gnassingbe Eyadema, has been trying to break an 18-month tug-of-war for power between himself and government forces led by Prime Minister Joseph Koffigoh. After more than a year of protests, Eyadema agreed to a national conference, which took place in August 1991. At the conference, forces opposed to military rule took control, named Koffigoh prime minister, and claimed most of Eyadema's powers. Since then, Eyadema's attempts to reassert his power have resulted in a growing number of violent clashes.

Charges for Birmingham Six man

The Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), the police force in Northern Ireland, announced it was considering charges against Paddy Hill for incitement. The RUC said it was trying to get a transcript of Hill's speech at a nationalist rally in Derry.

Hill's speech caused an uproar among the forces that support British rule in northern Ireland, and organizers of the commemoration disassociated themselves

from his remarks. In the speech, Hill condemned British rule and said British soldiers should be sent back "in boxes, because that's what they do to us." Hill was released from prison in March 1991 after 16 years. He was one of the Birmingham Six, a group of men whose frame-up by the police was overturned following a broadly supported public defense campaign.

Taxi drivers protest in South Africa

Running battles between taxi drivers and police in Soweto and Johannesburg, South Africa, have left two people killed and dozens injured. The government declared the cities an unrest area February 2 as police tried to prevent taxi drivers' protests from spreading to the center of Johannesburg. The drivers are angry about the constant harassment by police. They are also seeking government subsidies to cope with the economic crisis.

45-year low in major strikes

The number of strikes and lockouts involving 1,000 or more workers at U.S. companies in 1992 hit the lowest level in 45 years, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The agency said 35 major stoppages, involving 364,000 workers, occurred that year. This was down from 40 such stoppages in 1990 and a peak of 470 in 1952.

Two-thirds of the workers involved were in the two-day national rail strike, which ended when the Machinists' union decided to heed a back-to-work order from Congress.

Dozens die in siege of Kabul

Two rival factions have intensified a battle for Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan. They fired more than 75 rockets into the city February 2. The Hezb-i-Islami guerrilla force, led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, is trying to unseat the government of President Burhanuddin Rabbani. Rabbani took power in April 1992 after the collapse of the former regime, which had been backed by the Soviet Union. Since January 19, more 300 have been killed in the fighting. Hundreds more have been wounded and tens of thousands have fled.

German parliament votes down law enabling troops to go abroad

The German government attempted unsuccessfully to change the constitution January 15 to allow the use of its military forces abroad. The ruling coalition of the Free Democratic and Christian Democratic parties and the Christian Social Union failed to get a two-thirds vote on legislation that would have allowed the military to participate in "peacekeeping" and "peace-creating" missions. A "peace-creating" mission is a war purportedly waged to stop an existing conflict.

The Social Democrats, whose vote blocked the two-thirds majority necessary to change the constitution, favor participation in United Nations "peacekeeping" missions, but not "peace-creating" ones.

—DEREK BRACEY

THE MILITANT

Workers find it harder to get health care

Many working people look to Clinton's promises on health care in hope that they will at least provide some relief to the plight they face. But whatever arises from the government's survey of alternatives for health care is unlikely to improve the health of workers. The next 'Militant' will examine what Clinton's intentions on health really are. Don't miss a single issue!



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UN talks with Haitian military collapse as protests demand justice for refugees

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Talks between United Nations special envoy Dante Caputo and Haiti's military rulers collapsed February 4 as the regime rejected a previously agreed-on plan to deploy up to 500 UN-sponsored "human rights observers" to the country.

This development once again places the spotlight on Washington's inhumane policy, begun by George Bush last May and continued by Bill Clinton, of forcibly seizing and returning to Haiti all refugees attempting to flee repression in their homeland.

The collapse of the talks has also led to an increased clamor from both liberal and conservative forces for the use of U.S. military force in Haiti.

On January 17, after a 48-hour visit to Haiti, Caputo announced he had obtained letters from Prime Minister Marc Bazin and Lt. Gen. Raoul Cedras, the army chief, accepting the stationing of UN observers in Haiti and agreeing to a framework for negotiations to allow exiled president Jean-Bertrand Aristide to return.

Several days later a mutiny by some rank-and-file soldiers was reported at a base outside Port-au-Prince, the capital. This action, which was quickly crushed, was the first reported incident of open insubordination since the army's ouster of Aristide in a September 1991 military coup.

Bazin scuttled the UN plan by demanding that a series of conditions be met before he would allow UN observers into the country. Among them was recognition of his military-backed government, a lifting of the trade embargo imposed in October 1991 by the Organization of American States, and restrictions on the free movement of the observers.

"The whole thing was a bust," one diplomat told the *New York Times*.

More than 40,000 Haitians have attempted to reach the United States by boat in the 16 months since Aristide was ousted. About 11,000 were allowed to enter the country to pursue asylum claims before Bush began forcibly repatriating all Haitians last May.

While voicing support for Aristide, U.S. president Clinton expressed sympathy for some of the difficulties facing Haiti's military rulers as well. The "nub of the issue" blocking Aristide's return, Clinton declared, was statements by Aristide when he was in power that "caused people in the military... to have fear for their personal security."

"We have to be able to restore democracy," Clinton continued, "in a way that convinces everybody that their human rights will be respected and, for an interim period, protected."

Calls for military intervention

With Haiti's military rulers still firmly in power and the prospect of a new wave of refugees, a discussion is taking place among U.S. rulers about the feasibility of U.S. military action in Haiti.

"Mr. Clinton needs to strike out on a dramatically different course," stated a February 6 editorial in the *New York Times*, which called for the "need to consider military options if sanctions alone prove unper-suasive."

Rev. Jesse Jackson, who recently returned from a visit to Haiti, calls for dispatching a multinational force there.

"Marines to Haiti?" was the title of a recent nationally syndicated opinion column by Rowland Evans and Robert Novak. They state, "U.S. military intervention is privately conceded, among those who know Haiti well, to be probably the only way to restore Aristide... but substantial U.S. forces might have to stay for years to protect the Haitian military and propertied classes from violent retribution at the hands of Aristide's minions."

Conservative columnist Samuel Francis argues this point even more bluntly. He writes, "If we can 'liberate' Kuwait, feed Somalia, and enforce no-fly zones in Iraq and the Balkans, there ought not to be any reason we can't invade Haiti and restore Aristide or at least preside over a new election in which someone more satisfactory to everyone is elected."

"Unlike most of these other places," he continues, "our national interests are at stake there... Haiti lies in the same zone of U.S.

influence as Panama, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua and Grenada, in all of which we've used force in pursuit of our national interests."

Meanwhile, virtually all of the 267 Haitian refugees confined at the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, began a hunger strike January 28. They have vowed to fast until they gain admittance to the United States. Immigration authorities had previously backed their right to pursue political asylum claims in the United States but bar them from entering the country because they have supposedly tested positive for the virus that causes AIDS.

New York rally draws hundreds

BY JULIETTE MONTAUK

NEW YORK — During the worst snowstorm in New York this year, 300 people chanting "No Aristide, no peace" rallied at City Hall February 6 in support of the Haitian people's struggle. A representative from Mayor David Dinkins's office opened the event by proclaiming February 7-13 as "Haiti Solidarity Week" in the city.

At noon, demonstrators marched to the United Nations for another rally. As several people from the Haitian community got up to speak, march participants chanted, "Bill Clinton, we're watching you; don't wear George Bush's suit."

The featured speaker at the UN rally was Rev. Jesse Jackson. Calling on President Clinton to restore ousted president Jean-Bertrand Aristide, Jackson stated, "We said no to the warlords in Iraq and Kuwait. We said no to the warlords in Somalia. We should say no to the warlords in Haiti."

Dennis Rivera, president of Local 1199 of the hospital workers' union, also spoke. Local 1199 and the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union endorsed the day's events.

Speakers at forum discuss Haitian struggle

BY JOANNE WALLADOR

NEW YORK — "Open the borders! Closed down Krome! Let the Haitians in!" Harvey McArthur demanded, to applause by 70 participants in a Militant Labor Forum here.

McArthur, a rail worker and member of the United Transportation Union, traveled to the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, in December to interview Haitians being forcibly detained there. At the January 31 forum he spoke together with five other panelists.

Ciliese Succes explained that she had campaigned for Jean-Bertrand Aristide during Haiti's presidential election campaign in 1990. In September 1991, after the coup that forced Aristide out of the country, the military killed Succes's mother and father and destroyed her home. After spending four months in hiding, Succes and her husband fled Haiti by boat with 78 other people. They were intercepted by the U.S. Coast Guard and taken to the Guantánamo detention camp.

Succes was pregnant and gave birth at the camp. When her baby fell sick, they were transferred to the United States, where the baby died. She was jailed in the Immigration and Naturalization Service detention center in New York City for four months until protests forced her release in December.

"Even though I lost my mother, my father, and my baby, I can't be discouraged. Together we are strong," Succes stated.

Richard Tallini, cochair of the National Lawyers Guild at Touro Law School, described the mistreatment of Haitian refugees at the Krome detention center in Miami and the steps his organization is taking in their defense.

Claude Féquière, representing the Haitian group Tenth Department, pointed out that the repression in Haiti was fierce because

the democratic movement was so strong, unlike the situation under much of the previous Duvalier dictatorship.

The Tenth Department was formed after the election of Aristide. Haiti is divided regionally into nine departments. The extra "department" is comprised of the Haitians abroad.

McArthur said that one of the arguments raised for not allowing the Haitians to enter the United States is that there will not be enough jobs for everyone. "How many jobs are there in the United States?" asked McArthur. "Fifty million? One hundred million? It's a social question. It depends entirely on the fight waged by working people to demand jobs." McArthur explained that the labor movement should fight for a 30-hour workweek with no cut in pay to create more jobs and to unite the working class.

Panelists contrasted Cuba's approach toward Haitian refugees to that of the United States. Moïse St. Louis from the group Haitian Enforcement Against Racism explained that Haitians who chose to stay in Cuba were taught trades. Succes said, "Fidel [Castro] doesn't mistreat us," adding that it is not the people of the United States who are mistreating Haitians but "the American government."

Five hundred march in Miami

BY JILL FEIN

MIAMI — Five hundred Haitians and others marched through downtown Miami February 5 at noon to protest the U.S. government's policy toward refugees fleeing military repression in Haiti. They carried signs that read, "Democracy yes, repression no," "Shut down Krome concentration camp," and "Equal treatment for all refugees — stop double treatment now." The Krome detention center is the immigration prison, west of Miami, where Haitians who reach the United States are placed while they await asylum hearings that sometimes takes years.

The rally and march were organized by the African American Council of Christian Clergy of South Florida. Supporting organizations included the NAACP, the Haitian-rights group Veye Yo, Haitian Women of Miami, the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union, and many others.

Speaker after speaker at the rally, held outside the federal building, demanded that Haitian refugees receive the same welcome to the United States as Cubans, who, under a special law applying just to them, are quickly freed and almost automatically granted legal U.S. residency.

Speakers condemned as inhumane the confinement of Haitian refugees at Krome

and the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, where Haitians who allegedly carry the AIDS virus are being held and denied entrance into the United States.

Thirty groups sent a letter to President Bill Clinton calling on him to fulfill his campaign pledge to end the forced repatriation and interdiction of Haitians on the high seas. "We are asking President Clinton to put his work where his words are, to stop talking and start acting," said Marlene Bastin, president of Haitian Women.

"It's the same struggle in South Africa, Haiti, and the United States," stated Ray Fauntroy, president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

The rally came after a recent hunger strike at Krome detention center. There are presently two hunger strikes going on. One is at the Guantánamo naval station, where 260 Haitian refugees have been fasting for more than a week to demand their release. The other protest is at a north Florida prison where 28 Haitians are detained pending asylum hearings. Walter Richardson and four other local NAACP leaders just ended a 19-day fast in sympathy with Haitian prisoners at Krome.

"I fasted because my brothers and sisters went hungry," Richardson told the demonstrators, "I wanted to feel what they feel. It's only a little bit of geography that makes us different."

Jill Fein is a member of Lodge 2643 of the International Association of Machinists.

Philadelphia group reports on Haiti trip

BY NANCY COLE

PHILADELPHIA — A local delegation that visited Haiti in December reported to a meeting here January 24 on the dire state of human rights under the current military dictatorship.

The delegation was organized by the First United Methodist Church of Germantown. They went, participants explained, to offer solidarity and document repression. Their trip coincided with the second anniversary of the election of Jean-Bertrand Aristide as the first democratically elected president in Haiti.

Delegation head C. Richard Cox explained that they interviewed the head of the Organization of American States (OAS) observer team. "He had never been out of Port-au-Prince. He had never taken a single deposition. He had never conducted a single interview," Cox said.

Two attorneys who were part of the delegation described some of the 30 depositions they gathered during their eight-day stay. One described a student who had escaped a military assault on a peaceful student demonstration, only to be shot to death by soldiers in front of his mother in a hospital where he had gone to have his wounds treated.

The second story was of a man arrested first for listening to the music of a popular protest singer, and later as part of a roundup of 22 Aristide supporters in connection with the murder of a local politician. The deposition described the crowded jail cells and the daily beatings of every cellmate.

Attorney Carl Anderson explained that under former president George Bush's policy, which only allowed Haitians to apply for political asylum within Haiti itself, only 2 percent of the 15,000 who dared apply have been accepted into the United States.

"This is exactly the same policy that Mr. Clinton would like to continue," Anderson concluded.



Miami protest decried treatment of Haitian refugees

'Militant' launches subscription renewal drive

The *Militant* is launching a four-week renewal drive to run from February 20 to March 20. Through phone calls, house visits, and special trips to areas farther away, supporters of the socialist press around the world will recontact many of the more than 2,700 people who purchased *Militant* subscriptions last fall, urging them to resubscribe in order to keep up with a working-

ment and important worldwide political events will help convince many unionists to become long-term readers of the paper.

Militant supporters will also be visiting campuses to discuss politics and encourage the nearly 500 student subscribers won to the paper during the fall circulation drive to renew. Literature tables set up on campuses as part of this effort will

den, have made renewals a regular part of their circulation work. Since the end of December they have taken a goal of winning 10 percent of the *Militant's* new readers as long-term subscribers. This effort has been meeting with some success and has led to valuable political discussions. "We do renewal calling once or twice every week," reports Anita Ostling. "We have also decided not to take our long-term subscribers 'for granted.' We keep in touch with them more frequently and treat them as closer contacts" of the socialist movement.

meet students registering for classes at the universities.

The renewal campaign also takes place while thousands of coal miners in the United States organized by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) are on strike against the Peabody Coal Co. as part of the fight for a new national contract. Teams of *Militant* supporters are traveling through the coal-field regions to learn firsthand about this labor battle and introduce striking miners to the *Militant*.

Supporters in Los Angeles last week raised their *Militant* bundle to 175 to take advantage of increased opportunities to sell papers while they campaign for Socialist Workers candidates in the upcoming municipal election. Between January 25 and February 13, campaigners plan to collect a total of 5,000 signatures to win ballot spots for Kim Allen and Kevin Jones, Socialist Workers candidates for mayor and controller.

"The apparent obstacle to access to the ballot is being converted into an opportunity to reach broad layers of the population with the socialist press," writes Tim Elliot from Los Angeles.

The 'Militant' gets around

class perspective on United States and world politics.

Many current readers purchased introductory subscriptions during the international circulation drive that ended December 13. The renewal campaign is aimed at winning as many of these readers as possible to becoming long-term subscribers to the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*.

During the fall circulation drive, *Militant* supporters who are members of industrial unions in the United States, Canada, New Zealand, and Sweden signed up nearly 700 coworkers as readers of the paper. Recontacting these readers for discussions about the *Militant's* unique coverage of the labor move-

encourage other high school and college students to take advantage of the *Militant's* special introductory subscription rate of 12 weeks for \$10.

The *Militant* business office sends out a brochure with the last few issues of subscriptions that are about to expire, explaining the many reasons why readers should renew. The brochure encourages subscribers to order copies of one or more of the eight issues of *New International* as a way to delve more deeply into the political ideas being presented in the *Militant* each week.

Supporters in Stockholm, Swe-

In New Zealand, *Militant* supporters are already organizing visits to readers whose subscriptions are about to expire.

In addition to encouraging people to renew, they are providing new *Militant* readers with material on Militant Labor Forums, Pathfinder catalogs, and the Pathfinder Readers Club, which gives members a 15 percent discount on all Pathfinder books.

Plans are also in the works to set up daily sales tables on campuses in the Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch areas during the last two weeks of February to

The *Militant* business office continues to receive a steady stream of new subscriptions as well as renewals. From the Denver area, for example, two individuals recently wrote in for subscriptions to the *Militant* or *Perspectiva Mundial* after first being introduced to the socialist press by a sales team that went to nearby packinghouses and participated in a January 18 demonstration celebrating Martin Luther King's birthday. Last week the business office received 72 *Militant* subscriptions—40 new readers and 32 renewals.

—BRIAN WILLIAMS

Socialists campaign for U.S. Senate seat in Texas

BY MATT HERRESHOFF

HOUSTON — Rose Floyd launched her campaign for U.S. Senate at a news conference here January 26. Floyd, 34, a Houston factory worker and member of the International Association of Machinists, is the Socialist Workers candidate in the May 1 special election. She is running for the seat vacated by Lloyd Bentsen, now treasury secretary in the Clinton administration.

"Working people are the target of the U.S. wars in Iraq and Somalia," Floyd said, "just as working people in the United States are

the target of big business and its government.

"My campaign will be a voice for youth and working people who oppose these wars and seek to resist the effects of the worldwide depression," Floyd said.

The *Houston Post* and TV Channel 2 covered the news conference. Floyd was later interviewed by the *Houston Chronicle* and Channel 13.

Floyd announced plans to campaign widely throughout the state. "I will campaign among GIs at Fort Hood and among farm workers in the Rio Grande Valley," she said.

A longtime activist in defense of immigrant workers, Floyd pledged she would "help build the protests to save the life of Ricardo Aldape Guerra." Aldape, a young Mexican-born worker sentenced to die, has won widespread support in his efforts to overturn his unjust conviction.

Floyd took her campaign to Lamar University in the city of Beaumont, where the campus paper interviewed her. Members of a Black fraternity and Black student organization invited her to come back to speak. At the Exxon plant gate nearby, nine workers bought copies of the *Militant* and dozens more took campaign literature.

In Conroe, Texas, Floyd spoke with residents about a racist, pro-cop group at Con-



Rose Floyd, socialist candidate for U.S. Senate, petitioning for ballot status.

roe High School that calls itself the Cowboy Posse. At a recent high school basketball game there, the group unfurled a Confederate flag. This action led to protests and discussion among other students.

Floyd's campaign will launch a drive February 6 to win a place on the May 1 ballot. Socialist campaigners will gather more than 8,000 signatures to place Floyd on the ballot.

Berlin sales team finds interest in socialist literature

BY INGE HINNEMO

BERLIN — A team of *Militant* supporters from Sweden and Britain came here to take part in the January 30-31 demonstrations. The weekend began with a *Militant* sale at the BMW auto plant Friday morning and a Pathfinder book table at Humboldt University in eastern Berlin. On Saturday morning the table went up at the convention of the Party of Democratic Socialism, the former Communist Party in East Germany.

Altogether, at these activities and at the different demonstrations the team sold 38 copies of the *Militant*, 2 of *Perspectiva Mundial* and 1 *Militant* subscription. The new subscriber said he had been looking for the *Militant* for a long time. He had been able to read some issues at a library.

Close to \$250 worth of literature was sold at the book table. Many people wanted to discuss Cuba and Ernesto Che Guevara. Several saw the development of the Cuban revolution as something different than the regimes that had ruled in the Soviet Union and East Germany, and they wanted to know more about it. A woman at Humboldt University complained that the old regime had provided little information about Guevara. "They told us about his heroism and about Tania [a young woman from East Germany that joined Guevara's guerrilla force in Bolivia]. But we did not get to know his ideas," she said.

The team sold eight copies of the pamphlet *Che Guevara and the Fight for Socialism Today*.

Thousands of miners picket Peabody, the nation's largest coal producer

Continued from front page
ers pay 20% of medical costs."

Mine workers, however, are not in the mood to give up the hard won gains they've made through past struggles. "A lot of us understand that these are bad economic times," said one miner on the picket line near Marissa, Illinois. "But when the company gets on top of you, you've got to fight."

More than 700 miners who work at Peabody mines near Marissa met at the local community center during the first week of the strike to begin organizing themselves. Many wore camouflage fatigues and handmade T-shirts that read, "One day longer than Peabody."

John Cox, a UMWA official for the Midwest region, explained that miners in and around Marissa are planning to organize a solidarity camp. He also said a women's auxiliary is being formed and a speakers bureau will be put together to go out and

talk to other unions.

Many gas stations, convenience stores, restaurants, and other small businesses in town have posted signs in their windows that read, "This establishment supports the UMWA."

In Indiana, strikers are picketing Peabody's Lynnville and Squaw Creek mines and have set up a camp to organize strike operations. UMWA Local 1907, which organizes miners at the AMAX Ayrshire Mine, is putting together a benefit dance to raise money for the strikers. There are more than 900 Peabody strikers in Indiana.

Many of West Virginia's 2,300 Peabody miners spent the first week of the walkout going to organizing meetings, building picket shacks at the company's 12 portals, and stoking fires to warm themselves from frigid overnight weather. "We just want to make a living and feed our families," said Robert Bentley of UMWA Local 785 in Wharton, West Virginia. "We wouldn't be out here if

there wasn't a reason."

While the UMWA has concentrated the strike at Peabody, with miners at other companies continuing to work, meetings of mine workers are taking place throughout the coalfields to prepare for a broader strike. "If, after a period of time, the employers refuse to get serious about this situation, then the strike will be expanded," Trumka told reporters.

The mood among many miners is one of vigilance and willingness to do what is needed to win a contract. "The operators aren't even talking to the union. They feel they have the upper hand," said Peabody miner Melvin Jones in Illinois. "We'll need to organize the union from the grass roots in order to win a contract."

Contributors to this article include David Sandor from St. Louis; Bernie Senter from Morgantown, West Virginia; and Kate Kaku from Chicago.

Hundreds hear Cuban revolutionary

Canadian tour of Tablada draws 1,900 to discuss situation in Cuba today

BY CAROLE CARON

MONTREAL — Cuban economist Carlos Tablada, speaking on "The challenges before the Cuban revolution today," recently completed a 14-day tour of eight Canadian cities sponsored by Pathfinder Press. Pathfinder is the English- and French-language publisher of Tablada's book *Che Guevara: Economics and Politics in the Transition to Socialism*.

The Cuban revolutionary spoke to about 1,900 young people and workers at 17 meetings. He concluded his tour January 30 in Montreal.

"Despite all the predictions of the collapse of Cuba after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the Cuban revolution is still alive and here I am again with you, as I told you I would be," Carlos Tablada said at a city-wide meeting in Montreal, to the applause of many of the 250 participants.

In Montreal Tablada also spoke at the University of Montreal, McGill University, and the junior college, Cégep du Vieux Montréal. He addressed an event at Carleton University in Ottawa and spoke at Laval University as well as a citywide meeting in Quebec City.

The meetings won broad sponsorship from a range of student associations, university departments, Cuba solidarity organiza-

tions, and some union bodies.

The current situation in Cuba is critical, Tablada explained at the Montreal city meeting. "Our standard of living has qualitatively deteriorated since 1989," he said, adding that "making daily life in Cuba hell" was the goal of the U.S. embargo and its tightening through the adoption of the Torricelli bill.

But the problems of the Cuban revolution do not simply come from imperialism, Tablada continued. Cuban revolutionaries have also made their own mistakes. According to him, one of the biggest errors was the decision in the mid-1970s to copy the "Soviet model" in the Cuban economy.

A campaign to reverse the ensuing disastrous economic failures, bureaucracy, and growing demoralization of working people in Cuba was launched in the mid-1980s. This was called the rectification process, he explained.

"Is it true that popular support for the government has dropped?" asked a participant in the citywide meeting in Quebec City.

"Yes," replied Tablada. "I would be lying to say the opposite. In the elections last December the government received support from roughly 74 percent of the population."

"I am Cuban and I'd like to know what the likelihood is that Fidel and Raúl Castro

will accept the election results if they're not elected in Cuba," asked another.

Tablada took the opportunity to explain that Cubans now have the right to elections by direct and secret ballot at all levels of government. Previously, the People's Power legislative bodies allowed for direct election of representatives on the local level, but not on the provincial or national levels.

"We've had the first balloting in December and the real test will be in the coming weeks," he added, "including for Fidel and Raúl."

"What is the real level of consciousness among the masses?" asked a participant in the main meeting in Montreal.

"If my people didn't have a revolutionary consciousness, they would not have been able to resist as they continue to do today," answered Tablada.

"Don't you think, now that the Pinochet dictatorship is over, that Chile is more of a model for Latin American countries than Cuba?" asked another. Some of the participants in the audience murmured disapproval of the questioner.

Tablada held up his hands and demanded that all be treated with equal respect before replying. "I don't agree with you. I've been to Chile recently. Poverty has risen, political prisoners and torture continue to exist there,

and the masses still have no say."

Capitalism cannot cite one Latin American country as an example against Cuba, he added. "We are the only country where, despite the economic crisis, life expectancy continues to rise. It's the only country to fight discrimination against women. It's the only country to fight racism."

"You talked a lot about the Western press. I am a member of that press here and I came to listen to your point of view. But I was not allowed to give mine in Cuba because I was arrested," another participant commented in Montreal.

"Since you did not give the reasons why you were arrested," Tablada answered, "I can't comment on that. I am sorry that it happened, but you probably violated one of our laws. People sometimes get a tourist visa and start acting like a reporter once they are in Cuba. We don't accept that."

"It is true that the Cuban press is bad," Tablada continued, "but the Western press is worse. Here's an instance of censorship. A while ago, 500 Cubans living in Cuba were denied a visa by the U.S. government to go live in the United States. They went on a hunger strike and called a press conference in front of the U.S. embassy. No one came and nothing was ever printed."

Many young people met Tablada during his stay in Canada. They wanted to know about the role of youth in Cuban society today and about government positions on a range of questions. What is it doing to fight unemployment? Is education still free? What is the school dropout rate? Does the Cuban government support independence for Quebec? they asked.

Carole Caron is a member of Lodge 712 of the International Association of Machinists in Montreal.

Rightist disciplined for assault in Florida

BY DAN FEIN

MIAMI — Supporters of free speech won a victory here when Florida International University (FIU) disciplined a young rightist. The man had physically assaulted an usher at a public meeting held on campus for two Cuban youth leaders four months earlier.

Andrea Goldblum, a judicial administrator at (FIU), found Marcel Felipe guilty of violating the Student Code of Conduct by assaulting Tony Thomas. The university suspended Felipe for one year.

Goldblum's decision resulted from a hearing on charges filed by Thomas after the October 1 meeting at FIU for Ibis Alvisa González and José Antonio Concepción Rangel, two youth leaders from Havana, Cuba. This meeting was the first in many years where Cubans from the island spoke publicly in Miami in support of the Cuban revolution.

More than 200 people attended the event, a majority of them Cuban-Americans from the campus and the community. A number of student organizations sponsored the meeting. Although the discussion was heated at times and most in the audience were critical of the speakers, the majority wanted to hear the Cubans and exchange views.

At this meeting Thomas, a FIU graduate student and member of Transport Workers Union Local 291, volunteered as an usher.

During the program a very vocal minority tried to disrupt the discussion several times, including rushing to the front of the room more than once. The majority sentiment to continue the meeting kept this minority in check.

Gay rights march is set for April 25

BY NAOMI CRAINE

Gay rights activists across the United States are building for the 1993 March on Washington for Lesbian, Gay, and Bi Equal Rights and Liberation. Organizers hope the demonstration, set for Sunday, April 25, will bring hundreds of thousands to the capital.

The march's action statement says, in part, "Our quest for social justice links us fundamentally to the struggles against racism, sexism, class bias, economic injustice, and religious intolerance. We must realize if one of us is oppressed, we are all oppressed."

Two states held anti-gay rights referendums in the November elections. In Oregon, Measure 9 was defeated by a campaign that drew nationwide attention. Amendment 2, a similar proposal in Colorado, passed —

At the end of the meeting, however, this group, which included Felipe, rushed the stage. They pushed and shoved ushers, campus police, and others. During the disruption Felipe punched Thomas, knocking him to the ground. Felipe was immediately handcuffed and detained by campus security.

Following the event, Felipe, who is a member of the Young Cubans Freedom Movement, tried to justify his actions by falsely accusing Thomas of violence. He claimed Thomas had assaulted Cristina Otero, another member of his organization, and that he thought Thomas was a Cuban security agent. These charges were echoed in much of the media coverage of the meeting.

At the January 29 judicial hearing, testimony by administrator of student activities Larry Lunsford and Lt. Edward Brown from the FIU police confirmed that some people in the audience had been confrontational and disruptive and that Thomas had done nothing to provoke Felipe's attack.

The October 1 meeting for the two Cuban youth was an historic event in Miami. Organizers of the meeting had won broad backing for the right to hold it, and afterward many more people spoke out to support free speech and condemn the assault on Thomas. On the FIU campus in particular, many students and professors

overturning local laws that prohibited discrimination against gays.

Many in Colorado and elsewhere have expressed outrage at this undemocratic measure and are discussing how to oppose it. The struggles against these laws, along with the current debate on homosexuals in the U.S. military, are sure to attract large numbers of youth and fighters for democratic rights to the April demonstration.

Local committees in dozens of cities are publicizing the event and working to get people to Washington. In New York City, for instance, activists plan to send hundreds of buses. They expect many more people to travel on their own for the march.

More information is available from the March on Washington, P.O. Box 34607, Washington, D.C. 20043; or call 800-832-2889.



Militant/Joel Britton
Tony Thomas, after being attacked by Marcel Felipe. Felipe was suspended from campus for one year.

voiced support for the right of revolutionaries from Cuba to speak there like anyone else.

These developments reflect the growing isolation and fracturing of Miami's right-wing exile groups. They stem from the fact that most Cuban-Americans here favor dialogue with the Cuban people, normalization of relations between Washington and Havana, and an end to the U.S. embargo and travel ban on Cuba.

The decision by the university to suspend Felipe is a result of these changes. It puts the university clearly on record in favor of the right to discuss, free from disruption, the issue of Cuba and other subjects. This victory creates more openings for debate, discussion, and public meetings on Cuba, including with supporters of the revolution.

In addition to filing charges at FIU, Thomas filed a criminal complaint against Felipe with Janet Reno, the Florida state attorney. Reno's office, which is notorious for not filing charges against Miami cops and never seriously prosecuting a single cop for murder or brutality, has threatened to close the Thomas case.

Thomas and his supporters are demanding that Felipe be prosecuted and that the right to free speech and assembly be defended.

Letters urging prosecution of Marcel Felipe can be sent to: Janet Reno, State Attorney's Office, 1351 N.W. 12th Street, Miami, FL 33125. Phone (305) 547-5200. Copies can be sent to Tony Thomas, P.O. Box 1363, Miami, FL 33137.



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Another round in currency crisis hits Europe's economies

Continued from front page

Maastricht Treaty, which seeks a common currency among the 12 countries comprising the EC. A majority of voters in Denmark rejected the treaty in a referendum last June.

The currency crisis unfolded as the Bill Clinton administration fired new shots in the ongoing trade war between Washington and its rivals in Europe.

Washington-EC trade war

White House officials announced February 1 that the U.S. government would bar EC companies from bidding on contracts in the United States for telecommunications and power-generating equipment if the EC did not end "discrimination" against similar U.S. goods.

U.S. trade representative Mickey Kantor gave the EC a March 22 deadline to lift its directive giving favored status to European-made telecommunications, water, energy, and transport equipment in bids for government utilities.

Leon Brittan, EC commissioner for external economic affairs, responded by accusing Washington of "unilateral bullying." Former French president Valéry Giscard d'Estaing "said he had detected a shift toward protectionism in the United States that threatened to plunge the world into a 1930s-style depression," reported the *International Herald Tribune* February 4.

The latest U.S. action came on the heels of steep import tariffs, of up to 109 percent, that Washington imposed a week earlier on \$1 billion of steel exported by Germany, France, Britain, Japan, and several other countries. These tariffs were in addition to

duties applied to the same steel products in November. Executives of Thyssen, one of the biggest steelmakers in Germany, threatened to pull out of steel production if Bonn does not take action to protect German companies from the price war.

U.S. rulers taste victory

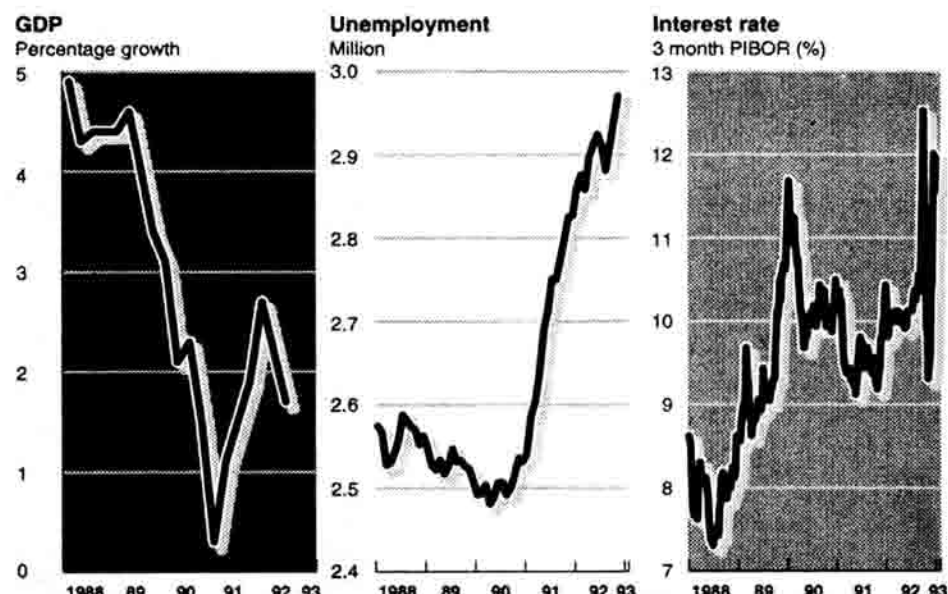
The U.S. government has the taste of blood in its mouth after its victory against EC members during the trade war over oil-seed production three months ago. Washington is finding it is able to successfully use the dominant size of the U.S. economy as a lever against its imperialist rivals in Germany, France, and other European countries.

The latest currency crisis begun with a 10 percent devaluation of the Irish punt January 30. The devaluation followed three days of heavy selling of the punt on the foreign exchange markets, triggered by a 1 percent cut in British interest rates. Days later the British pound tumbled to a record low against the German mark.

On February 4 the Danish krone fell to the lowest level against the mark permitted inside the EC Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM). The very existence of the ERM has been placed in question since Britain and Italy abandoned it following the currency crisis last September.

The Danish central bank then raised short-term interest rates and other European banks intervened to shore up the krone. The same day the pound scored new record lows against the mark and the French franc.

Hostilities subsided February 4 after the Bundesbank, the German central bank, announced a slight cut in interest rates. Bonn



French economic indicators (above) show surge in unemployment, slowing of rate of growth of gross domestic product, and high interest rates. Depression-like conditions are spreading throughout capitalist Europe.

is worried that further devaluations will threaten Germany's export-dependent economy. Sixty percent of its exports are to Germany's western European neighbors.

"Combined with overall European economic strains caused by the shock of German reunification, the ERM upsets have put the EC on a knife-edge," wrote David Marsh and Lionel Barber in the *Financial Times*.

Faced with a possible collapse of the ERM, officials in Bonn and Paris now openly admit that the next move might be a "mini-Europe" centered on Germany, based on fixing the exchange rate of the German mark and the French franc and drawing in Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands.

Germany raised its lending rates after reunification to the highest level since World War II in order to finance huge transfers of funds to the former East Germany. These transfers are estimated to have exceeded \$130 billion in 1992, or 6 percent of the country's gross national product. Because the mark is the strongest currency, other European governments have tied their

interest rates to those of Germany. As a result, Bonn's economic competitors in Europe are in effect subsidizing the reconstruction of eastern Germany.

This has laid the basis for widespread anti-German propaganda in Britain and other countries. Responding to these attacks, Bundesbank president Helmut Schlesinger called critics of high German interest rates "ignoramus."

Discontent continues among German workers, as underemployment and joblessness have surged to 40 percent in the eastern region. Divisions within his government and opposition from labor unions forced German chancellor Helmut Kohl to postpone the presentation of a "solidarity pact" to parliament that would guarantee wage restraints employers had demanded last year.

Speaking in Strasbourg, France, Kohl implicitly accused the governments of the United States and Britain of seeking to "torpedo" the EC's drive for economic union by speculating against individual currencies. French prime minister Pierre Bérégovoy has leveled even harsher charges against Washington.

In the middle of the currency turmoil, French government officials intensified attacks against London, accusing the British government of "social dumping." The latest dispute came after Hoover Corp., the U.S. vacuum cleaner manufacturer, decided to shut down a plant in Dijon, France, and move it to Scotland, lured by lower labor costs in Britain. Paris filed a complaint with the European Community accusing London of illegally or unfairly bribing Hoover with social and financial concessions.

Unemployment on rise

In the meantime, unemployment in France has climbed to 3 million, or 10.4 percent, in a steady rise since 1990. Peugeot announced at the beginning of the year it was laying off 2,600 workers, an indication there will be no respite in 1993 either. The economic downturn has caused a political crisis for the governing Socialist Party. Most newspaper reports predict that the conservative opposition will win March parliamentary elections.

The economic crisis has been accompanied by growing social polarization marked by the rise of ultrarightist currents and attacks against immigrant workers in Germany, France, and other European countries. The government of Greece announced at the beginning of February that police will conduct a nationwide sweep to hunt down and deport hundreds of thousands of "illegal" immigrants.

Resistance to these attacks is also on the rise. Thirty thousand people marched in Paris February 6 demanding defense of the right to asylum and the right to vote for immigrants. Most immigrants in France, including many who are born in the country, cannot become citizens and are permanently disfranchised. The action was sponsored by the antiracist organization SOS Racisme, both major union federations, and dozens of other groups.

— CALENDAR —

ALABAMA Bessemer

March and Rally to Support the Striking Steelworkers at Trinity Industries. Sat., March 6, 11:30 a.m. Bessemer Civic Center (Powder Plant Rd. exit off Interstate 20/59). Sponsored by District 36, United Steelworkers of America. For more information (205) 425-9226.

Washington renews N. Korea threats

BY SARA LOBMAN

The U.S. government is stepping up its attacks against North Korea. The International Atomic Energy Agency has renewed charges that the People's Democratic Republic of Korea (North Korea) is secretly developing nuclear weapons. This accusation comes just weeks before Washington plans to restart joint military maneuvers with South Korea for the first time in two years.

The military exercises, code-named "Team Spirit," are scheduled to begin in March. They will involve more than 120,000 troops, who will conduct a mock invasion of North Korea. Washington and Seoul say the maneuvers are aimed at forcing Pyongyang to allow inspection of two waste sites they claim may contain nuclear

waste. The U.S. government has for many years used the bogeyman of nuclear proliferation as an excuse to justify its aggression against North Korea.

Last year, Seoul pulled out of the Team Spirit exercises after signing a pact in late 1991 with North Korea on "reconciliation, nonaggression and cooperation and exchange between North and South." The South Korean government felt obliged to sign the agreement under pressure from massive sentiment for reunification and the impact of serious economic instability. Demonstrations, strikes, student protests, and unionization drives had plagued the South Korean government in the period leading up to the signing of the accord.

The 1991 agreement called for mutual

inspection of sites in the north and the south "in order to verify the de-nuclearization of the Korean Peninsula." This included allowing North Korea to inspect U.S. bases in the south. Although it was not a formal part of the agreement, North Korea agreed to allow inspections of its nuclear sites by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Since signing the agreement, Pyongyang has submitted to six inspections by the Atomic Commission team. No team has made public any evidence that North Korea is producing nuclear weapons. For years the presence of U.S. nuclear weapons in South Korea has been an open secret. Although Seoul issued a statement following the signing of the 1991 agreement announcing that all nuclear weapons had been removed from its territory, there have been no inspections in South Korea or on the U.S. bases in that country to verify this. The United States is the only country in the world to have ever used nuclear weapons.

The Korean Peninsula has been divided since the U.S.-led Korean war ended in 1953. Some 37,000 U.S. troops remain permanently stationed in Korea.

The International Atomic Energy Agency is questioning several of the plutonium samples taken from a research reactor in North Korea. The plutonium was accounted for in the declaration of nuclear material that North Korea gave to the atomic agency last year. But now officials claim the samples indicate that perhaps more plutonium was produced than was originally indicated. The officials have demanded that, in addition to the open access they have to nuclear facilities, they also be allowed to visit several sites they claim may hold nuclear waste.

North Korea has refused to grant permission to the agency to inspect the waste sites as long as plans continue for the joint U.S.-South Korea military exercises. In a February 6 editorial, the *New York Times* granted that "there is some justice" in North Korea's position. "The exercises are needlessly provocative," said the editors, who then went on to say that, in spite of that fact, the only solution to the crisis is for North Korea to allow greater access to the International Atomic Energy Agency and inspectors from the South Korean government.

Clinton forced to drop more attorney general nominees

BY DEREK BRACEY

President Bill Clinton dropped United States district judge Kimba Wood from consideration for attorney general February 5 after his political advisers decided her nomination would be too contentious. Wood acknowledged that she had employed an undocumented immigrant worker to babysit for her.

Wood insisted that her 1986 hiring of a worker from Trinidad was not a problem because she had broken no laws, unlike Zoë Baird. Baird withdrew her nomination for attorney general January 22 amid a public outcry against her hiring of undocumented workers and her failure to pay their taxes and Social Security.

Despite the fact Wood did not break the law, "the judgment was that they couldn't explain it to the country simply and the public can't accommodate a complicated issue," one administration source said, explaining Clinton's decision.

Wood hired a babysitter for her son before the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 — which made it illegal to employ undocumented workers — was passed.

Wood's babysitter obtained documents for legal residence in the United States in December 1987.

Some of Clinton's political advisers were angry at Wood for not explaining her situation earlier. In three interviews, including one with Clinton January 29, Wood was asked if she had "any Zoë Baird problems." Each time Wood replied that she did not, as she had broken no laws.

The issue came to the attention of White House aides on February 4. Some later complained that Wood was "narrow, legalistic," and lacking in "political sensitivity." Some aides then leaked other potentially embarrassing information about Wood from the files they were vetting.

The Clinton administration is now scrambling to find someone else to nominate. It suffered yet another blow when Charles Ruff, a Washington lawyer who was next to Wood on a short, three-person list for the attorney general's post, was ruled out for similar reasons as Baird. Ruff had hired a maid who worked for him for nine years while he did not pay her Social Security taxes. Ruff only paid up after the Baird hearings.

Drywallers' strike strengthens their union

But construction workers' fight for union contract continues in San Diego

BY ELIZABETH STONE
AND CRAIG HONTS

LOS ANGELES — Thousands of striking drywall workers won a victory December 28 when 46 building contractors signed an agreement with the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America. But the fight is not over.

The agreement between the contractors and the union guarantees a wage of seven and a half cents per square foot for hanging plasterboard. The previous rate per unit was between three and five cents. The drywallers will also have a health plan under the contract. Most important, workers now have a union. Contractors must begin hiring 50 percent of their workers from the union hiring hall. By February 28 all workers must be taken on through the union hall. Five important contractors in Orange County, Riverside, and Los Angeles have not signed; picketing against them continues. In San Diego County none of the contractors have signed, making this the center of the ongoing fight.

"We have to counter the false impression of the media that the strike is over," said drywall organizer Roy Navarro, "We are still fighting and we need support from the unions, from the community."

Drywallers from throughout southern California regularly go to San Diego to help picket. Hundreds of drywallers and strike supporters, some from as far away as Ventura, north of Los Angeles, marched through downtown San Diego January 26 to demonstrate solidarity and protest the daily police harassment of the strikers.

The importance of the San Diego fight was underlined recently when a local construction company threatened to move into the Los Angeles area, underbidding the contractors who have already signed with the union.

Even in areas where the companies made the agreement with the union, most drywallers are still not back to work. The recession, the slow winter construction season, and weeks of rain have limited jobs.

Financial support from the union was cut back after the signing, so many strikers face hardship. Money is also needed for gas and maintenance on the trucks workers use to picket and check out construction sites for breaches of the contract.

Union members reach out

On January 24, several hundred drywallers met at the Carpenters' hall in Orange County to discuss these challenges. They decided to build an outreach committee to raise money and talk to unions and community groups.

Nativo López, a strike supporter and director of the community group Hermandad Mexicana, said at the meeting, "Tremendous ground has already been taken in this strike. . . . You yourselves have made this union. The leaders have come from you, from the base up. It's with you that the

problems will continue to be solved."

Francisco Ríos is one of the many rank-and-file activists who, after seven months on the picket lines, is still in the fight. "It's not easy, but we can't stop now," he said.

While Ríos was speaking a young drywall worker, new to the strike, entered the union hall for the first time. "We have several of these new guys coming in every day now, asking about the union," Ríos noted. The activist spent an hour talking to the newcomer, going over why a union is necessary point by point.

Ríos has worked in drywall for 17 years. He was a union member during the 1970s when pay was still pretty good. He saw how wages fell after the union was broken in the early 1980s. By the 1990s, workers who once made over \$15 an hour were receiving \$7 or less.

"They didn't pay extra for overtime," Ríos said. "When we worked 60 hours they would not give us our checks until we signed a paper saying we had only worked 40 hours."

"It got so bad we couldn't pay the rent. We couldn't support our families. We had nothing to lose, but if we organized there was a lot we could gain."

A lot of work went into organizing the strike. "We began weekly meetings in 1991," Ríos explained. "We started going to the construction sites, urging others to come to the meetings. We discussed everything together—how we would carry out the picketing, rules such as no beer on the picket line, and what to do about the police."

Union fight has impact

On May 31, 1992, more than 700 workers voted to go on strike. They began to picket construction sites, calling on workers inside to come out. Through the summer the number of strikers grew into the thousands. The strikers knew they were making an impact when contractors suddenly raised wages to keep workers on the job.

The companies built fences around work sites and hired security guards. "The guards tried provocations, wanting us to do something so they could call us violent," said Ríos. We were prepared. When they arrested the strikers at Mission Viejo, not one weapon was found, not even a small knife. We were not one hundred percent disciplined, since that's impossible, but we were very disciplined."

Hundreds of strikers turned out each day before dawn to picket. "I was here seven days a week," Ríos commented. "Sometimes it was 14 hours a day."

The contractors counted on the deep slump and high unemployment in the housing industry to dampen the Strike effort. They also used the police, who arrested more than 600 workers in the course of the strike. The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) was brought in to further intimidate the strikers.

Strike organizer Navarro explained, "At the beginning, the contractors expected us to return to work humiliated after a few weeks. They didn't think we would be able to organize ourselves. They didn't think we could keep going after the police started arresting us and the INS started trying to deport us. All of that only made us more determined. We surprised them."

Bosses use deportations

Some 50 workers faced deportation proceedings and about half were actually deported. Many drywallers are immigrant workers from Mexico.

The drywallers defended every arrested striker in court. Even when strikers signed "voluntary" deportation statements under pressure in jail, the unionists contested the right of the INS to deport them.

The strikers scandalized the INS for intervening in the strike. They organized demonstrations outside the Federal Building where the deportation hearings were held.

Another key to the drywallers' strength



Striking drywallers by a work site in Anaheim, California, in August 1992. December victory inspired working people and unions throughout the state.

Militant/Elizabeth Stone

and unity was their relentless campaign to convince workers who hadn't yet made up their minds to join in the strike. The picket lines resounded with shouts of "Come on, join us, brothers," and "Together we can win." The pickets fought to force the contractors to allow the most persuasive strikers to enter job sites and talk with the workers inside. These tests of strength would sometimes result in whole crews walking off the job. Other times it was just a step toward persuading the unconvinced.

The determination of the strikers caught the attention of other unionists in southern California. The Carpenters union was the first to jump in, providing money and union facilities for organizing centers and strike kitchens. A special AFL-CIO fund was set up. Twenty-one unions and six labor councils contributed to the fund, which grew to over \$3 million.

Churches and community organizations such as Hermandad Mexicana helped keep the kitchens that provided free daily meals

to hundreds of strikers stocked. The funds also went to help strikers pay monthly rent and electricity bills.

The December victory inspired working people and unions throughout California. The drywall workers have provided the best example in years of how it is possible, even in a period of deep economic crisis, to organize and defeat the employers.

As Navarro said, "This is only the beginning. There are unorganized roofers and framers who want to do the same thing. And drywall workers in other parts of the country as well."

Solidarity is still needed. Messages of support and contributions can be sent to: Carpenters Union Local 2361, 1916 W. Chapman Ave., Orange, CA 92668. Telephone: (714) 937-9911.

Elizabeth Stone is a member of International Association of Machinists Lodge 1932 and Craig Honts is a member of United Transportation Union Local 1700.

Eyewitnesses to cop beating of King expected to testify at federal trial

BY HARRY RING

LOS ANGELES — Civilian eyewitnesses to the police beating of Rodney King are expected to testify at the federal trial of the four Los Angeles cops now charged with violating King's civil rights.

There were numerous civilian witnesses to the brutalization of King, but none were called to the stand in the state trial, in which the four cops were acquitted on all but one count.

Several witnesses to the assault testified before the federal grand jury that indicted the cops for violating King's constitutional rights by intentionally using unreasonable force against him. Transcripts of grand jury testimony obtained by the *Los Angeles Times* confirm King did not attack the cops, as the defendants claim.

One bystander, Benjamín Becerra Avila, was asked, "Did he hit the officers?"

"I did not see that he hit him," the witness responded.

"Did he attack the officers?"

"I did not see that at any moment," Becerra Avila declared.

Another witness, Robert Hill, also told the grand jury he did not see King attack or threaten the cops. He said at one point King raised his hand, but he appeared to do so "to fend off the blows," not to attack the police.

A third eyewitness, Dorothy Mae Gibson, gave similar testimony. In an interview with the FBI, she reportedly described the beating as "sadistic."

Meanwhile, in a memorandum outlining their trial plan, federal prosecutors charge that Officer Laurence Powell allowed King to get off the ground and then used the opportunity to beat him with his club. In the

state trial, Powell asserted King had charged at him and was resisting arrest.

The federal memo states, "Defendant Powell made no attempt to keep King down, but instead allowed King to stand up and start moving. It continued, 'As King started moving in a direction near Powell, Powell hit King with a baseball-bat like swing of the baton, knocking him to the ground. Defendant Powell continued to strike King with his baton approximately 10 times after King fell down.'"

The prosecutors also rebut the story of Officer Theodore Briseno, who testified in the state trial that he had stomped King in the head merely to control him so the other cops would stop beating him. The document declares that King was already moving to comply with police commands when Briseno assaulted him. Briseno, the memo says, "stomped on his head, neck or back, causing King's body to convulse."

The prosecution added that defendant Timothy Wind joined Powell in beating King as he lay on the ground. When King rose to a sitting position, Wind "kicked him in the head, neck or back six times."

The federal case repeats the state charge against the commanding officer, Sgt. Stacey Koon, that he violated the law by failing to stop the three other cops from beating King.

Jury selection began February 3. The trial is scheduled to be held in an 80-seat courtroom in the Roybal Federal Building in downtown Los Angeles, with 32 of the seats reserved for assigned members of the press.

The state trial of the four cops was widely televised. Televising is barred in federal trials.



Militant/Elizabeth Stone

Preparing a meal at drywallers' food bank in Orange, California.

Clinton plans attack on Social Security behind fraud of 'shared sacrifice'

Continued from front page

rector, strongly advocates a one-year freeze in cost-of-living increases for Social Security recipients. Social Security checks currently amount to only \$650 a month on average.

Democratic congressman Dan Rostenkowski of Illinois went before a meeting of the American Association of Retired Persons February 4 to drive home the seriousness of government plans to make retired workers pay for the economic crisis. "I don't agree that any one segment of our society should be left as a sacred cow, not to be touched," he said. "We can't afford to let anyone escape his responsibility."

Coupled with increasing calls for sacrifice from the elderly is a campaign to convince working people that Social Security is not part of a social wage that working people have earned, but rather a form of government charity. John Stossel argues in a recent *Wall Street Journal* article, "Those who retired 10 years ago recovered everything they paid in, plus interest, three years after retirement. In essence, since then, they ha[ve] been collecting welfare."

In a *Wall Street Journal* interview given by Clinton shortly before taking office, the president also complains that one of the main problems with benefits to the elderly is that people are living too long. "When Social Security was instituted... The average person that actually drew retirement benefits spent about five or six of their adult years in retirement," he said. "Now, with the fastest growing group of the population over 80, by the turn of the century the average person could literally spend 20 years in retirement." When the *Journal* interviewer asked Clinton why not raise the corporate tax rate the president responded, "I was trying to leave as much money in the corporate sector as I could for reinvestment in the economy."

Another argument being raised against the elderly is that all old people are wealthy and therefore don't really need their benefits. Stossel contends "seniors... are the wealthiest age group" of all U.S. citizens. Because

old people won't accept a cut in benefits important social problems can't be solved, he says. To bolster his point he quotes a recent retiree who believes Social Security should be cut back because, "We cannot begin to deal with the two-headed monster of poverty and racial division that is destroying the soul of this nation until we deal with the deficit."

Far from being well to do, most recipients of Social Security need every penny of their benefits to live a decent life. It is estimated that even a one-year suspension of cost of living adjustments to social security would plunge a half-million elderly officially into poverty.



Protest against threatened cutbacks in early 1980s. The Clinton administration is sounding out schemes to cut Social Security payments most retirees depend on.

Ontario judge sets September trial date for two framed-up antiracist activists

BY ROBERT SIMMS

TORONTO — An Ontario judge ruled January 15 that Black rights activist Dudley Laws will be put on trial September 20. He, along with Larry Motley of Michigan, will face several charges of conspiracy to smuggle undocumented workers between Canada and the United States.

Laws and Motley are victims of a frame-up operation by the Metro Toronto police and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Laws is a leader of the Black Action Defense Committee in Toronto, which has organized many significant protests against police violence and murders of unarmed Blacks since 1988. Motley is the international president of the Universal African Improvement Association, originally founded by Marcus Garvey in 1914.

A preliminary hearing, which took place in several sessions last year, revealed that the police have no independent evidence or third-party witnesses of illegal activities by the accused activists.



Militant/Helen Nelson
Black rights activist Dudley Laws

Despite months of wiretaps on several phones and 24-hour police surveillance — an operation that cost \$400,000 and involved 30 full-time officers — the case by the police came down to the word of four undercover cops against the word of Laws and Motley, who say they are being framed. The four cops say they were smuggled across the Canada-U.S. border posing as "illegal immigrants" and that Laws and Motley accepted payment for these "illegal" activities.

Defense lawyers told the court the two activists were victims of "police entrapment and abuse of process."

The preliminary hearing ended November 18 when Ontario Court Judge William Babe ruled there was enough evidence to commit Laws and Motley to trial. Babe's decision is being appealed; that request will be heard in late April.

3,000 march against rightists in Vancouver

BY JOE YOUNG

VANCOUVER — Three thousand people, overwhelmingly young, participated in a spirited antiracist rally at the Vancouver Art Gallery January 22. This outpouring was organized to protest a meeting of the white-supremacist Canadian Liberty Net on less than two weeks notice.

Tom Metzger, the founder of the U.S.-based rightist organization White Aryan Resistance, was scheduled to be the featured guest at the meeting. About 20 racists showed up, but Metzger never appeared.

The British Columbia Organization to Fight Racism organized the protest. The event was supported by a wide range of groups, including the Vancouver and District Labour Council, the Canadian Farmworkers Union, the Vancouver Association of Chinese Canadians, and many others.

The Coalition United to Fight Oppression organized a march of several hundred to join the rally. Many gay-rights activists participated, protesting recent cases of gay-bashing.

At the end of the rally a few hundred protesters marched to the Century Plaza Hotel where the ultrarightists were meeting. Some individuals tried to break into the hotel. They were stopped by the police, who used clubs on the demonstrators. This incident was used by the media to portray the antiracist activists as a violent mob. The headline in the *Vancouver Sun* the next day read, "Racists escape mob through hotel parkade."

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Working farmers in Canada discuss crisis

BY ROGER ANNIS

SASKATOON, Saskatchewan — Three hundred delegates and guests met here for the biannual convention of the National Farmers Union (NFU) January 14-17. The convention discussed the crisis facing farmers throughout North America and adopted several action proposals to defend family farmers.

One of those proposals was to build and participate in a farm protest rally scheduled for January 26 in this city.

The NFU has 20,000 members in Canada on 4,300 small and family farms. It has no members in the largely French-speaking province of Quebec. Statistics presented to delegates detailed the devastating conditions under which small farmers are working today.

The number of farms in Canada declined from 318,000 in 1981 to 280,000 in 1991. The decline for individual and family farms was even more dramatic — from 275,000 to 177,000.

Farmers are being driven off the land by a combination of low prices for their products and escalating costs for land, equipment, fuel, and fertilizer.

Financial institutions ruthlessly exploit farmers when they are obliged to borrow money to survive. The total debt of Canadian farmers in 1991 was \$18 billion (\$22.8 billion Canadian); net farm income for 1992 will only amount to \$3.3 billion.

The crisis is particularly acute among grain farmers in western Canada. Here, wheat prices are at a historic low because of the significant expansion in world grain production in the 1980s and resulting trade war among agricultural traders in the various producing countries. Ten thousand farmers in Saskatchewan alone lost their farms between 1981 and 1991. Financial institutions now control 1.4 million acres of land in this province.

More and more farmers are forced to rely on off-farm income to make ends meet. Average annual income for farmers is \$29,000, but more than \$17,000 of that comes from jobs off the farms.

Fewer young people are able to farm because of the huge costs involved. In 1991, 32 percent of all farm operators in Canada were age 55 or older.

Tony Stoekl, a delegate to the NFU convention from the Peace River district of British Columbia, described his situation in an interview. He is a grain farmer with 1,300 acres and like others in his region faced recurring drought during the 1980s. Last

year brought more drought; his total farming income was \$9,500.

"That's enough to pay the hidden taxes on my fuel and nitrogen fertilizer," he explained. Stoekl will receive about \$20,000 from crop insurance and government support programs. That is all he and his family will have to pay their costs and living expenses. "Farming is like torture," he said. "I would be better off living on welfare."

In a speech to the convention, outgoing national president Wayne Easter accused the Canadian government of systematically dismantling the country's social and agricultural infrastructure under the guise of achieving competitiveness. "In the process, rural communities are being torn apart as farm families are dispossessed," he said.

Resolutions and discussion at the convention reflected the NFU's view that farmers need to organize around opposition to the North American Free Trade Agreement and preservation of existing agricultural agencies such as government-run marketing boards.

The organization favors negotiations at the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade talks that would open up markets for Canadian agricultural exports such as wheat. At the same time, it wants protectionist barriers maintained in Canada for such industries as dairy and poultry.

Easter wrote in a message to the convention, "Canada is rapidly losing its ability to set its own domestic policies because of the government's free-trade agenda. By surrendering our right as a nation to make our own decisions, particularly in regard to such an all-important matter as food policy, the government is also surrendering our ability to develop this country's true potential."

Delegates heard reports from John Hansen of the Nebraska Farmers Union and Luis Menesa Murillo from the National Union of Autonomous Regional Peasants Organizations of Mexico. Land prices in Mexico are rising, said Menesa, while peasants face the



Militant/Monica Jones
Participants in February 1992 rally of 30,000 farmers in Ottawa, Canada.

same cost-price squeeze as farmers all over the world. The result is growing poverty in the Mexican countryside. Increasing numbers of peasants are being forced into the cities to find work.

Many delegates were brought up to date on the fight for justice of imprisoned U.S. union and political activist Mark Curtis. Many members of the NFU have supported Curtis's case and have stayed informed through mailings. Supporters of Curtis's defense campaign discussed the latest developments in the case with delegates.

Youth at the convention organized a workshop on an exchange program through which young NFU members share five weeks each summer with farmers on three Caribbean islands — Grenada, St. Vincent, and Dominica. Several delegates who have visited Cuba took part in the discussion and reported favorably on the conditions of farmers they observed there. Many farmers in Canada travel to Cuba on holidays.

Roger Annis is a member of Canadian Auto-workers Local 1900 in Montreal.

Thousands of angry farmers rally in Saskatchewan for support payments

BY PAUL KOURI

SASKATOON, Saskatchewan — "This rally must go on record in demanding \$1 billion in support payments to farmers in Saskatchewan before March 1!" declared Ron Bishoff to more than 13,000 angry farmers attending a rally here.

The January 26 rally was called by the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool to protest what the organization calls "an economic crisis in agriculture beyond anything ever known." It was the largest rally of farmers in Canada in recent history.

Bishoff, a farmer from Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, was one of many speakers from the floor who addressed the politicians seated on a stage at the indoor hockey arena where the rally was held. His comments were greeted with a standing ovation.

Another farmer, from Cutworth, Saskatchewan, denounced the federal government for "policies that favor corporations at the expense of the working farmer."

Other demands raised by speakers at the rally were for a moratorium on foreclosures of indebted farmers and an end to government-imposed hikes in grain transportation costs.

Saskatchewan is Canada's largest grain-growing province and has been hit very hard by low prices. Pool spokesperson Richard Jennison explained in an interview, "Because of the international grain trade war, grain prices are down to 1930s levels in real dollars."

One farmer told reporters, "It costs \$100 per acre to grow my crops! I get \$50 in return. Where's the other \$50 supposed to come from?"

An older woman farmer said, "We're using up our retirement savings plan to pay for our chemical fertilizer. Where does that put us when we retire?"

The New Democratic Party government in Saskatchewan came under fire at the rally for cuts in the Gross Revenue Insurance Program (GRIP), a joint federal-provincial crop and income insurance program, which it made shortly after the 1991 election. "You

cost me \$29,000 with your changes to GRIP," a farmer from Yorkton charged Saskatchewan premier Roy Romanow, who had addressed the rally earlier.

"Many of us feel that the Romanow administration has turned its back on us. Both levels of government have lost touch with us; change must come from the grass roots," he said.

The day before the rally the federal and provincial governments announced a \$134 million (\$170 million Canadian) emergency support program to Saskatchewan farmers. The farmers are demanding much more, but in a speech to the rally Romanow said his government's high debt made that impossible. He called on the federal government to provide an immediate \$400 million income-deficiency payment to grain farmers.

Charles Mayer, Canada's minister of agriculture, told the rally that the answer to the crisis lies in more agricultural exports. For that, he argued, access to international markets must be opened up through the current discussions at the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the international body through which the world's capitalist countries negotiate their trading relations.

He said, "The answer is not getting more dollars [in aid]. The answer is getting better returns from the international market place."

Canadian grain companies and beef and pork processors favor reducing trade barriers because they are confident they can conquer a greater share of international markets. They are willing to let barriers in Canada come down in such highly protected industries as dairy and poultry if necessary. This is also the view of the Canadian government.

Like their U.S. counterparts, the government and industry blame subsidies paid by European governments to farmers in those countries for much of the problem.

This 'free trade' strategy is endorsed by the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, which is Canada's largest grain handling company. The Pool arose in the 1920s as a farmer

cooperative in opposition to the large companies that monopolized grain marketing at the time. For many years now its operations have been dominated by the largest capitalist farmers.

Many farmers at the rally didn't buy Mayer's explanations. Don Kinzie, a grain farmer in Pike Lake, Saskatchewan, told CBC news the day before the rally, "The problem in agriculture is the lack of government initiative to take control of what's happening in international markets. And if you talk about GATT, I don't know why we should bring farmers in Europe down to our level in Canada or the United States. They're having a hard time already."

Kinzie called on the government in Canada to provide a guaranteed price for grain that covers the cost of production. There should be a maximum number of bushels of wheat that could be sold at the guaranteed price, he said, adding, "I would also go so far as to call for a moratorium on all farm foreclosures."

Paul Kouri is a member of the United Steelworkers of America Local 3495 in Vancouver, British Columbia.



Militant/Monica Jones
Between 1981 and 1991 the number of individual and family farms in Canada declined from 275,000 to 177,000.

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Balkans' history seen in 1912-13 war writings

The Balkan Wars (1912-13): The War Correspondence of Leon Trotsky, by Leon Trotsky. 524 pp. New York: Pathfinder, 1981. \$30.95

BY IKE NAHEM

The breakup of Yugoslavia has been marked by a brutal war over territory and resources. Hundreds of thousands have already been killed, maimed, and disappeared. More than 2 million refugees have been generated — the largest number in Europe since World War II.

The Balkans have been at the center of imperialist diplomatic intrigue and military conflict throughout the 20th century. They have also been the scene of gigantic

IN REVIEW

class struggles uniting working people of the myriad nationalities, language groups, and religious denominations who live in the region bounded by the Adriatic, Aegean, and Black seas.

Large-scale military conflict broke out in the Balkans less than two years before World War I, helping trigger the first worldwide conflagration between the major capitalist powers.

The Russian revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky was an eyewitness to the Balkan Wars of 1912-13 and wrote extensively on war and politics in the peninsula for several publications. Pathfinder Press has collected these writings, originally printed in the Soviet Union in the mid-1920s, in *The Balkan Wars (1912-13)*. Workers, students, and others will find the volume an excellent resource to help understand the background to and roots of today's events.

At the time Trotsky, who had been a central leader of the St. Petersburg workers' soviet during the defeated 1905 Russian revolution, was a political exile living with his family in Vienna, Austria. From 1908-12 he published in Vienna *Pravda* (Truth), a socialist journal that was smuggled into Russia.

Trotsky supported his family and *Pravda* mainly as a journalist — writing under the pen name Antid Oto — for *Kievskaya Mysl* (Kievan Thought), which was the largest-selling newspaper in the Ukrainian city of Kiev and widely circulated in southern Russia. In 1912 the left-wing daily asked Trotsky to be its military correspondent and to cover, on the spot, the impending war in the Balkans.

Prior to 1912 Trotsky had followed political developments in the region and had political contacts in the working-class and revolutionary movements of several Balkan countries. The first section of *The Balkan Wars*, consisting of articles from 1908-10, provides historical and political background to the war dispatches and revolutionary journalism that make up the bulk of the book.

In these earlier pieces Trotsky explains the highly decomposed character of the nearly 500-year-old Turkish Ottoman Empire, which still ruled virtually all of the Balkan Peninsula, and the rise of the Young Turk movement of military officers opposed to the regime of Sultan Abdul Hamid; uncovers the diplomatic and political maneuvers of the regimes of the Russian Tsar and the European "Great Powers" in the Balkans; and analyzes the development of capitalist industry and working-class struggle in Turkey and several Balkan countries.

In the 1909 article "The New Turkey" Trotsky argues

for a unitary, democratic, and federal Balkan republic. "It is not its national diversity but the fact of its splintering into many states that weighs upon [the Balkan Peninsula] like a curse. Customs frontiers divide it artificially into separate bits. The machinations of the capitalist powers are interwoven with the bloody intrigues of the Balkan dynasties. If these conditions continue, the Balkan Peninsula will go on being a Pandora's box."

Trotsky was on his way to the Serbian capital, Belgrade, in October 1912 when hostilities broke out after Bulgaria, Greece, Montenegro, and Serbia attacked Turkey.

Isaac Deutscher, the Marxist historian and biographer of Trotsky and Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin, said Trotsky's Balkan war correspondence was in the "grand style of journalism... Each article was a considerable essay, remarkable for the solidity of its background information, for the wealth of impression and local colour, for the excellence of its portraiture and analysis, and, last but not least, for imaginative and vivid language... [Trotsky] was also a full-blooded journalist, keen to see things for himself, to interview people in all walks of life, and to supply his readers with hot topical matter."

Through the prism of the Balkan Wars Trotsky could see the alignment of the European imperialist powers as they would appear in World War I. He took a keen interest in military history and tactics. His war dispatches weave questions of supply, military training, and tactics into the fabric of national and troop morale.

The road to World War I

Under military attack Turkey and its European empire rapidly collapsed. The Turkish regime sued for peace in December 1912. "Peace negotiations" in London, under the direction of the top European capitalist powers, arrived at terms that recognized the decay of the old Ottoman order in Europe.

A military coup in Turkey opposing the London terms broke up the negotiations and fighting resumed in January 1913. After the fall of Adrianople and two other garrisons, the new Turkish government was impelled to submit to the London terms and signed a treaty at the end of May 1913. The Treaty of London satisfied no one, however, least of all the European imperialist powers whose pressure on the Balkan states produced it.

The other pre-World War I continental European empire, dismembered in the aftermath of that war, was Austria-Hungary. Backed by Germany and Italy, the government of the Hapsburg dynasty supported Albania against Serbian and Greek territorial ambitions, in particular Serbia's drive for an outlet to the sea.

Thus blocked by greater powers, the ruling classes of Greece and Serbia took sections of Macedonian territory



The Balkan Peninsula before the wars of 1912-13. With the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, the Balkans splintered into many small states.

that had been given to Bulgaria in previous treaties and accords.

One month after the London terms were signed Bulgaria attacked Greek and Serbian forces in Macedonia. Trotsky again left Vienna to cover the next round of Balkan combat. The second war left Bulgaria isolated and totally defeated in Macedonia. In addition, the Turkish army retook Adrianople and Romanian troops occupied the Bulgarian city of Silistria.

The second round of bitter Balkan fighting ended in late 1913. Less than a year later, on June 28, 1914, Serbian nationalists assassinated the heir apparent to the Hapsburg throne in Sarajevo, capital of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Austria-Hungary, backed by Germany and supported by Bulgaria, attacked Serbia, which was in turn backed by Russia, Britain, and France. World War I had begun.

The Balkan Wars includes useful maps, a five-country chronology, detailed notes and glossary, and an index. The introduction by George Weissman includes an analysis of the Yugoslav revolution of the 1940s and the consolidation of a federated workers' state under Josip Tito's Stalinist regime.

War is a great accelerator of politics and the class struggle. Out of World War I came the victory of the Russian revolution and an upsurge of working-class and revolutionary struggle throughout Europe. In the Balkans, the dismemberment of the Austro-Hungarian Empire led to the establishment of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, which became Yugoslavia in 1929.

Out of World War II came a people's revolution in Yugoslavia when the united toilers of all nationalities defeated the Nazi occupation, established their own government, and overturned capitalist property relations.

Out of the present carnage and growing imperialist intervention in the Balkans the working people and youth in southeast Europe will again fight to find a united way forward against the gangster nationalist regimes and imperialist intervention, as part of international anticapitalist struggles.

'Union of all peoples' is way forward for region

The following passage is from "The Balkan Question and Social Democracy," written by Leon Trotsky in 1910. The article forms part of *The Balkan Wars (1912-13)*. This excerpt is copyright © by Pathfinder Press and is reprinted by permission.

Two aspects need to be distinguished in what is known as the Eastern Question: first, it is a question of the relations between the nations and states of the Balkan Peninsula; second, it is a question of the conflicting interests and intrigues of the European capitalist powers in the Balkans. These two questions are not at all identical. On the contrary: the real solution of the purely Balkan Question runs entirely counter to the interests of the European dynasties and stock exchanges.

The Balkan Peninsula, which is approximately as big as Germany but has only about one-third as many inhabitants (22 million), is divided between six independent states: Greece, Turkey, Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Montenegro, together with the Austro-Hungarian provinces of Dalmatia, Bosnia, and Herzegovina. In the six independent states, each of which has its own dynasty, army, currency, and customs system, there live many nations and races, divided into separate fragments: Greeks, Turks, Romanians, Bulgars, Serbs, Albanians, Jews, Armenians, Gypsies... The frontiers between

the dwarf states of the Balkan Peninsula were drawn not in accordance with national conditions or national demands, but as a result of wars, diplomatic intrigues, and dynastic interests.

The Great Powers — in the first place, Russia and Austria — have always had a direct interest in setting the Balkan peoples and states against each other and then, when they have weakened one another, subjecting them to their economic and political influence. The petty dynasties ruling in these "broken pieces" of the Balkan Peninsula have served and continue to serve as levers for European diplomatic intrigues. And this entire mechanism, founded on violence and perfidy, constitutes a huge burden weighing upon the Balkan peoples, holding back their economic and cultural development.

Thus, the Serbs are forcibly partitioned between five states: they form one small "kingdom" and one tiny "principality," namely, Serbia and Montenegro, separated from each other by the sanjak of Novibazar, which, though inhabited by Serbs, belongs to Turkey; many Serbs live in the Macedonian districts subject to Turkey; finally, a large proportion of the Serbs are included within the frontiers of Austria-Hungary.

A similar picture is offered by all the other Balkan nationalities. This peninsula, richly endowed by nature, is senselessly split up into little bits; people and goods moving

about in it constantly come up against the prickly hedges of state frontiers, and this cutting of nations and states into many strips renders impossible the formation of a single Balkan market, which could provide the basis for a great development of Balkan industry and culture.

On top of all this is the exhausting militarism that has come into being in order to keep the Balkans divided, and which has given rise to the danger of wars fatal to the peninsula's economic progress — wars between Greece and Turkey, Turkey and Bulgaria, Romania and Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia...

The only way out of the national and state chaos and the bloody confusion of Balkan life is a union of all the peoples of the peninsula in a single economic and political entity, on the basis of national autonomy of the constituent parts. Only within the framework of a single Balkan state can the Serbs of Macedonia, the sanjak, Serbia, and Montenegro be united in a single national-cultural community, enjoying at the same time the advantages of a Balkan common market. Only the united Balkan peoples can give a real rebuff to the shameless pretensions of tsarism and European imperialism.

State unity of the Balkan Peninsula can be achieved in two ways: either from above, by expanding one Balkan state, whichever proves strongest, at the expense of the

weaker ones — this is the road of wars of extermination and oppression of weak nations, a road that consolidates monarchism and militarism; or from below, through the peoples themselves coming together — this is the road of revolution, the road that means overthrowing the Balkan dynasties and unfurling the banner of a Balkan federal republic.

The policy followed by each of these
Continued on next page

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Meeting of socialist oil workers discusses bosses' offensive and political openings

BY OMARI MUSA

PHILADELPHIA — Socialist workers who are members of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) met here January 23-24 to discuss the employers' offensive and the tasks of socialists in the union. The meeting occurred just one week before the expiration of hundreds of contracts between the OCAW and oil companies.

Discussions centered on a report given by OCAW member Joanne Kuniansky from Pittsburgh that outlined the perspective of the Clinton administration and the oil barons. "The program of the new administration is more wars like that against the people of Iraq and austerity against working people in the United States. The government is taking deadly aim at many of the entitlements working people have won. At the top of Clinton's hit list," Kuniansky said, "are Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid." She noted that in the current crisis it is not only workers' present wages the bosses seek to slash, but also our "social wage, the part of our pay that is deferred for when we are retired or put out of work."

As U.S. rulers increase the use of troops to defend big business abroad, the economic situation at home is not looking good at all. Unemployment is still very high, even though the government has officially declared the recession over. Big layoffs were announced recently, Kuniansky noted. These include workers at United Airlines, General Motors, and International Business Machines.

Oil industry also in crisis

Kuniansky also reported that the oil and chemical industry has not been excluded from the capitalist crisis. The August 1992 *Oil and Gas Journal* announced plummeting profit margins. The trends they predict include a continuing loss of thousands of jobs in the U.S. petrochemical industry. "The oil and chemical barons are trying to

shore up their falling rates of profit by demanding higher productivity from us with fewer workers. This will result," she said, "in an increase in catastrophic accidents, deaths, and injuries."

"The bosses are going to squeeze and try to get us to make concessions in the upcoming oil bargaining, but they are not prepared to launch an all-out assault on our unions yet. They're chipping away at both our take-home pay and the social wage."

The bosses are meeting some resistance in their drive against working people. Several participants in the meeting pointed to the fight of United Steelworkers of America members against Trinity Industries in Bessemer, Alabama, and the successful organizing drive by OCAW members at the Chevron refinery in Philadelphia.

One highlight of the meeting was discussion on a recent trip to Trinidad and Tobago by socialist oil workers. OCAW members John Benson from Los Angeles and Dan Fein from Miami were part of a team of Pathfinder Press supporters who participated in a book fair organized by the Oil Workers Trade Union (OWTU) there. The OWTU is the largest and one of the most powerful unions in the Caribbean. Both Benson and Fein explained the Trinidadian bosses are on a big privatization drive. "And right at the center of this drive is privatizing the state-owned oil and chemical industry," Benson said. The union is opposed to privatization and is trying to fight against it. Fein noted that Pathfinder Press is well respected among



Oil refinery. Thousands of jobs are being lost in the petrochemical industry as the bosses try to boost profits by demanding more production from fewer workers.

Trinidadian workers and youth. "We also found that many workers and young people supported the Cuban revolution and wanted

to read more about it and its leaders," he said.

Socialist oil workers also discussed their participation in a western regional women's conference organized by the OCAW. The conference brought together 80 women OCAW members from Alaska to Nevada.

Women in the union

Pat Grogan, a refinery operator and OCAW member from Salt Lake City, Utah, said women from different generations participated in the conference. "There were older women who had fought their way into the industry and fought the early battles, and a younger generation who had not experienced the big retreats of the union movement in the face of the boss offensive of the last 15 years."

Pat Nixon, an OCAW member from Los Angeles, said that, while the organizers of the conference didn't put issues like abortion on the agenda, "there were discussions on clinic defense and abortion rights informally among participants." Many women at the conference were interested in socialist literature. Seven women OCAW members bought *Militant* subscriptions.

Many socialist oil workers pointed to the role of the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, *New Internationalist*, and Pathfinder Press titles in promoting a working-class perspective among unionists. They noted increased sales on the job of titles on Malcolm X and

the Cuban revolution. Philadelphia OCAW member Kathleen Mickells reported on the recent successes of OCAW members in the international drive to expand circulation of socialist literature.

"We went over our goals," she reported. "We expanded the *Militant's* sub base among OCAW members, while getting renewals and new readers. We want to come out of this meeting on a footing to circulate the revolutionary press among our coworkers on a regular basis and as broadly as possible."

Participants decided to launch a drive through the end of February to sell 32 copies of the *Militant* each week, win 21 new members to the Pathfinder Readers Club, sell 21 copies of *New Internationalist*, and convince current readers to renew their subscriptions to the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*.

A forum on the Clinton presidency, presented by *Militant* labor editor Paul Mailhot in conjunction with the OCAW meeting, drew nearly 60 people. In addition to OCAW members, several students and other unionists from the Philadelphia area attended.

Omari Musa is a member of OCAW Local 1-326 in San Francisco.

Union reaches agreement with Amoco that will set pattern in oil industry

SAN FRANCISCO — The national oil bargaining policy committee of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) union announced an agreement with Amoco Oil Co. February 1. This proposal constitutes the pattern for more than 300 contracts with oil companies whose workers are represented by the OCAW. Negotiations continue plant by plant on local issues.

The announced settlement calls for a wage increase in the first two years totaling \$1.25 per hour and 70 cents in the third year; modest hikes in the company's contribution to employees' medical plan; and a family-leave policy of up to 12 weeks in a 12-month period "in the event of a birth or adoption . . . or the serious illness of a child, spouse, or parent."

While the major oil companies in California have agreed to the terms of the Amoco contract, several statewide and local issues have yet to be resolved. Foremost among them is wage parity of the northern California refineries with those in the Los Angeles area. Unocal, ARCO, and other refineries granted raises to workers in southern California based on a substantial wage increase won at the Chevron refinery after the expiration of the last contract in 1989. The bosses gave higher wages in exchange for job combinations and other concessions agreed to by union officials.

Soon after the recent Amoco agreement was ratified in the Los Angeles area, workers at Unocal's Rodeo refinery in northern California organized informational picket lines for wage parity. These pay increase demands range from \$1.08 to \$1.80 per hour in operations and maintenance. At the same time OCAW Local 1-326 members in Rodeo rejected the job combinations in maintenance accepted in Los Angeles.

The negotiation committees at Chevron, Shell, Unocal, and Tosco have agreed to present the wage parity issue as a statewide demand to the oil companies.

A tentative agreement was reached between Unocal and the union officials February 6. It still needs to be approved by the membership.

Martin Luther King holiday

Oil workers are also demanding a paid holiday on Martin Luther King's birthday and that companies pay a union member to be an environmental safety monitor. The question of a King holiday was the central demand of a demonstration held January 18 at the offices of Tosco Refining, Unocal, and Chevron organized by OCAW Locals 1-5 and 1-326.

Since the January 18 action the two locals have organized picket lines and rallies at or near four refineries in northern California to press contract demands. On February 5 nearly 400 workers from area refineries held a rally at Shell Oil Co. in Martinez. Support

from the surrounding community was expressed by hundreds of honking horns.

The question of the union having a monitor who can challenge company safety violations and environmental hazards is being widely discussed by oil workers. Many environmental groups in the area have raised the need for monitors of the refineries responsible to the communities surrounding the workplaces.

More rallies are planned to push the three major statewide issues. As one coworker explained, "The real issues are parity, a King holiday, and environmental monitors. I'm not all that excited about the national wage and medical agreement, but we can win the statewide issues and make some headway against the companies if we stick together against them."

— OMARI MUSA

'Union of all peoples' is the road forward

Continued from previous page

pint-sized Balkan monarchs, with their ministers and ruling parties, has as its ostensible aim the unification of the greater part of the Balkan Peninsula under one king. "Greater Bulgaria," "Greater Serbia," "Greater Greece," are the slogans of this policy. Actually, though, nobody takes such slogans seriously. They are semiofficial lies put out to win popularity among the people. The Balkan dynasties, artificially installed by European diplomacy and lacking any sorts of roots in history, are too insignificant and too insecure on their thrones to venture upon a "broad" policy such as Bismarck's when he united Germany by blood and iron. The first serious shock could sweep away for good the Karageorgeviches, Coburgs, and other crowned Lilliputians of the Balkans.

The Balkan bourgeoisie, as in all coun-

tries that have come late to the road of capitalist development, is politically sterile, cowardly, talentless, and rotten through and through with chauvinism. It is utterly beyond its power to take on the unification of the Balkans. The peasant masses are too scattered, ignorant, and indifferent to politics for any political initiative to be looked for from them. Accordingly, the task of creating normal conditions of national and state existence in the Balkans falls with all its historical weight upon the shoulders of the Balkan proletariat.

This class is as yet small in numbers for Balkan capitalism is everywhere still hardly out of swaddling clothes. But every step forward along the road of economic development, every additional mile of railway line, every new factory chimney that arises in the Balkans, increases and rallies the

ranks of the revolutionary class. Alien to every kind of ecclesiastical and monarchical superstition and to all bourgeois-democratic and nationalistic prejudices, the young Balkan proletariat, filled with vigor and enthusiasm, is utilizing, in the first steps that it takes on its historic road, the rich experience of its elder brothers in Europe.

The Social Democratic parties of Bulgarian and Serbia, the most mature representative of the labor movement in the Balkans, are fighting tirelessly on two fronts: against their own dynastic-chauvinist cliques and against the imperialist plans of tsarism and the Europe of the stock exchanges. A federal republic in the Balkans, as the positive program of this struggle, has become the banner of the entire conscious proletariat of the Balkans without distinction of race, nationality, or state frontiers.

UN mediators seek NATO warplanes to enforce Bosnia partition

Continued from front page

Clinton said he is instead preparing a diplomatic effort to modify the proposed peace plan to make it acceptable to the Bosnian government. Clinton's retreat from earlier positions favoring direct military intervention came at the urging of his defense secretary Les Aspin and the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff Gen. Colin Powell.

Pentagon and NATO officials are worried that imposition of the Vance-Owen plan under the circumstances will require a much larger force and the involvement of U.S. ground troops. A February 4 *New York Times* editorial, which endorsed Clinton's cautious approach, said "any accord will have to be policed by 200,000 Europeans and Americans, by NATO estimates." The *International Herald Tribune* put the troop estimate at 100,000.

The recent shift in Washington's stance towards the conflict in Bosnia came as the government of Russia threatened to veto at the UN Security Council any proposals for military strikes against Serbia. The Security Council will be discussing such proposals this week.

The debate in the U.S. media took new twists with the announcement of the administration's reservations over the Vance-Owen initiative. In the February 8 issue of *Time* magazine, columnist Charles Krauthammer — who has in the past opposed U.S. moves towards intervention — endorsed the Vance-Owen plan. He said that "western governments should be providing the muscle behind the mediation," when "instead the mediation is being undermined by American signals of nonconfidence."

Clinton dispatched Les Aspin to Europe, attempting to win support for his approach toward Bosnia. Administration officials have said their initiative, will include a tightening of the embargo against Belgrade and stepping up of aid to Bosnia. German chancellor Helmut Kohl has also called for a total blockade of Serbia.

The sanctions have continued to have a devastating effect on the people of Serbia. According to a report in London's *Financial Times*, prices in Yugoslavia — comprised of Serbia and Montenegro — rose 100 percent in December. Industrial production is down 22 percent from a year ago. More than 800,000 workers have been forced on compulsory leaves. Some 70 percent of Serbia's nearly 10 million inhabitants are earning less than \$370 per year. The continued tumbling of the value of the Yugoslav dinar has led many companies to conduct business only in dollars.

Meanwhile, the Vance-Owen "peace map" that divides Bosnia into 10 autonomous cantons along ethnic lines, has spurred new fighting in Bosnia and Croatia.

The Croatian army has continued its offensive unabated against Serb-held positions near the Adriatic coast. Serbian separatists hold nearly one third of Croatian territory, which they have named the "Serbian Republic of Krajina."

Rightist Serbian forces have launched a new wave of "ethnic cleansing" in villages around Zvornik in eastern Bosnia, expelling thousands of Muslims. Radovan Karadzic's troops recently expelled all 4,000 Muslims from the town of Trebinje, in the southern corner of the republic. In another case of "ethnic cleansing," Croatian militiamen opened fire on a dozen Serbian civilians they had taken from their homes in the town of Mostar, which is controlled by the Croatian army.

Zeljko "Arkan" Raznjatovic, head of the Serb fascist paramilitary group in Kosovo called the Tigers, has begun a campaign to push Albanian families out of their homes in some villages of northern Kosovo and give their land to Serbs.

Labor news in the Militant

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

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

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Birmingham

Support Asylum for Haitian Refugees! Speaker: Evan Roberts, Socialist Workers Party, member United Steelworkers of America Local 9226, on strike against Trinity Industries. Sat., Feb. 13, 7 p.m. 111 21st St. S. Donation: \$3. Tel: (205) 323-3079.

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Open U.S. Borders to Haitian Refugees. Speaker: Rodney Holt, member International Association of Machinists. Video: *Killing the Dream*. Sat., Feb. 13, 7:30 p.m. 2546-C W. Pico Blvd. Donation: \$4. Tel: (213) 380-9460. Translation to Spanish.

San Francisco

Revolutionary Cuba Today. Speakers: Rebecca Gettleman, student, University of California Santa Cruz; Alfredo Rico, Socialist Workers Party, member United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1179. Both just returned from youth brigade to Cuba. Sat., Feb. 13, 7:30 p.m. 3284 23rd St. (near Mission). Donation: \$3. Tel: (415) 282-6255.

Malcolm X: The Final Speeches. Panel discussion on new book from Pathfinder Press. Sat., Feb. 20, 7 p.m. 3284 23rd St. (near Mission). Donation: \$3. Tel: (415) 282-6255.

FLORIDA

Miami

The Clinton Presidency: Challenges Facing Youth and Trade Unionists. Speaker: representative, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Feb. 13, 7:30 p.m. 137 NE 54th St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (305) 756-1020. Translation to Spanish and French.

GEORGIA

Atlanta

Haiti: The Fight for Justice and the Refugees. Speakers: Wesley Madhere, Haitian Culture Society; Rev. Felix Jean-Guillaume, Haitian Ministry; G. Bellard, Haitian community activist; Dan Fein, Socialist Workers Party; representatives of Clergy and Laity Concerned and Southern Chris-

tian Leadership Conference. Sat., Feb. 13, 7:30 p.m. 172 Trinity Ave. SW. Donation: \$3. Tel: (404) 577-4065.

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Gays in the Military. A panel discussion. Sat., Feb. 13, 7 p.m. 545 W. Roosevelt Rd. Donation: \$4. Tel: (312) 829-6815 or 829-7018.

MARYLAND

Baltimore

The Clinton Presidency — Challenges Facing Youth and Trade Unionists. Speaker: Sara Lobman, *Militant* staff writer. Sat., Feb. 13, 7:30 p.m. 2905 Greenmount Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (410) 235-0013.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

Malcolm X: Internationalist Fighter/Opponent of Imperialist War. Sat., Feb. 13, 7:30 p.m. 780 Tremont St. (corner Mass Ave.) Donation: \$3. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

MINNESOTA

St. Paul

The Clinton Presidency: Challenges Facing Youth and Trade Unionists. Speaker: Doug Jenness, Socialist Workers Party, member United Steelworkers of America Local 15199. Sat., Feb. 13, 7:30 p.m. 508 N. Snelling Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (612) 644-6325.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

The Glen Ridge Rape Trial. A panel discussion. Sat., Feb. 13, 7:30 p.m. 141 Halsey St., 2nd floor. Donation: \$3. Tel: (201) 643-3341. Translation to Spanish and French.

NORTH CAROLINA

Greensboro

The Legacy of Malcolm X. Speakers: Cecil Rouson, former bodyguard for Malcolm X; Robert Dees, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Feb. 13,



Speakers at recent New York Militant Labor Forum on Haiti (see article on page 3). Militant Labor Forums are weekly free-speech meetings for workers, farmers, and youth.

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7:30 p.m. 2000-C S. Elm-Eugene Street. Donation: \$3. Tel: (919) 272-5996.

The Struggle to Save Black Farms. Speakers: Billy Harvey, Rural Advancement Fund; Lillie Mae Bailey, United Farmers Organization; representative, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Feb. 20, 7:30 p.m. 2000-C S. Elm-Eugene Street. Donation: \$3. Tel: (919) 272-5996.

PENNSYLVANIA

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End the Death Penalty! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Panel of speakers including representative of Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal. Sat., Feb. 13, 7:30 p.m. 1906 South St. Donation \$3. Tel: (215) 546-8218.

Pittsburgh

Gays in the Military. Speakers: Randy Collins, Univ. of Pittsburgh student; Matilde Zimmermann, Socialist Workers Party; Todd Kinavey, Pitt BIGALA; Chris Young, League of Gay and Lesbian Voters. Sun., Feb. 14, 7 p.m. 4905 Penn Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (412) 362-6767.

UTAH

Salt Lake City

The Legacy of the Civil Rights Movement. Sat., Feb. 13, 7 p.m. 147 E. 900 S. Donation: \$3. Tel: (801) 355-1124.

Thomas Sankara and the African Revolution. Speaker: Pat Hunt, Socialist Workers Party, member, United Transportation Union. Sat., Feb. 20, 7 p.m. 147 E. 900 S. Donation: \$3. Tel: (801) 355-1124.

CANADA

Toronto

Why Working People Should Support Affirmative Action. Speaker: Heidi Rose, Communist League, member, International Association of Machinists Lodge 2754. Sat., Feb. 13, 7:30 p.m. 827 Bloor St. West. Donation: \$3. Tel: (416) 533-4324.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

Yazaki Strike in Western Samoa. A panel of speakers. Sat., Feb. 13, 7 p.m. La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Rd. Donation: \$3. Tel: (9) 379-3075.

Palestinian Resistance to Israeli Occupation. Speaker: Laila Deeb, Palestinian journalist based in Jordan, involved in relief work for Iraq. Sat., Feb. 20, 7 p.m. La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Rd. Donation: \$3. Tel: (9) 379-3075.

Wellington

New Steps in the Fight to Free Mark Curtis. Video and presentation by Christine Beresford. Fri., Feb. 12, 7 p.m. 23 Majoribanks St., Courtenay Pl. Donation \$3. Tel: (4) 384-4205.

The Widening Conflict in Yugoslavia. Sat., Feb. 20, 7 p.m. 23 Majoribanks St., Courtenay Pl. Donation \$3. Tel: (4) 384-4205.

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The Murder of Joe Hill. Speaker: Hilding Eklund, Metalworker. Sat., Feb. 13, 4 p.m. Vikingagatan 10 (T-bana St Eriksplan). Tel: (08) 31 69 33.

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That's odd — "Despite its many good deeds, the 22,000-member UN peacekeeping force, like the government, is far from universally popular



Harry Ring

here." — *Los Angeles Times* dispatch from Cambodia.

Oh — "UN officials, paid salaries plus \$145 a day as a hardship allowance, crowd Phnom Penh's tiny La Mousson Restaurant, which serves caviar on blinis. Air-condi-

tioned UN offices close for a two-hour lunch break each day while thousands of Cambodian employees — including mine-clearing teams earning \$1.50 a day — have not been paid in weeks." *L.A. Times* on "largest and most expensive United Nations peacekeeping operation in history."

Not that we're skeptical — We'd appreciate a Japanese-speaking reader providing a translation of "ooya san." A news report on the death of Taikichi Mori, a multi-billionaire Tokyo real estate shark, said people called him that, and it's "a friendly nickname."

Peaceful war — "Despite the name, nonlethal weapons are

hardly gentle, and in a few instances, they could even make war more grotesque. For example, powerful lasers designed to destroy an enemy tank's optics could also explode a soldier's eyeballs. Portable microwave weapons... can quietly cut enemy communications but also can cook internal organs." — *The Wall Street Journal* on a new class of weapons that can supposedly disable equipment without hurting people.

Mummy dear — If you'd like your remains preserved for posterity, check out Summum, a mummification company. No-frills mummies start at \$32,000. Custom-made is a bit stiffer. Can include

gold inlay and eye sockets drilled out for sapphire insets. That's upward of half a million.

Better not answer wrong — His name is John Grundhofer, but he's also called Jack the Ripper because his specialty is firing people. In three years as head of First Bank System Inc. of Minneapolis, he's chopped 2,000 jobs. He makes nearly a million but his office is modest, with three plants he assertedly paid for himself. "And we water them ourselves, don't we?" he says to his secretary.

Give someone a sense of history — With the 30th anniversary of the Kennedy assassination coming up in November, the National

Historical Mint is offering 5,000 bullets recently fired from the gun that Jack Ruby used to kill Lee Harvey Oswald. Each is boxed in a cherrywood case with a "Ruby red" velvet lining. \$495.

New toxic waste — Over the past five years in Montana, at least nine drunken grizzly bears have been killed by Burlington Northern freight trains. A report says bears get stoned eating grain spilled from derailed freight trains that has become fermented. The bears then fall asleep on the tracks. BN says it's spending \$3 million to improve rails and ties along curves to reduce derailments and save bears.

Governors cheer Clinton plan to gouge welfare

BY MARTIN KOPPEL

President Bill Clinton, repeating a campaign promise, vowed to "end welfare as we know it" in a February 2 speech to a meeting of governors from across the United States. Both Democratic and Republican governors enthusiastically applauded his proposals, which if enacted will sharply restrict the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program.

Clinton's proposed measures would limit welfare payments to two years. After that, working people receiving welfare would be required to have a job or be cut off. The government would also require recipients to attend school or a job training program. Almost 14 million people in the United States rely on federal welfare programs to subsist.

The president said state governments would be given "more elbow room to experiment" with ways to slash welfare.

As a carrot, the government would assertedly provide health insurance, child care, and a tax incentive to AFDC recipients who do find a job. Clinton also promised to crack down on those who owe child support payments to parents receiving welfare.

During the presidential campaign, Clinton pledged to allocate \$6 billion for these measures. Since then, administration officials have backtracked on how much would be spent on programs like job training. That figure is "not necessarily what's going to be included in the president's budget" next month, Clinton aide Bruce Reed cautioned.

Bipartisan backing

Clinton pushed his austerity measures in the name of reducing the budget deficit. He resorted to the demagogic notion that working people who are poor are to blame for their own situation and should do more to "help themselves." Limiting access to welfare "will remove the incentive for staying in poverty," he declared. "And it will reinforce the work ethic."

The president's proposals won solid bipartisan support. Robert Rector of the conservative Heritage Foundation hailed Clinton's criticism of welfare as "slightly to the right of things that Ronald Reagan said during the 1980s." Republican governor John Engler of Michigan said he was "very excited" about Clinton's welfare-gutting program. The Michigan government abolished its general assistance program in 1991, cutting off 82,000 people.

Democratic senator Daniel Moynihan, a leader of the antiwelfare campaign in Congress, said he was "hugely gratified" by

Clinton's speech. Moynihan sponsored the 1988 Family Support Act, which includes major elements of Clinton's program.

With growing unemployment and declining living standards, the number of working people living in poverty has taken a leap in recent years.

Two million more people were pushed below the official poverty line in 1991, increasing the number of poor to nearly 36 million, or 14 percent of the population. For Blacks, who are doubly hit by the growing unemployment and declining living standards, the poverty rate has risen to more than 32 percent.

As a result of these depression conditions, the number of families receiving welfare increased more in 1990-92 than in the previous 16 years. At the same time, however, state governments have slashed social programs for the poor since 1991. AFDC benefits have been frozen or cut in at least 40 states, drastically in some. Average welfare benefits for a single parent with two children are now a meager \$372 a month.

Wisconsin, for instance, has instituted a two-tier welfare program. New residents moving from states with smaller benefits are frozen at that lower level for six months. The government also cuts payments to recipients whose children drop out of school.

Connecticut governor Lowell Weicker has proposed a "welfare reform" plan that would remove people deemed "employable" from the state's welfare rolls. This would chop off 22,000 working people — two-thirds of general assistance recipients — by July 1.

New Jersey has established a so-called workfare plan that big business views as a model for other states. It denies additional benefits to mothers who have a second child and orders those receiving welfare to attend a state job training program. But since it began more than two years ago, "less than 10 percent" of the 5,900 people in the program have been hired, program coordinator Clare Elton said in a phone interview.

Scapegoating workers

Oregon adopted a workfare measure — still awaiting federal approval — that would eliminate welfare payments, unemployment insurance, and food stamps for three years in six target counties. Welfare recipients would instead be forced to work at private or government jobs at 90 percent of the state's \$4.75-an-hour minimum wage.

Some states already demand that women receiving welfare get married, limit the size of their families, and keep their children in

school. Other governments want to be able to require that people submit to drug tests, fingerprinting, or implantation of birth-control devices as a condition for receiving welfare. Those who refuse such punitive measures would be stricken from the rolls.

Such programs, along with the "workfare" proposals, are reminiscent of a degrading system of private and public charity for a minority of the most impoverished workers — the workhouses and poorhouses of the last century.

In an attempt to reinforce divisions among working people, proponents of gutting welfare portray workers receiving AFDC benefits as lazy "welfare cheats." California governor Pete Wilson, for example, has targeted immigrant workers in his campaign to reduce welfare. He has scapegoated them for the state's recession conditions, accusing them of being "tax recipients" who burden middle-class "tax payers."

The AFDC program is not the only thing on the Clinton administration's chopping block. So are Medicaid, which is subsidized health care for welfare beneficiaries and low-paid workers; Medicare, health care for the elderly; and Social Security.

These entitlements — programs with an

automatic allocation of funds that is not reviewed in annual budgets — are among the social gains that working people won through giant struggles in the 1930s and expanded through the civil rights struggles of the 1960s. Together with the hourly wage paid by employers, these government-paid benefits, or social wage, make up the basic living standards of working people.

The employer class and its government are on a drive to lower the hourly wage and social wage of working people in order to restore the sagging profit rates of U.S. capitalists in their cutthroat competition with rivals abroad. They want workers and farmers to pay for the economic breakdown of capitalism.

As Clinton was speechifying to the governors about the need to "move people off welfare rolls and onto payrolls," major corporations like IBM, Boeing, Sears, and McDonnell Douglas were announcing plans to lay off 100,000 workers.

The White House and Congress have offered no solution to address the mass layoffs and rising poverty. The only road to win jobs for all is for the labor movement to fight to reduce the workweek with no cut in take-home pay.

25 AND 50 YEARS AGO

THE MILITANT

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February 19, 1968 Price 10¢

The Young Socialist Alliance held the largest convention in its history in Detroit Feb. 9-11. Three hundred and fifty youth came from 35 cities and towns, and among the delegates were students from 43 college campuses and 18 high schools.

The convention mapped plans for building a giant network of Young Socialists for Halstead and Boutelle across the country in support of the Socialist Workers Party election campaign.

In a report on the antiwar resolution, YSA national chairman Lew Jones described the deep significance of the recent National Liberation Front offensive in Vietnam.

Jones pointed out that the international antiwar movement is helping to organize an expanding youth radicalization on a world scale. "That radicalization comes mainly in response to the democratic struggles of the colonial world," he said. "That is, in Europe it was the Algerian revolution that was the spark. In this country it was the Cuban revolution, and the struggle of the Afro-American people."

"And today," Jones continued, "Throughout the world, youth are reacting to the Vietnamese revolution and rallying to its defense... American imperialism is throwing down the cudgels, and these youth are taking them up."

Pfc. Howard Petrick, a YSAer on leave from the army who was threatened last spring with court-martial for discussing his antiwar and socialist views with other GIs, described to the convention the nature of the antiwar sentiment within the army. One of the most significant developments he described was

the effects of the ghetto rebellions on black GIs. Petrick said the black GIs are more quick to praise the bravery of the Vietnamese revolutionaries than are the white GIs.

"There's a great admiration for the Vietnamese people," he said. "GIs I've talked to coming back from Vietnam will admit this, that these people have something we don't have because they are willing to die."

THE MILITANT

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February 20, 1943

The Rumanian government last week announced its willingness to allow 70,000 Rumanian Jews to leave that country for any refuge selected by the Allies, provided the democracies would agree to accept them. The more than 10,000,000 Jews of Europe and North Africa have undoubtedly been the chief sufferers at the hands of capitalism in its most horrible manifestation: fascism.

The Allies are using Hitler's treatment of the Jews as an important bulwark of their propaganda. They are able to point at the martyrdom of the Jews, and thereby win to the support of the war not only the Jews, but also the masses of workers, and large sections of other races, religions, and nationalities such as the Negroes, who have tasted the bitterness of persecution. But up to now the commiseration has been nearly exclusively verbal.

Before the war, when hundreds of thousands of desperate German and Austrian Jews clamored at American consular offices for permission to enter the United States, only a trickle were allowed visas. The great majority had to wait, entrapped, for deportation to the slave-ghettos of Eastern Poland, which are merely a stop en route to certain death at the hands of fascist detachments trained to kill humans on a large scale.

Save these 70,000 from the Rumanian torture chambers and slaughterhouses! Open the doors to the refugees!

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Expand Social Security program

"By the turn of the century the average person could literally spend 20 years in retirement," complained President Bill Clinton in a recent interview with the *Wall Street Journal*. "What's the problem?" most working people would wonder upon hearing that statement.

A humane society would look at the fact that people are living longer as a sign of progress. But under capitalism, if you're a worker and you're not producing goods that a boss can make a profit from, the longer you live on Social Security the more money gets diverted from the wealthy families who exploit us.

For that reason Clinton is determined to cut Social Security as part of reducing the budget deficit. Although his plan is called "shared sacrifice," in reality the government is choosing who should sacrifice and who should not. The wealthy families who hold the bonds that finance the government's deficit spending are not being asked to forsake their interest payments. Only working people are being asked to sacrifice. In fact, the government is trying to transfer more wealth to the wealthy.

In order to gain acceptance for Social Security cuts, Clinton, along with Democratic and Republican politicians in Congress, seeks to expand the conflict between generations. Retirees are pointed to as being prosperous on the whole, even rich, and getting more than they deserve. Young workers are told that they are paying for the overblown benefits of the elderly and that because of the national debt there may

not be enough to go around when they retire.

Retired workers are told they are being selfish for not giving to future generations. One article in the *Wall Street Journal* even blames older people for racial divisions in society, implying that payments to the elderly block funds from being dedicated to the poor and minorities.

The Social Security system is part of the social wage that working people have fought for over many decades. The social services that benefit working people in this country have been won as a by-product of mass political struggles, including those that built the industrial unions in the 1930s and battered down Jim Crow segregation in the late 1950s and 1960s.

Just as workers fight for better wages and working conditions on the job, entitlement programs such as Social Security are part of the working-class struggle to establish government responsibility for providing unemployment compensation, food and housing, and other basic social rights to all those affected by the workings of the capitalist system.

Rather than calling on workers who have retired to sacrifice at the altar of the budget deficit, the government should expand programs to protect people from the ravages of a capitalist economic system in crisis. Working people should oppose all reductions in payments to the elderly. Any moves to curtail Social Security for the "wealthy" are really aimed at the massive numbers of working people who benefit from the program.

For child care, available to all

The political storm that erupted over Zoë Baird's domestic help hiring practices has now also claimed Clinton's following two choices for attorney general, and continues to spread. As we go to press it has been revealed that Ron Brown, new occupant of the post of secretary of commerce, also was not paying Social Security taxes for his "household help" until last month, when the scandal broke.

Brown counts himself fortunate that he managed to get the job, unlike Zoë Baird and her two fellow guardians of the law, Kimba Wood and Charles Ruff.

Revealed in this government saga is the common practice among the wealthy: hire the servants as cheaply as possible. For many this means dodging Social Security payments. For some, it means hiring an undocumented worker, taking advantage of the precarious position such workers are in to pay them below what other workers would get.

Some columnists say the issue in this scandal is the oppression of women. "The Clinton administration has managed to permanently eliminate 99 percent of all working women," writes one. In a *New York Times* column titled, "It's Gender, Stupid," Anthony Lewis writes, "It is time to

focus on the real problem: the laws make it so hard to find good and legal child care."

Those arguing this, show the same class blindness displayed by Clinton when he thought Baird's lawbreaking would be viewed no differently from a parking ticket. When they talk on behalf of "working women" they don't mean the vast majority of women who work, or who would like to work. They are referring only to those from a certain class — the one that hires servants.

While Wood swore she broke no laws like Baird did, Clinton dropped her like a hot brick. "The public can't accommodate a complicated issue," said a Clinton aide, explaining why they didn't want to argue this one, and once again revealing their class prejudices.

Behind this scandal lies a real need of working women: for child-care facilities, conveniently located, free, and available to all. Millions of women face being considered pariahs for getting welfare benefits to stay home with their children, while others beg family and friends to help or risk criminal prosecution for leaving their children home alone. The fight for child care is in the interest of all working people.

European 'unity' gets shakier

The message behind the latest round in the currency crisis once again shaking the European Monetary System is that workers and farmers in Europe should brace themselves for fresh attacks on their democratic rights and standard of living.

The renewed monetary gyrations in the European Community (EC) show that steps toward so-called economic integration will not translate into a common European economic policy, let alone a common currency. Neither will the recent easing of many trade tariffs or passport controls among EC member countries translate into a "political union," that is, a common European foreign or military policy.

In the wake of the monetary turmoil in Europe, national antagonism, protectionism, and economic uncertainty have all intensified. The recent controversy between Paris and London over the transfer of the Hoover vacuum cleaner manufacturing facilities from Dijon, France, to Scotland is a case in point. The swipes by the German Bundesbank president calling British government officials and others "ignoramus" and the continued anti-German propaganda in Britain are additional proof of this.

Conflicts among the capitalist powers of a German-dominated Europe are rising amid a worldwide economic depression. In each country the capitalist class is attempting to put the burden of the crisis on the backs of working people. Bonn is trying to push through parliament a "solidarity pact" demanding wage concessions. Millions are joining the ranks of the unemployed in France, Denmark, and most other EC countries. Attacks on immigrant workers, who are being blamed for the crisis by rising ultra-rightist currents and most capitalist politicians, have spread throughout Europe. The Greek police are hunting for hun-

dreds of thousands of "illegal" immigrants for deportation.

At the same time, competition between European capitalists and other imperialist trading blocs has sharpened. Washington has taken the lead in dealing blow after blow to its rivals in Bonn, Paris, and Tokyo. The trade war began over oil-seed production, moved to steel exports, and has now turned to telecommunications and electrical equipment.

The mounting trade conflicts will lead to further trade wars and shooting wars. The rivalries among imperialist powers can herd humanity toward World War III — if the employers succeed in inflicting crushing blows against working people in Europe and elsewhere.

But workers, farmers, and young people have taken to the streets in many countries in Europe to resist this offensive on our social wage, working conditions, and democratic rights. Hundreds of thousands have protested against attacks on immigrants in Berlin and many other German cities, in Paris, and elsewhere. German chancellor Helmut Kohl is meeting resistance from labor unions in his attempt to impose his austerity plan. Thousands of high school students have occupied their schools in Greece for more than a month protesting government cutbacks on education.

Through such actions working-class unity can be forged across national borders. Such unity is needed to fight the capitalist rulers' onslaught, no matter what trading bloc working people find themselves in.

A fight for working-class unity can begin by demanding jobs for all by shortening the workweek with no cut in pay, affirmative action programs, and cancellation of the foreign debt that devastates Third World countries. The labor movement should oppose all restrictions on immigration and travel.

Persian Gulf War and lessons of Vietnam

In his letter printed on the opposite page, Robert Simms corrects a previous *Militant* article, which erroneously stated that the U.S. government and its allies dropped more bombs on Iraq during the 1990-91 Persian Gulf War than what Washington dropped on Vietnam during the 1960s

DISCUSSION WITH OUR READERS

and '70s. He notes that, in fact, the imperialists used significant resources in their effort to bring the Vietnamese people to their knees, unleashing destruction that "equaled the explosive force of 700 Hiroshima-type bombs."

This important fact gives the lie to assertions by some big-business commentators and politicians who still argue that Washington lost the Vietnam War because, as they put it, "we fought with one hand tied behind our backs." As Simms points out, the Vietnamese people went up against the most powerful imperialist war machine in the world — with its overwhelming firepower and military technology — and defeated it. Malcolm X made this point repeatedly: "Little rice farmers, peasants, with a rifle — up against all the highly mechanized weapons of warfare — jets, napalm, battleships, everything else, and they can't put those rice farmers back where they want them."

Today many proponents of U.S. aggression abroad point to Washington's war against Iraq as a victory that was decided by the overpowering use of technologically advanced weaponry. Of course, a growing number of capitalist politicians now admit that the Gulf War was not a victory but a political fiasco for the U.S. rulers — unsolved by George Bush, the problem has now been dropped in Bill Clinton's lap.

What's more, as the *Militant* article quoted by Simms noted, the assault on Iraqi forces was not an example of an organized people defending themselves against imperialist attack and losing. Washington and its allies simply massacred tens of thousands of fleeing workers and farmers whom the Hussein regime had abandoned on the battlefield. The Iraqi people showed their fighting capacity during their courageous post-Gulf War uprisings against the regime, and they will have the last word.



Antiaircraft gunner in Haiphong, Vietnam, 1967.

The real lesson of Vietnam is that working people around the world can and will defeat imperialism, in spite of its advanced military hardware. The best example today is that of the Cuban people, who made a socialist revolution 90 miles from U.S. shores and have successfully stood up to the imperialist giant for more than three decades.

Why has the U.S. government, after ceaseless aggressions, provocations, and a 30-year-long economic embargo against Cuba, been unable to invade that Caribbean island? For years, some argued that the Soviet nuclear arsenal acted as the main deterrent to a U.S. attack on Cuba. But the Stalinist regime in the Soviet Union has collapsed and revolutionary Cuba remains.

Even during the October 1962 "missile" crisis, when the U.S. rulers brought the world to the brink of nuclear war, it was not primarily the Soviet "deterrent" that blocked Washington's planned invasion of Cuba. As recent disclosures have shown, the Kennedy administration in October 1962 was taken aback at how rapidly a quarter of a million Cubans mobilized and took up arms to prepare to repel a U.S. assault. Since that moment the imperialist rulers have correctly judged that they would pay an undesirably high political price for invading Cuba, with huge U.S. casualties and enormous public opposition at home and abroad.

As Cuban president Fidel Castro explained to a 500,000-strong rally of Cubans in 1988, "our defense never depended on short-, intermediate-, or long-range missiles." The Cuban people, he said, "apply the principle that the defense of our country is in the hands of our own people."

— MARTIN KOPPEL

Workers occupy auto parts plant in Nova Scotia

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

Working people around the world are involved in skirmishes over speedup, forced overtime, layoffs, and attacks on health and safety benefits. Some unionists faced with sharp takeback demands, lockouts, and union-busting moves have gone on strike to force the bosses to back down.

We invite you to contribute

ON THE PICKET LINE

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.

Members of the Canadian Auto-workers union (CAW) have occupied the Premium Automotive Tanks Inc. factory in Port Hawkesbury, Nova Scotia, to protest the company's decision to close the plant and move production out of the province.

Company officials entered the plant at the end of the work day February 1 and handed out final paychecks. Trucks rolled in overnight and began to haul away the machinery.

The next day, 50 angry workers stormed the plant and confronted company owners and managers. Part-owner Alton Toole barricaded himself in a closed area of the plant to escape the wrath of the workers. Negotiations over severance pay

between the union and the company began later that day in the presence of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) Canada's federal cops.

Scenes of the plant occupation were broadcast on television news across Canada. The unionists are angry that the company has tried to sidestep its legal obligations to them. Under the Industry Closing Act of Nova Scotia, a company employing more than 50 workers must give three months' notice before closing its plants. Premium laid off 35 workers in late 1992,

bringing the number still working down to 43.

The workers are also angry over the millions of dollars of tax money which Premium has received since locating its factory in Nova Scotia in 1987. Liberal Party member of parliament Francis LeBlanc said that Premium received some \$3 million from the federal government's Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency in loans, grants, and tax credits.

Several million dollars worth of equipment is still sitting inside the Premium Automotive factory and the workers have vowed to maintain their occupation until they receive a better severance package. They also want the government to find a new owner to operate the factory.

New Zealand unions hurt by anti-labor law

According to a recent survey, in the first six months after the Employment Contracts Act (ECA) became effective in May 1991, union membership in New Zealand dropped by 89,000. Before the ECA, there were 80 unions in the

country with a combined membership of 603,000.

The ECA removed many of the legal protections unions in New Zealand enjoyed for most of the past 50 years, including compulsory membership by law. Under the ECA, many workers, including some of those who are members of unions, must now sign individual contracts with their employers governing pay and work conditions.

Minister of Labour Bill Birch reported that, following passage of the ECA, the number of work days lost through strike action fell sharply. In the 16 months following the law, a total of 50,951 days were lost, compared to 356,410 days in the 16 months preceding it — a decline of 86 percent.

United cuts jobs and demands concessions

Citing large new losses, United Airlines officials recently announced plans to slash 2,800 jobs. All United employees were also urged to participate in a "cost-restructuring plan" to save the company \$400 million.

The company's proposal caused a flurry of discussions among airline workers represented by the International Association of Machinists at Dulles Airport in Virginia.

The proposal included an immediate five percent wage cut that would last one year, a suspension of all pay raises due this year and next, increases in the cost of medical contributions, higher out-of-pocket deductibles, extending the contract date, and permanent work rule changes.

In exchange for these measures, United offered to provide a profit-sharing program. Similar proposals were made to the flight attendants and pilots.

Workers were outraged. "Concessions do not save jobs," many said. Workers pointed to examples,

including Eastern Airlines and Pan Am, where employees agreed to give concessions but the company still went out of business. Others pointed to how difficult it is just getting by on their present wages.

IAM officials rejected the company's proposals and refused to reopen the contract.

A union statement said contract negotiations just 13 months ago "fully took into account the depressed state of the industry in general and United's position in the industry." A similar position was taken by the Association of Flight Attendants.

While airline workers greet the stand against concessions with a sigh of relief, few believe that jobs are secure.

Hong Kong flight attendants strike

A dispute between flight attendants and management of Cathay Pacific Airways (CPA) led to strike action in Hong Kong after CPA refused to stop taking disciplinary actions, including dismissals, against union members. The dispute began in December when three flight attendants were fired for refusing to perform "downgraded" duties. This action highlighted growing discontent over two existing issues: understaffing, and an unsatisfactory wage increase offer.

CPA's refusal to reinstate the three workers resulted in a strike by 2,000 Flight Attendant Union (FAU) members. The strike began after talks broke down January 13, and continued for 15 days, with a sit-in outside Government House and protests at CPA offices and the Hong Kong international airport.

Other Hong Kong unions and community organizations rallied in support of the FAU action, sensing that the outcome would have serious implications for workers' rights over the next several years.

Among other labor and community groups, Hong Kong's Confederation of Trade Unions, the Trade Union Education Centre, community leaders, and pro-labor legislators came out in support of the FAU.

Following the strike, the union is calling for new legislation to guarantee the right to strike without fear of dismissal.

Aircraft workers face mass layoffs

McDonnell Douglas, a major aircraft manufacturer in Long Beach, California, will cut 4,000 more jobs this year in addition to over 20,000 salaried and union workers laid off since 1990. The company recently announced it is closing two plants in Torrance, California, and Columbus, Ohio, to cut costs and bring production in line with its shrinking share of the airplane market.

"I don't know if I'm going to be next in line," said Dominic, a United Auto Workers (UAW) member at Long Beach. "There's a lot of uncertainty we face with the company going back and forth on layoffs. They treat people like you're just a number."

With air travel in decline as a result of the depressed world economy, airlines internationally have posted an estimated \$9 billion in losses over the past 36 months and three U.S. carriers remain in bankruptcy. Meanwhile, a storage area in the Mojave Desert is awash with surplus jets.

Contributors to this column include: Roger Annis, member of Canadian Autoworkers Local 1900 in Montreal; James Robb from Auckland, New Zealand; Janice Lynn, member of International Association of Machinists Lodge 1759 in Virginia; and Bob Custer, member of United Auto Workers Local 148 in Long Beach, California.

LETTERS

Cuba's AIDS policy

On January 26, I attended a highly successful forum which discussed revolutionary Cuba's evolving AIDS policy. About 50 people attended the meeting at the Philadelphia Friends Center and listened to presentations from two gay HIV-positive Cuban men.

Dr. Juan Carlos de la Concepción and Raúl Llanos were wrapping up a historic tour across the United States to tell the real story about AIDS in Cuba.

Since the early years of the epidemic, Cuba has been vilified for its AIDS policy, which has focused on mandatory testing and the sanatorium system.

Concepción explained that the early years of Cuba's reaction to AIDS reflected what little the country (and the rest of the world) knew about the disease. The government's primary concern was to contain the spread of HIV and provide treatment of those already infected.

Llanos, a computer specialist, has been under treatment at the sanatorium since 1986. He admitted his disappointment at being "forced" to live at the sanatorium and the absence of free mobility. However, all this is changing. Today, Llanos explained, close to 70 percent of patients at the sanatoriums are considered "trustworthy" and are free to return to work and live among the general population. The category "trustworthy" is determined after a period of professional counseling that the individual will behave responsibly and not transmit the virus to others through unsafe, high-risk behavior.

Concepción spoke about the

"enormous crisis" currently facing Cuba but said residents at the sanatoriums have not suffered any losses or cutbacks in care and treatment. He explained that the Cuban state continues to do "the impossible" to guarantee the best care for those living with AIDS. An effect of the criminal blockade enforced by the U.S. government means that Cuba must pay three times the normal price to purchase AZT.

Craig McKissic
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Discussion with readers

"Discussion with our readers" is a good addition, but should perhaps be more conversational, not simply listing the errors of a letter writer, but showing some sympathy with him/her and inviting him/her to reconsider.

D.P.
College Park, Maryland

Bombing of Vietnam

An article in the February 5 *Militant* by Martin Koppel on Iraq two years after the war says that the 88,000 tons of bombs dropped on the Iraqi people in the six weeks of war by imperialism were "much more than the total tonnage dropped during 10 years of the Vietnam War."

Without taking away anything from imperialism's murderous barbarity in its massacre of the Iraqi people by air, the bomb tonnage dropped on Iraq was scarcely more than one percent of that dropped on Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War.

In *The Endless War — Vietnam's Struggle for Independence* by James Pinckney Harrison, the author says that between 1965 and 1975 U.S.

forces dropped more than 7.5 million tons of bombs on Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, with Vietnam hit with almost 6 million of the total. A roughly equal amount of artillery explosives also fell. This equaled the explosive force of 700 Hiroshima-type bombs and included 400,000 tons of napalm. The bombs dropped in the Vietnam War were more than three times what all sides dropped in World War II.

The Vietnamese people, with their incredible determination, sacrifice, and heroism stemming from their revolutionary mobilization, stood up to this massive firepower and defeated the mightiest military power in the world. The scale of destructive violence unleashed against them and the fact that they withstood it and overcame it helps explain why the defeat of U.S. imperialism in Vietnam was such an important turning point in world history and why the "Vietnam syndrome" remains an important factor in world politics today.

Robert Simms
Toronto, Canada

More on Haiti

I would enjoy more stories on Haiti and the Afro-American struggle in the U.S.

J.D.
Charleston, Illinois

What causes crime?

I read some very interesting statements made by Estelle DeBates in Greensboro, North Carolina, last October, in the October 16 *Militant*: "First we have to look at what



Rob Rogers

causes crime," the socialist explained. "Poverty does not cause crime — alienation does. When I visited South Africa, where people are living in extreme poverty, crime (except the violence perpetrated by the South African government) is very low because people do not feel alienated from what is going on in society."

"Millions of youth and working people are part of a movement to change society. They see an alternative and have hope that they are part of something that will affect the conditions of their lives for the better. Here, many people feel alienated from society and that there is nothing they can do to change things. That is why many turn to drugs and crime, out of total alienation and hopelessness."

How true that is! But this is an area that the orthodox sociologists and criminologists carefully avoid.

They may want to reduce crime, but not that way!

Keep up the good fight!
A prisoner
Stormville, New York

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, NY 10014.

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

Hundreds of thousands join protests against racist violence in Germany

BY INGE HINNEMO

BERLIN — Hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets January 30 in cities throughout Germany to protest racist violence. The demonstrations took place on the 60th anniversary of the Nazis' coming to power.

In this city protesters spelled out *Nie wieder* (never again) in giant letters with their candles. Altogether, 100,000 people took part in a candlelight vigil that stretched from the western to the eastern part of the city in a human chain.

Protesters hung a banner, several stories high, with the names of the 17 people killed in ultraright attacks during the last year on a house in eastern Berlin that has been taken over by a group of youths.

At 6:00 p.m., the demonstrators blew out all their candles. This symbolized their re-

jection of the torchlight victory celebrations by the Nazi gangs that had marched through the streets 60 years ago.

On the same day 120,000 antiracist demonstrators turned out in Düsseldorf, 80,000 in Dortmund, and 20,000 in Rostock, where last August rightist thugs attacked a refugee hostel.

Union-sponsored march

In the city of Erfurt, in eastern Germany, the DGB union federation sponsored a march of 1,000; a plaque was placed on the union headquarters listing the names of the victims of racist murders in the last year. In Cologne the public employees' union ÖTV organized a five-minute silent pause from work January 29. The media workers' union called a 15-minute work stoppage.

Over the past three months, 3 million peo-

ple have taken part in antiracist demonstrations in Germany. Right-wing groups have continued their attacks on immigrants and others, but the huge public mobilizations have dealt a political blow to the racists. In recent polls, the proportion of respondents who said they supported extreme right-wing groups or sympathized with the physical attacks on immigrants has dropped noticeably.

Two smaller demonstrations took place on the January 29-30 weekend here. Some 2,000 people participated in an antiracist meeting sponsored by the Party of Democratic Socialism, the former Communist Party in East Germany.

Another 5,000 people marched from the old Gestapo headquarters. Several peace, antiracist, and left-wing organizations issued a call for this action, which was also backed by the DGB union federation.

The call for this demonstration against "racism, sexism, nationalism, and anti-Semitism" expressed opposition to the proposed changes in the German constitution that would restrict the right to asylum and allow German troops to be deployed abroad. A banner held up by colorful balloons read "Article 16 must remain," referring to the article in the constitution on the right to asylum.

Many of the protesters later joined the candlelight demonstration of 100,000. Several criticized the government, saying that, while it endorses the antiracist demonstrations — federal president Richard von Weizsäcker, for example, took part in the candlelight rally in Rostock — it is responsible for the racist violence by scapegoating immigrants and attempting to restrict the right to asylum.

Lüko Willms from Frankfurt, Germany, contributed to this article.

Filipino youths discuss changes in world politics

BY RUTH GRAY

MANILA, Philippines — The Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. vice-president in 1992, Estelle DeBates, toured this country January 21-31 as a guest of the League of Filipino Students (LFS). She spoke with students and met with members of a range of workers' and peasants' and political organizations.

DeBates explained that Washington's attacks on the livelihood and democratic rights of working people in the United States and the growing U.S. war drive abroad will accelerate under the Clinton presidency.

Pointing to the beginnings of working-class resistance to these attacks inside the United States, DeBates stressed the importance of fighters linking up internationally against "our common enemy — the worldwide capitalist system, which is ravaging the lives of working people around the globe." In particular she pointed to the importance of defending the revolutionary struggles in South Africa and Cuba.

Fifty students came to hear DeBates at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines in Manila. Even before the meeting began, students were approaching her to discuss such questions as the reasons for the U.S. intervention in Somalia, why the U.S. government can't defeat Iraqi president Saddam Hussein, the antiapartheid struggle in South Africa, and the struggle in Ireland and the character of the Irish Republican Army.

Another topic discussed was the removal of U.S. military bases in the Philippines. The last of these bases was dismantled after the Philippine congress voted against renewing the base treaty with Washington. A focus of student protests over many years had been these U.S. bases. One student pointed out that while they were happy about the withdrawal, "it is not the end of imperialism. U.S. capital is still here. Only the military is out."

The U.S. socialist leader made a four-day visit to southern Tagalog, a region south of Manila. This is one of the five areas designated by the government for attracting foreign industrial investment by providing the necessary infrastructure, tax breaks, and a low-paid and strike-free labor force. The government hopes these kinds of projects will alleviate the country's deep economic crisis and will help the Philippines become an industrialized country.

Hosted by the League of Filipino students chapter at the University of the Philippines in Los Banos, DeBates met with several local groups that have been protesting the human cost of this "fast-track industrialization." They told the Socialist Workers leader that thousands of families had already lost their land and homes as a result of the development of these projects.

While in Manila, DeBates met with LFS

activists at St. Joseph's College. She also spoke to students at the University of the Philippines in Quezon City.

A discussion has opened up among students and other activists since Philippine president Fidel Ramos unbanned the Communist Party of the Philippines and initiated talks with antigovernment guerrillas. Many comments focused on the place of armed struggle in revolutionary strategy; the collapse of the Stalinist regimes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe; the future of China; the Cuban revolution; and the lessons of the overthrow of the Marcos dictatorship in 1986 in the Philippines.

Some 400 students attended a rally organized by the LFS January 29. The rally commemorated the student demonstrations in 1970 that were savagely repressed by the Marcos government before he declared martial law.

Leaders of different LFS chapters and other youth organizations addressed the crowd, including LFS national chairperson Amante Jimenez.

DeBates also spoke at the rally. She explained that the world depression has weakened imperialism and that working people and youth must build a movement powerful enough to disarm the imperialist war makers. "You are part of the struggle for justice around the world," she said. "Our strength is in our numbers worldwide. Only by working with and learning from each other's struggles can we build the international movement we need to be victorious."

'Cuban Women Today' to be topic of U.S. tour

BY JUDY WHITE

LOS ANGELES — There has been a "tremendous response" to a December letter announcing plans to organize an April-May U.S. lecture series for Afro-Cuban attorney Elsa Agramonte Hernández, according to Carlos Ugalde, professor of Latin American Studies at Glendale Community College and coordinator of the Elsa Agramonte Faculty-Student Lectures Committee. Agramonte specializes in women's affairs and will be speaking on "Cuban Women Today."

In response to a letter sent out by the lectures committee at the end of December, more than 130 invitations for Agramonte have been received from Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, Missouri, Michigan, California, New York, and Washington, D.C. The overwhelming majority come from more than 40 different college campuses, among them the University of Southern California, Stanford University, University of California campuses in Berkeley, Los Angeles, San Diego, and Santa Cruz; Georgetown and Howard



Militant/Robert Koper
Estelle DeBates speaking at January 29 student rally in Manila to commemorate protests in 1970 that were savagely repressed by Marcos government.

universities in Washington, D.C.; Emory University and Spelman College in Atlanta; the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor and Wayne State University in Detroit; University of Alabama campuses in Birmingham and Tuscaloosa; Washington University, Saint Louis University, and the University of Missouri in St. Louis; and Queens and Hunter colleges in New York.

Invited include African-American, Latin American, and women's studies programs; professors of law, the social sciences, foreign languages, and education; and officers of student governments and other campus organizations.

These invitations have now been forwarded to Agramonte in Cuba, the lectures committee reports, so that she can apply for a visa to the United States.

Agramonte is a member of the Union of Cuban Jurists and the National Committee for the International Year of the Family, 1994. She has been a consultant for UNICEF on women, employment, and food production.

As a member of the Federation of Cuban Women, Agramonte has participated in a number of national and international conferences. Most recently she attended the Conference of Ministers of the Nonaligned Countries on the Role of Women in Economic Development (1990), and the Fifth Congress of Cuban and U.S. Philosophers (1992), where she took part in the panel on class, race, and gender. She is currently working on a study of Black women in Cuba.

The tentative schedule for the lecture series is California, April 1-9; Michigan, April 10-14; Georgia/Alabama/Mississippi, April 15-21; Missouri, April 22-26; Washington, D.C., April 27-29; and New York, April 30-May 7.

More information on Agramonte's visit can be obtained from the Elsa Agramonte Faculty-Students Lectures Committee, c/o Professor Carlos Ugalde, Ethnic Studies Department, Glendale Community College, 1500 N. Verdugo, Glendale, CA 91208. Telephone: (818) 240-1000 x5470. Fax (818) 549-9436.