

# THE MILITANT

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International Socialist Review — PAGES 9-13

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 57, NO. 31 September 13, 1993

## U.S. gov't charges cleric under gag law

BY GREG ROSENBERG

NEW YORK — Lacking a shred of evidence connecting Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman to any specific act, a federal grand jury indicted the religious figure and 14 others on sweeping conspiracy charges August 25.

The indictments, approved by Attorney General Janet Reno, allege that the defendants conspired to "levy a war of urban terrorism against the United States." The charges include the assassination of ultrarightist Meir Kahane in 1990; the bombing of the World Trade Center; an alleged plot

**Drop conspiracy charges!**  
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to bomb the United Nations and the Lincoln and Holland tunnels, as well as other sites in New York; and another plot to assassinate Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak.

The government is "blowing a lot of smoke in the hope that the jury will see at least some fire," said attorney Ronald Kuby, who along with William Kunstler represents some of the accused. "They have drafted a case so big, so vast, that it is almost impossible to prosecute, impossible to try, and impossible for the jury to understand. They are hoping that the jurors will see just one large indistinguishable wad of Arab terrorists."

Using an anti-working-class seditious conspiracy statute, which outlaws "conspir[ing] to overthrow, or put down, or destroy by force the Government of the United States," the indictment makes only the vague

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## Washington intensifies Somalia war

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

In their largest military operations since arriving in Somalia, about 50 U.S. Army Rangers and soldiers from the Army's Quick Reaction Force stormed several Mogadishu buildings before dawn August 30, snaking down ropes from 10-15 U.S. helicopters hovering above. They claimed to be targeting a command and control center belonging to Somali Gen. Mohamed Farah Aidid, but their attack was directed against a house and adjoining offices occupied by the UN Development Project and the French humanitarian organization International Action Against Hunger.

The U.S. soldiers broke down walls with grenades, kicked in doors, and destroyed radio equipment before seizing three foreign aid workers and six Somali UN employees.

Larry DeBoice, 45, a Canadian employed by the UN said the troops tied his hands and those of his colleagues behind their backs with plastic cuffs and told them "to keep our head down and not look at anybody." The workers were then flown by helicopter to a detention center, blindfolded and released only after being interrogated.

These latest acts of aggression by Washington's troops in Mogadishu followed a major policy address August 27 by U.S.

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# Israel agrees to limited Palestinian autonomy

BY PAT SMITH

The Israeli cabinet approved a draft agreement August 31 on Palestinian self-rule over the Gaza Strip and the West Bank city of Jericho that includes some form of withdrawal of Israeli forces from the two areas.

The document calls for establishing "a Palestinian Interim Self-Government Authority, the elected Council, for the Palestinian people in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, for a transitional period not exceeding five years, leading to a permanent settlement based on [United Nations] Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338."

In 1988 the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) agreed to a two-state settlement based on the 1947 United Nations partition plan for Palestine and declared statehood in the West Bank and Gaza.

The state of Israel was founded in 1948 after Zionist armies expelled 750,000 Palestinians from their homeland, creating an instant Jewish majority in parts of Palestine. Tel Aviv has occupied the West Bank and Gaza since the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.

"We believe that the coming days will witness a positive and an historic development which has been awaited, expected by both people for a long time," Yasir Abed Rabbo, head of the PLO information department, said on Israeli army radio.

Transfer of authority in education, culture, health, social welfare, direct taxation, and tourism would begin immediately. Israeli troops would be redeployed outside of



Jericho residents in Israeli-occupied West Bank look out from doorway framed by graffiti supporting the accord between Tel Aviv and the PLO. Hundreds in Jerusalem have demonstrated in support of the agreement but an equal number have turned out to oppose it. In Gaza, Hamas supporters have rallied against the proposal and in some cases attacked PLO supporters celebrating the announcement that could lead to limited Palestinian self-rule in Gaza and Jericho.

populated areas and Palestinians would build their own police force. After the council's inauguration, additional powers and responsibilities may be worked out. Palestinians living in Israeli-annexed eastern Jerusalem would have the right to take part in council elections.

Negotiators outlined economic develop-

ment programs and joint business ventures to address the poverty, under industrialization, and acute unemployment in the occupied territories. The accord postpones decisions on the status of Jerusalem, refugees, and the future of Jewish settlements.

It is not clear yet how the accords will

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## Thousands rally in Washington, D.C., demanding 'jobs, justice, and peace'

BY GREG ROSENBERG

WASHINGTON, D.C. — In sweltering 95-degree heat, tens of thousands of people marched and rallied here August 28 to demand "jobs, justice, and peace." The activity commemorated the 1963 march of a quarter of a million people that marked a climactic point in the battle to smash the Jim Crow system of racist segregation in the South.

Union members, civil rights activists, and young people in the multinational crowd came to protest racism and the deteriorating economic and social conditions in the United States today.

Many speakers and rally participants, while pointing to the victories registered by the civil rights battles of the 1950s and '60s, cited growing conditions of economic depression. Yvonne Scruggs of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies pointed to the "over 14 percent average minority unemployment. There are 10 percent more Blacks in prison today than in 1963," she said, and over 39 percent of all death sentences are given to prisoners who are Black."

Trade unions and civil rights groups, who organized the big majority of march participants to come to Washington, brought buses from throughout the eastern half of the country. Thousands of people flocked to booths set up by the NAACP, United Auto Workers (UAW), United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW), and others. Participants marched behind dozens of union and civil



Tens of thousands marched in Washington, D.C., August 28 to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the 1963 civil rights march.

rights banners. Nearly every major union in the United States organized contingents. Some 12,000 members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees from the New York area alone participated. Ten buses made the trip from Miami.

Marchers carried printed placards with

slogans like "Health care for all" and "Jobs for all." Many signs opposed the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

Jeff Radebe of the African National Congress received warm applause when he spoke from the main podium on the steps of

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## Nigerians demand civilian rule

Nigerians launched an open-ended nationwide strike August 28 after carrying out their second successful three-day general strike in major cities August 25-27. They are protesting Gen. Ibrahim Babangida's refusal to return the country to an elected civilian government. Other demands include reversing the government's decision to raise gasoline prices tenfold. Strike organizers say they are not backing any specific candidate.

More than a dozen human rights activists were subsequently arrested, and the government shut down at least four opposition newspapers, including one owned by Moshood Abiola, who is widely believed to have won the annulled June 12 elections.

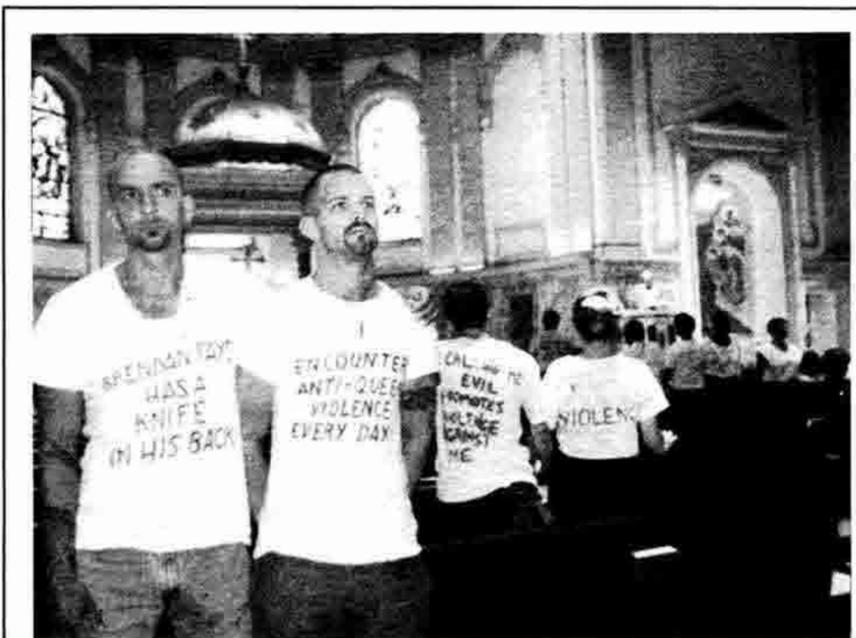
Babangida, who took power in a 1985 coup, resigned August 26 and appointed Ernest Shonekan, a Harvard-educated businessman, to head an interim government. At a London news conference, Abiola rejected the interim government, which is responsible for organizing new presidential elections next year. He is expected to return to Nigeria soon.

## Sudanese oppose U.S. frame-up

Hundreds of thousands demonstrated in Khartoum, Sudan, August 24 in opposition to Washington's unsubstantiated claims that Sudan is involved in terrorism. U.S. president Bill Clinton plans to impose trade and other sanctions against Sudan after placing the country on Washington's list of "terrorist nations." The protest was the biggest demonstration in Sudan in the last 10 years. It was organized by the Popular Organization for the Defense of the Faith and of the Nation, which includes trade unions as well as community and religious groups.

## Bosnian parliament rejects plan

Bosnia's parliament unanimously voted August 28 to reject a United Nations plan that would carve Bosnia-Herzegovina into three autonomous republics divided by nationality. The fighting has claimed more than 150,000 lives and as of the end of 1992 had driven 1.7 million people from their homes. Parliament voted to seek territorial and constitutional adjustments to the plan.



Tom Hill, left, and Andy Baker were among 29 gay and lesbian activists at silent protest August 29 at Brooklyn, New York, church service. Brendan Faye, an advocate of civil rights for gays and a parishioner at the church, was stabbed earlier that week. Organizers have documented 376 such attacks in the city this year. They protested Bishop Thomas Daily's pastoral letter, which said homosexuality was "ordered toward an intrinsic moral evil."

Meanwhile, the self-styled parliament set up by the rightist Serb forces in Bosnia accepted the plan. The Croat parliament in Bosnia in effect rejected it, demanding that additional territories be attached to the newly declared Croatian republic, "Herzegovina."

## China condemns U.S. sanctions

China's deputy foreign minister Liu Huaqiu summoned the U.S. ambassador to Beijing August 27 to protest President Bill Clinton's decision to ban the sale of \$1 billion in high-technology equipment for space and military programs. Beijing called the sanctions "entirely unjustified" and accused Washington of a double standard. The U.S. government claims Beijing violated a 1987 missile control agreement by selling M-11 ballistic missile technology to Pakistan. The governments of China and Pakistan argue that the sale does not

violate the accord because the M-11's range is less than the 186 miles covered in the agreement.

The economic sanctions come as Washington continues to harass a Chinese freighter in the Persian Gulf accused of carrying ingredients for chemical weapons to be delivered to Iran.

## Japanese companies move abroad

Propelled by the sharp rise in the value of the yen against the dollar, Japanese companies are shifting production to China and Southeast Asia. Already, almost 70 percent of the color televisions made by Japanese-owned companies are made outside the country. Japan may import more color TVs this year than it exports, mainly from its plants in other parts of Asia.

## Tokyo apologizes for war role

Japan's recently elected prime minister, Morihiro Hosokawa, apologized August 23 for the country's role in World War II. "I would thus like to take this opportunity to express our profound remorse and apologies for the fact that Japan's actions, including acts of aggression and colonial rule, caused unbearable suffering and sorrow for so many people," he told parliament.

## U.S. army chief's father was Nazi

The father of Gen. John Shalikashvili, President Bill Clinton's choice for chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, served during World War II as an officer in the German army's Waffen SS, the Nazi Party's military organization. He then lied about his involvement to gain entry into the United States. According to reports in

the big-business press, this cast doubts on the colorful up-from-refugee story Clinton told in an August 11 Rose Garden ceremony at the White House, when explaining why he picked Shalikashvili among the candidates for the country's highest military post.

## Los Angeles cop who beat Rodney King had prior record

Laurence Powell, one of the Los Angeles cops who was convicted for the brutal beating of Rodney King, used his flashlight to repeatedly strike another handcuffed man five months earlier. Powell had also been given a severe reprimand by the Los Angeles Police Department for "serious misconduct" in the October 1990 beating of Danny Ramos. But that disciplinary action did not come about until July 1992, after the King-beating trial. Federal District Judge John Davies refused the prosecutors' request to introduce the earlier beating as evidence before the officers were sentenced in the King case. Powell's supervisor at the time of both beatings was Sgt. Stacey Koon. Koon and Powell were convicted in federal court of violating King's civil rights. They are appealing their two-and-a-half-year sentences.

## U.S. layoffs up from 1991

Layoffs in the United States are averaging 50,516 a month according to the placement firm Challenger, Gray & Christmas. That's 4,000 a month more than during the 1991 recession.

## Clinton denies Irish leader visa

Despite campaign promises to end the prior practice of denying visas to people whose views London might object to, President Clinton refused to grant Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams a visa. Sinn Fein is the political party allied with the Irish Republican Army. Adams was elected to the British parliament as a member from Northern Ireland from 1983-1992, but abstained from taking his seat in protest of the British government's continued occupation of Ireland's six northern counties. He is also the author of five books and planned a 10-city U.S. tour to promote two of his latest ones.

## Pentagon ready for two wars

Washington unveiled a new plan September 1 to fight and win two nearly simultaneous nonnuclear wars with some small cuts in the military. Implementing the strategy, called "win win" will cost \$13 billion more than the \$1.2 trillion allotted to the military for the next five years. Clinton plans to store enough weapons and equipment for army brigades at several overseas locations for use in the Persian Gulf or in Korea, to spend more money on precision-guided missiles and bombs, and to buy additional ships for transporting troops and equipment. The proposals do not depart from former President George Bush's military strategy.

— PAT SMITH

## THE MILITANT

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## The Militant

Closing news date: September 1, 1993

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Published weekly except for next to last week in December and biweekly from mid-June to mid-August by the Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Telephone: (212) 243-6392; Fax: (212) 924-6040; Modem, 924-6048; Telex, 497-4278.

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

Second-class postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Subscriptions: U.S., Latin America: for one-year subscription send \$45, drawn on a U.S. bank, to above address. By first-class (airmail), send \$80. Barbados: Send \$75Bds for one-year subscription to P.O. Box 891, Bridgetown, Barbados. Asia:

send \$80 drawn on a U.S. bank to 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Canada: send Canadian \$75 for one-year subscription to Société d'Éditions AGPP, C.P. 340, succ. R, Montréal, Québec H2S 3M2. Britain, Ireland, Africa: £35 for one year by check or international money order made out to Militant Distribution, 47 The Cut, London, SE1 8LL, England. Continental Europe: £50 for one year by check or international money order made out to Militant Distribution at above address. Belgium: BF 2,600 for one year on account no. 000-1543112-36 of 1Mei Fonds/Fonds du 1 mai, 2140 Antwerp. Iceland: Send 5,000 Icelandic kronur for one-year subscription to Militant, P.O. Box 233, 121 Reykjavik. Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark: 500 Swedish kronor for one year. Pay to Militant Swedish giro no. 451-32-09-9. New Zealand: Send New Zealand \$90 to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland, New Zealand. Australia: Send Australian \$75 to P.O. Box 79, Railway Square Post Office, Railway Square, Sydney 2000, Australia. Philippines, Pacific Islands: Send Australian \$75 or New Zealand \$100 to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland, New Zealand.

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# UN suspends oil embargo on Haiti

BY HILDA CUZCO

The United Nations Security Council voted unanimously August 27 to suspend its oil embargo against Haiti. These sanctions, which included a ban on arms shipment to Haiti and the freezing of Haitian assets abroad, were imposed by the 15-member council June 16 to put pressure on the Haitian military leaders to allow the return of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to the country.

In addition, Joao Clemente Baena Soares, secretary-general of the Organization of American States (OAS), announced that the organization will also suspend its continent-wide sanctions against Haiti, which were initiated shortly after the September 1991 military coup that ousted Aristide from power.

On July 3 Aristide and Lt. Gen. Raoul Cedras, who led the coup, signed a UN-brokered agreement promising to restore the Haitian president to office October 30. The 10-point plan included the nomination of a new prime minister, the resignation of Commander-in-Chief Cedras, amnesty for military participants in the coup, and promises of more than \$1 billion in developmental aid over the next five years.

As an initial step in implementing the accord, President Aristide selected Robert Malval as his new prime minister. The Haitian parliament ratified his appointment August 25.

Malval, a 50-year-old businessman in the printing industry, met Aristide in 1986 when he published some pamphlets for the de-

posed president. One of the country's wealthiest entrepreneurs, Malval enjoys the approval of the Clinton administration.

With the oil sanctions suspended, the UN Security Council is beginning discussions on sending a 1,000-strong police force to Haiti. It would include 567 troops from Canada, France, and countries in the Caribbean. Washington has offered to contribute 350 soldiers and military engineers at a cost of \$37 million for the first six months.

## Haitians oppose UN intervention force

The UN troop proposal has met with disapproval from thousands of Haitians awaiting the return of Aristide. Activists from two organizations, Front for the Country's Progress and the League for National Resistance, rallied August 17 at the National Pedagogical Institute in Port-au-Prince to oppose foreign military intervention. The Front condemned Malval for remaining silent about the possible arrival of this multinational force.

In an effort to allay concern about this force, Malval subsequently announced that the U.N. troops will "enter as civilians, on regular airline flights. . . . They will not come in armed. The authorization for them to carry guns will come from the Haitian authorities."

While U.S. and UN officials describe the lifting of sanctions as a triumph for democracy, repression against Haitians has continued to mount. More than 50 people have



Haitian army in Port-au-Prince. Despite the signing of accords, repression against Haitian workers and peasants has continued to mount.

been killed in Port-au-Prince alone since July 1, said Ian Martin, human rights director of the UN civil mission.

In Petionville, a suburb of Port-au-Prince, heavily armed uniformed and plainclothes police attacked a group of some 25 youthful Aristide supporters, who had publicly announced a campaign August 16 to put up pro-Aristide posters and banners. They dispersed the protesters, who were led by Rev. Yvon Massac and Antoine Izmyer, a prominent businessman. The police then arrested the priest and at least two others and began tearing down posters as a team of UN and OAS human-rights monitors watched. Police also questioned freelance British reporter Michael Tarr, who was covering the event for Reuters,

and confiscated some of his documents.

Army and police officers broke up a meeting of peasants near the southern town of Grand-Goave, killing one man and raping a 12-year-old girl. Frank Delva, head of the Tetabef peasant organization told a reporter that about 35 officers armed with machetes and sticks attacked the 100-member group, accusing them of being communists and carrying pictures of Aristide.

"The army has given us no guarantees. We know they will try to crush us if we take to the streets to support the elected government," a school teacher in Gonaives told the *Miami Herald* in early August. "They can try to keep knocking us down, but that will not stop us."

# ANC apologizes for abuses in military camps, challenges de Klerk to expose crimes of gov't

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The African National Congress (ANC) issued an apology for abuses of human rights that occurred in ANC military camps abroad in the 1980s.

The ANC also challenged South African president F. W. de Klerk to participate in a "truth commission" to investigate and expose abuses by all sides during the anti-apartheid struggle and to decide on punishments and compensation.

"We accept responsibility for our actions and apologize for them," stated ANC president Nelson Mandela to a news conference in Johannesburg, South Africa, August 30. "He [de Klerk] has something to hide. We don't have anything to hide."

"What you must appreciate," Mandela told reporters, "is that the alleged abuses were committed in a state of siege." By contrast, he said, the government's "abuse of human rights was part of a policy, part of a system." He added, "We don't think that it is in the interest of justice for us to punish only a few individuals . . . when these gross violations have been committed as part of a systematic policy by the government of this country."

Allegations of abuse in ANC camps in Angola, Zambia, and Tanzania first surfaced in the 1980s and were publicly aired by some exiles returning to the country in 1991.

An independent commission appointed by the ANC to investigate these charges issued its findings August 23. It reported abuses that included torture, detention, and the murder or execution of at least 22 people in 3 of the 11 camps the ANC operated abroad before the South African government lifted its ban on the organization in 1990.

A statement released by the ANC's National Executive Committee said, "It is especially painful for us that the heroism of our combatants in exile should be tarnished by such unacceptable and tragic episodes."

"The violations referred to in the report can in no way be equated to the activities of the apartheid state, which were gross, systematic, and a product of a policy which transgressed . . . virtually the whole range of fundamental rights protected by international law."

Max Coleman, chairman of South Africa's independent Human Rights Commission, welcomed the ANC's proposal to convene a truth commission to investigate all

the crimes committed under apartheid rule. "Before we can wipe the slate clean, we need to know what's on it," he said.

## Crimes by S. African government

Coleman said allegations against the South African government between 1960 and 1990 included: 73 political prisoners killed in police detention; approximately 220 political leaders assassinated by state death squads, 120 of them since 1990; some 75,000 people detained without charge under political security laws with many of them subjected to torture; and 3.5 million people forcibly removed from their homes, many of them at gunpoint as part of the apartheid system's land grab.

"The issue of punishment should be decided by a democratic government," stated Coleman, but "those who committed these serious offenses, including those ANC members named in the report, should never be put in a position of power again."

Meanwhile, township violence took the life of 26-year-old U.S.-born Amy Biehl August 25. Biehl, who was white, worked at the predominantly Black University of the Western Cape. She was driving three friends to their homes in Guguletu, 900 miles southwest of Johannesburg, when her car was stopped by a barrage of stones. The attackers pulled her from the car and stabbed her to death.

Biehl had worked closely with the African National Congress Women's League on various projects in the townships. The ANC condemned the slaying as "racism in its crudest form."

According to the Reuters wire service, witnesses to the slaying said some of the attackers chanted "One settler, one bullet" as they stoned Biehl, a slogan raised by the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC). Two youths who are members of the youth wing of the PAC were taken into custody by the police and charged with the slaying death. The PAC student organization, PASO, admitted the two arrested teenagers were members of its group, but said it was not PAC policy to kill whites.

## Negotiations mark progress

Meanwhile, negotiators from the 23 political organizations involved in multiparty talks continue to make progress in drafting key legislation necessary to organize South

Africa's first-ever democratic, nonracial elections set for April 27, 1994.

The Transitional Executive Council, Independent Electoral Commission, Independent Media Commission, and Independent Broadcasting Authority bills are designed to level the country's political playing field and provide guidelines for the electoral process.

The negotiators are aiming to complete drafts of these bills as rapidly as possible so that they can be approved by a special session of South Africa's current Parliament, tentatively scheduled to convene in mid-

September.

In other news, the African National Congress has named Thabo Mbeki to the post of ANC national chairman. Mbeki, 51, had been in charge of directing the ANC's international affairs work. He replaces Oliver Tambo, who died in April.

The South African Democratic Teachers' Union announced August 27 that it was suspending its two-week national strike. The union is demanding a pay increase and an end to layoffs. The 76,000 teachers returned to school, pending further talks with the government.

# Cuba solidarity meeting set in Toronto

BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

DETROIT—An International Trade Union Conference in Solidarity with Cuba, set to take place October 1-3 in Toronto, is winning new support.

Endorsements for the conference include the United Food and Commercial Workers Union/Canada, Ontario Public Service Employees Union, Canadian Union of Postal Workers in Toronto, Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 1281, Ottawa District Labor Council, and Ontario Secondary School Federation District 15.

"This conference helps us build on the victory of the Pastors for Peace Friendship in the labor movement," said Ignacio Meneses, an organizer of the U.S./Cuba Labor Exchange, one of the main sponsors of the conference. "Trade union solidarity with Cuba is building to a new level," stated Meneses. The Central Labor Council of Alameda County and the San Francisco Labor Council in northern California adopted resolutions in support of the caravan's successful effort to deliver humanitarian aid to Cuba.

"It is very important to pass union resolutions" against the embargo and travel restrictions to Cuba, continued Meneses. This summer the convention of the Newspaper Guild adopted a resolution that supports granting visas to Cuban trade unionists to visit the United States and urges normalization of relations with Cuba. A resolution adopted by the Minnesota AFL-CIO convention calls for U.S.-Cuba trade; especially in food, medicine, and housing supplies; and urges the national AFL-CIO to support nor-

malized relations.

Albis Nubia Fabier Ramirez, Manuel Montero Bistilleiro, and Angel Luis Mena Kindelan, all members of the Confederation of Cuban Workers (CTC), are slated to attend the October conference. The three have been denied visas by the U.S. State Department in the past. "We are holding the conference in Toronto to break the U.S. blockade on ideas. But many U.S. trade unionists will travel to Canada to participate in the exchange of views with our sisters and brothers from Canada and Cuba," said Meneses.

The U.S./Cuba Labor Exchange will also hold the fifth "Cuba Labor Seminar" in Havana, Cuba, November 1-15. The seminar will be hosted by the CTC. In addition to having substantial time to meet Cuban workers and others, participants will have a chance to visit work sites, including factories, hospitals, and schools. At the seminar, U.S. and Cuban unionists will discuss the role of unions in Cuba and the United States, economic and social conditions in the two countries, as well as U.S.-Cuba relations.

For more information about the Toronto conference, contact in the United States: U.S./Cuba Labor Exchange, P.O. Box 39188, Redford, MI, 48239. In Canada contact: Worker to Worker, Canada/Cuba Solidarity Committee, or Sarah Shantal/UFCW at P.O. Box 407, Station P, Toronto, Ontario M5S 2S9.

Arlene Rubinstein is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 26 in Detroit.

# Thousands rally for 'jobs, justice, peace'

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the Lincoln Memorial. "I bring expressions of unwavering support from the entire democratic movement" for the role played by the civil rights struggle in the United States, he remarked.

"Today in South Africa, the forces of racism and injustice are on the retreat. The countdown to the democratic transfer of power to the people has begun," Radebe said, pointing to the first-ever nonracial elections slated for April 1994. Appealing for support for the ANC's election campaign, Radebe said, "Let's walk the last mile to the democratic victory in South Africa. We can only do this with your help."

Contingents included a group of 27 Haitians from Miami protesting the Clinton administration's brutal policy of returning refugees to Haiti; Ethiopians marching for democracy in that country; a group of Nigerians with T-shirts exclaiming that Nigerian military ruler "Babangida must go!"; and a contingent of people opposed to Washington's embargo of Cuba.

"Civil Rights for All — Down with Immigrant Bashing" read a banner from the Latino Civil Rights Task Force in Washington, D.C.

"I was here in 1963," said Hildred Lawrence, who works for an electronics company in Pittsburgh. "The changes are so few that I'm back again and this time with my grandchildren. We need jobs. The jobs we had are gone, and there are too many low paying jobs," she added.

Seven members of Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union Local 2490 from Kuppenheimer's Loganville, Georgia, plant also traveled to the march. Following the rally, Montine Lett, the president of the local, who has worked at Kuppenheimer's for 25 years, said, "I saw the march as a fight for more jobs and equal treatment for everyone. I'll go again. I think we need more marches."

"I came to protest racism and injustice and to check out the political dialogue," said Brock Satter, one of two members of the Africana Student Cultural Center at the University of Minnesota who drove to Washington. Students from dozens of fraternities and sororities turned out, along with thousands of other young people who came with family members or on their own. Many saw the connection to the 1963 march as "history in the making," as Rosemine Ocean, a 19-year-old Black student from Connecticut College put it.

All working people "have to show our solidarity. So let's get marching!" said striking coal miner Gary Anderson from Clarington, Ohio, as his contingent assembled near the Washington monument. "Today shows how much things have changed over the years. It used to be that the two

races were fighting. Now we're more united."

## Coal miners' contingent

Seven hundred striking coal miners attended the march. The miners came from West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Kentucky, and Ohio. The more than three-month-long strike involves 17,000 coal miners in seven states.

"When you are a coal miner," said UMWA member Aaron Martin, "you don't care what color your skin is. You're a brother."

The coal miners' contingent drew attention and support from other march participants. After a brief discussion with miners, a group of four NAACP members shouted their support to the strike and promised to spread the word.

Teresa McKensie and Linda Lester were among the first women to work underground. McKensie, a member of Local 7170 at a Pittston mine in Virginia, said of the demonstration, "We needed it. We're for equality for all. Women miners are a minority, too. We know how it is."

UMWA president Richard Trumka was a featured speaker at the rally at the Washington Monument before the march began. "Wherever people stand up to racism, sexism, and bigotry, that's where you'll find the United Mine Workers," Trumka said.

"The reason why 17,000 coal miners are on strike today is no different than the reason why a quarter of a million other Americans marched in this city 30 years ago. Whether it's 1963 or 1993, the equation remains the same. It's that racism, prejudice, and anything else that divides us serve the interests of the boss."

Commenting on President Bill Clinton's immigration policies, UAW Local 442 member Yvonne Witte of Webster City, Iowa, said "I don't think immigrants are stealing jobs. They are being exploited by the companies that bring them here. They have a right to look for work. Everyone deserves a chance for a decent life."

## Speakers at the rally

A host of officials from civil rights organizations and trade unions, along with dozens of Democratic party politicians spoke at the rally. They included New York mayor David Dinkins; Coretta Scott King, president of The Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Non-Violent Social Change; Southern Christian Leadership Conference president Joseph Lowery; AFL-CIO president Lane Kirkland; NAACP executive director Benjamin Chavis; National Organization for Women (NOW) president Patricia Ireland; UAW president Owen Bieber; American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) president Gerald McEntee; Democratic Party politician Jesse Jackson; National Urban League president



Militant/Arthur Hughes

NAACP youth contingent at August 28 march. Many young people attended rally.

John Jacob; and a variety of religious figures.

Lani Guinier, whose nomination for assistant attorney general for civil rights sparked nationwide debate on affirmative action and voting rights before it was withdrawn by the Clinton administration, was also welcomed.

Presenting a central theme of march organizers, Coretta Scott King called for "a new coalition of conscience" of the labor movement and civil rights organizations to win passage of legislation to address pressing social problems.

"There is still too much racism and poverty," she said. While the Clinton administration opens "the possibility of a new era," pressure needs to be placed on the White House to accomplish legislative goals.

King called for "a social contract between government, management, and labor to provide decent jobs."

Rosa Parks, who in 1955 refused to give up her seat on a bus, touching off the Montgomery, Alabama, bus boycott, one of the first battles of the civil rights movement, needed no explanatory introduction. She was greeted with a massive round of applause.

The demand for jobs that was presented in most speeches was built around opposition to NAFTA and making U.S. workers more "competitive." "We must recognize that American-made products mean American jobs," said Jessica Looman of Frontlash, the AFL-CIO youth group.

Several speakers echoed calls by President Clinton to increase the use of police to deal with crime and "violence in our neighborhoods."

"Brothers keep killing brothers," said AFSCME president McEntee. "If our government can send Rangers to Somalia to hunt down a warlord, then we want them to send the same kind of forces into our cities" to get drug dealers.

McEntee and others urged support for the Clinton administration's moves to reshape health care. "We don't know exactly what President Clinton will propose," he said, "but we know that it will be better than what we have."

## Fight against police brutality

NAACP executive director Chavis was one of the best-received speakers. Reciting a list of civil rights and Black rights fighters, Chavis's "Long live the memory of Malcolm X" brought one of the biggest rounds of applause of the day.

"We are here," said Chavis, "to let the forces of racism and exploitation know that we do not intend to let anyone or anything

turn us around. We will not rest until every African-American, every Latino-American, every Anglo-American, every Asian- and Pacific-Islander-American, every Native American and until every American is treated fairly and justly."

Chavis slammed racist cop brutality in Los Angeles and skinhead violence in Washington state.

Pointing to the case of death row inmate Gary Graham in Texas, Chavis said, "We call for the total abolition of capital punishment. We in the civil rights movement will not tolerate it." This brought roars of approval from many assembled at the rally.

Chavis called for going from "protest to politics to economics. We must now move to desegregate Wall Street and the corporate suites," he said.

A few other speakers referred to the fight against police brutality. Midway through the program, however, emcee William Lucy, president of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, introduced "the woman who stepped up to the plate in Waco, Attorney General Janet Reno." Reno and Clinton, were the government officials who ordered the FBI raid against the Branch Davidian compound in Waco, Texas, which ended up in a massacre.

Reno joined the march alongside Jesse Jackson.

## Orientation to youth

One theme of the march was "passing the torch of leadership" to younger generations. Leaders of youth sections of the NAACP, AFL-CIO, NOW, Malcolm X Cultural Education Center, and others were prominently introduced and given time to speak.

Chavis emphasized the youth recruitment effort, saying, "To all of the young people who are here... we need you to win new victories for the freedom movement."

The march was preceded by a "University on the Mall," a series of workshops attended by 200 young people.

Reflecting the fact that the leaderships of the trade unions and civil rights organizations have less and less weight in the decisions and calculations of the White House and Democratic Party, Clinton declined to meet with march organizers, claiming he would just be returning from vacation.

*Maceo Dixon from Boston; Ellen Haywood from Atlanta; Bernie Senter from Morgantown, West Virginia; Bill Scheer from Pittsburgh; and Maurice Williams from Des Moines, Iowa, contributed to this article.*

## Miami caravanistas speak against U.S. embargo

BY DAN FEIN

MIAMI — Members of the second U.S.-Cuba Friendship caravan are beginning to give reportbacks on their experiences and the fight against the U.S. embargo of Cuba.

In mid-August Roberto Alacea appeared on WMNF's radio talk show in Tampa, Florida. Susan Fernandez, who arranged a meeting in St. Petersburg as the caravan was heading toward Laredo, Texas, spoke on radio WFLA, also based in Tampa, on a three-hour call-in program in mid-August.

Alacea is now arranging speaking engagements in classes at South Florida University and Eckhart College where professors opposed to the U.S. embargo teach. A public meeting in Tampa is planned for September.

Miami caravanistas will also participate in the program.

This reporter has spoken twice at the Friday evening meetings of Veye-Yo, a Haitian rights organization in Miami.

Many people in South Florida know of the caravan from the television coverage on channels 7 and 10, which sent reporters to accompany the caravan while in Cuba. The stations began daily reports for a week after returning from Cuba.

Students at the University of Florida at Gainesville are organizing for a slide show and reportback by Miami caravanistas in September.

*Dan Fein was a Friendship driver from Miami.*



Militant/Chris Hoepfner

An enthusiastic crowd of 15,000 Cubans greeted members of U.S.-Cuba Friendship caravan August 25 in Havana. Rally celebrated release of school bus seized July 29 in Laredo, Texas, after a 23-day hunger strike. Rev. Lucius Walker, founder of Pastors for Peace, pledged to "redouble efforts to end the U.S. trade embargo and organize a third U.S.-Cuba Friendship caravan in February 1994." The caravan donated more than 100 tons of humanitarian aid to Cuba.

# Letters urge parole for framed-up activist

Mark Curtis, a unionist and political activist was the victim of a frame-up and beating by the police in Des Moines, Iowa. He was convicted on false charges of sexual assault and burglary in September 1988 and is currently serving a 25-year sentence. Since his arrest, thousands of workers, farmers, students, and fighters for democratic rights around the world have demanded justice for Mark Curtis.

Below are excerpts from some of the dozens of letters received in response to the Parole Now! campaign launched in June by supporters of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee to demand his release. To send a letter urging parole for Curtis, write the Iowa State Board of Parole at: Capitol Annex, 523 East 12th Street, Des Moines, IA 50319. Send copies to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee at: P.O. Box 1048, Des Moines, IA 50311, or call (515) 264-1695; fax (515) 243-9869.

\* \* \*

**Winston Rubie**  
President Local 846  
International Association of  
Machinists  
Baltimore, Maryland

Now that Mr. Curtis has served the time required by the state for his conviction on sexual assault, it seems only reasonable and compassionate to grant him an immediate



Militant/Margrethe Siem

Curtis's supporters win hearing from fellow fighters at Southern Christian Leadership Conference convention in Washington, D.C., August 26.

parole from the lesser and seemingly ancillary charge of burglary. Mr. Curtis has been a model prisoner, whose behavior and cooperation with the authorities is unquestionable, except for his refusal to participate in the SOTP [Sex Offenders' Treatment Program] which he considers a coercion for the admission of guilt. He believes in his innocence, and still has hope in our system of Justice.

**Rev. Joseph Fahy,**  
Hispanic Apostolate  
Catholic Archdiocese  
Atlanta, Georgia

I strongly recommend that Mr. Mark Curtis be immediately granted parole since the sentence of the crime for which he was accused has now expired. I believe several weighty reasons counsel the immediate pa-

role of Mr. Curtis at this time.

Mr. Curtis has consistently maintained his innocence of the crime for which has been sentenced; considerable convincing evidence has been alleged that Mr. Curtis was falsely accused and sentenced; the severe physical beating he endured when arrested — a court of law declared in January 1992 that the version of the police concerning said beating was "not credible"; and the exemplary conduct of Mr. Curtis during his years of incarceration.

**Jackie Vaughn III**  
Michigan State Senator  
Associate President Pro Tem of  
the Senate  
Chairperson, Martin Luther  
King, Jr. Commission  
Lansing, Michigan

I would like to take this opportunity to request that you give thoughtful and earnest consideration to the parole petition of Mr. Mark Curtis. Mr. Curtis is currently imprisoned at the Bennett Correctional Center in Fort Madison, Iowa. On June 18 of this year Mr. Curtis completed his term of imprisonment for his conviction of sexual abuse, and now remains in prison only for the charge of burglary. This charge was added several months after his arrest.

Mr. Curtis has maintained his innocence of all charges and his appeals are current. He has sustained a record of good conduct while incarcerated, and he has engendered a great deal of public support. I hope you will weigh these important factors carefully when making your decision on his parole request.

## Prison guards fired for abusing inmates

BY RUTH GRAY

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — A ministerial inquiry has revealed widespread violence against inmates by officers in New Zealand prisons.

The inquiry was ordered by the minister of justice, Doug Graham, after 17 prison officers at Mangaroa Prison in Hawkes Bay were suspended in April amid allegations of assaults on inmates. Twelve officers were subsequently dismissed following an investigation.

The assaults occurred in response to an alleged attack on a guard by a prisoner in January. In retaliation, "all inmates in that particular area were systematically beaten, and in cases, left naked outside in secure yards and subjected to ongoing assaults over a four-day period," the investigation found. The report added that "it comes as little surprise that the officers have decided not to be truthful in their answers when interviewed."

The ministerial inquiry released its findings July 21. The 92-page report revealed that the January beatings were not an isolated incident at the prison. "What was considered unusual by those at Mangaroa," it said, "was that these illicit beatings became un-

controlled, spilling over into unprovoked attacks on other inmates and extending the assaults over several days."

**'Designated hitters'**

The inquiry revealed the existence of a squad of guards known by the softball term "designated hitters." Sanctioned by senior prison officials, the squad was used to punish prisoners through beatings. Similar squads exist at other prisons throughout the country, the inquiry found.

In June, an investigation was announced into Wellington Prison after an internal inquiry found allegations of beatings to be "serious and worthy of closer scrutiny."

The ministerial inquiry cited other incidents of abuse of prisoners by prison officers. These included arbitrarily withdrawing privileges, the misuse of confidential information, transfers away from a prisoner's home region, theft, and organizing inmates to assault other prisoners.

The main recommendation of the inquiry is to set up a Prison Complaints Authority for those incarcerated.

The 12 officers dismissed from Mangaroa Prison have been protesting their dismissal.

The group to which they belong, the Public Service Association (PSA), has been vocal in supporting them.

Responding to criticism of the existence of "designated hitter" squads, PSA official Alan Millar reported that every prison has these "control teams" to discipline inmates. The problem at Mangaroa was that the officers assigned to this task were "ill-trained and ill-led," he said.

The prison guards also gained backing from some members of Parliament. Graham responded that prison officers "should not take the law into their own hands."

The debate around treatment of prisoners comes as legislation is being put through Parliament to allow prisons and prison-escort services to be privately run. The number of prisoners in New Zealand has risen by 60 percent over the past six years.

## Rightists attack Sydney bookshops

BY DOUG COOPER

SYDNEY, Australia — Swastikas and right-wing threats were spray painted across the front of the Pathfinder Bookshop in Surry Hills in the evening of August 30. Supporters of the bookshop are calling on defenders of democratic rights to protest this rightist vandalism.

Along with the swastikas, the graffiti read, "Beta Dead than Red!" and "Commiss out."

The bookshop carries the works of revolutionary and working-class leaders such as Nelson Mandela, Ernesto Che Guevara, Malcolm X, Karl Marx, and V. I. Lenin; titles on trade union and other labor struggles; as well as on the origins of women's oppression.

Bob Aiken, Pathfinder Bookshop manager, described the act as "an example of ultrarightist attacks taking place here and around the world, which are aimed at intimidating and ultimately terrorizing working people as a whole—immigrants, Aborigines, trade unionists, and others—from expressing political ideas and speaking out in defense of their rights."

Aiken is calling on the mayor of South Sydney, Councillor Vic Smith, and the local council to speak out against this politically motivated act of vandalism. Supporters of the bookshop are also pushing for the police to conduct a serious investigation of the incident.

This attack comes less than a month after an arson attack on another political bookshop in Sydney. Black Rose Anarchist Books in Newtown, a well-known radical bookshop and anarchist meeting place, was

**Kevin Dunlea**  
Essex, England

I would like to take the opportunity to express my views about your consideration for parole for Mark Curtis. I am convinced that he is an innocent man and has spent far too long in jail for crimes, I believe, he did not do. Saying that, he has now completed the state's required time for one of the charges. Look at his good work record in this time and his conduct throughout. This must all help in his case for parole.

I am only one of many people who wish to see justice come to Mark Curtis. Like him, I am a committed trade unionist only trying to help other working people if they are in need. If parole would be granted, I'm sure he can further prove his innocence. I await your judgment with keen interest.

## New Zealand youth protest cop violence

BY MIKE PETERS

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand — Up to 150 people marched here August 13 to protest police violence. Carrying placards with slogans such as "Save our children from police brutality" and "Our country. Whose police?" the mainly young demonstrators circled a police kiosk in Cathedral Square, the city center. A portable sound system loudly played the police's television advertising theme tune: "He Ain't Heavy, He's My Brother."

The protest was organized in response to the actions of Christchurch police when they closed down a dance party attended by several hundred young people in a rented warehouse early in the morning, July 18. The police claimed that the party was a "fire risk."

Those attending the party described the aggressive and violent methods used by the police to disperse them. People were pushed, abused, dragged, and beaten. At one stage, police dogs were brought in and a number of people were bitten. Several of the most violent incidents were captured on film by a television crew.

Thirty-one people were arrested, although only nine subsequently faced charges. Those taken into custody describe being strip-searched and denied blankets, phone calls, and medication.

More than 40 complaints have now been

filed with the Police Complaints Authority — an internal police review body.

The police actions drew an immediate response. Thirty-five people picketed the Christchurch District Court July 19. Another picket two days later was followed by a public meeting that night attended by more than 140 people.

The Civil Rights Action and Information Group was set up to organize protests, assist those facing charges, and coordinate the filing of official complaints.

A third courthouse picket July 23 involving 150 people turned into a spontaneous march on the central police station.

Among those who addressed the marchers August 13 were a representative of the Council for Civil Liberties, Labour Party member of Parliament Lianne Dalziel, protest organizers, and representatives of the Communist League and Communist Party.

Several march participants attended an open house that evening sponsored by the Militant Labour Forum at the Pathfinder bookshop. Protest organizer Richard Arachnid and Carmen Bain, Communist League candidate for Christchurch Central in the upcoming general election, spoke.

*Mike Peters is a member of the New Zealand Engineers Union at Toyota assembly plant in Christchurch, New Zealand.*

*Doug Cooper is a member of the National Union of Workers and works at the Weston Biscuit Co. in Sydney.*

# Boston socialists fight exclusion from ballot

BY RUSSELL DAVIS

BOSTON — Despite substantial evidence that this city's voter registration records are in a state of disarray and that the procedures used to check nomination petitions are deeply flawed, a Suffolk County judge recently rejected a request from the Socialist Workers campaign committee for an injunction to prevent the printing of ballots for the September 21st primary elections.

Maceo Dixon, Socialist Workers candidate for mayor, and Jason Coughlin, city councilor District 3 candidate, were ruled off the ballot in spite of the thousands of signatures the candidates and their supporters have collected. Dixon turned in over 6,000 signatures and Coughlin more than 470 — twice the legal requirement of 3,000 and 200 respectively.

"The decision made by the Boston Election Commission (BEC) has little to do with how many signatures our campaign turned in," Dixon explained. "Instead, it is a cold-blooded political decision by the city government in Boston to shut out points of view it disagrees with."

Karen Ray, Socialist Workers candidate for city councilor at-large, has been certified to appear on the ballot. "This is a tremendous victory," Coughlin said. "It's the first time in 10 years a Socialist Workers candidate has appeared on the ballot in Boston. It shows the potential we have to push back attempts to keep our ideas out of the city elections."

## Voter registration scandal

An ongoing discussion on ballot access has been prominently featured in Boston's major media for the past several weeks. This discussion was sparked by revelations about the city's inaccurate voter registration rolls and the effect this had on several mayoral candidates' ability to get on the ballot.

Of the eleven mayoral candidates who collected signatures to qualify for a spot on the ballot, two dropped out of the race because they felt they could not meet the requirements. Four others — including Dixon — were told by the Boston Election Commission that initial counts of their signatures indicated they would not appear on the ballot. Several days later three of the candidates — City Councilor Bruce Bolling, former journalist Christopher Lydon,

and Dorchester attorney Diane Moriarity were certified for the ballot after election officials conducted a second count of the nomination signatures.

Newspaper articles revealed that the BEC dropped 60,000 voters from its registration rolls this year. Most of those dropped were from Black or Latino areas of Boston. This was the result of a voter "census" carried out by the city. Those who didn't return verification cards received in the mail were automatically taken off the city's voter rolls.

An opinion column in the *Boston Herald*, entitled, "Archaic voting laws a threat to candidates" railed against the BEC's nomination procedures. It pointed out that the signature requirements for mayoral candidates were too high, and that restrictions that prevent a voter from signing more than one candidates' nominating petition are prohibitive.

The socialist candidates have vowed to continue to expose the undemocratic nature of Boston's election laws and registration methods while presenting the only working-class perspective in the city's electoral contest. Despite the BEC's recent decision and moves by some event organizers to exclude him, Maceo Dixon continues to be invited to candidate debates and activities.

At a campaign rally on August 21, Dix-



Boston Socialist Workers mayoral candidate Maceo Dixon campaigns at August 28 march on Washington, D.C.

on stated, "The fact that Karen Ray was placed on the ballot is evidence of the huge hearing our campaign continues to get. The crisis facing working people and farmers

in Boston and around the world is not going to disappear, just as the need for working-class solutions to this crisis will not go away."

# Communist League begins campaign in Canada

BY ROBERT SIMMS

TORONTO — "The campaign by the Ontario New Democratic Party government against so-called medicare fraud is part of the employers' drive to cut medicare and other social services, and blame immigrants for the economic crisis and government deficit," said auto worker and Communist League candidate Susan Berman to an August 22 meeting to launch the Communist League's federal election campaign.

The Conservative Party government is nearing the end of its five-year legal mandate. Prime Minister Kim Campbell is expected to schedule a federal election for October. This campaign will take place as the Canadian economy sinks deeper into depression and governments at all levels carry out unprecedented cutbacks in health care, education, welfare, unemployment insurance, and other services needed by work-

ing people.

The Communist League is fielding six candidates throughout Canada. Machinist Tony Di Felice is Berman's running mate in Toronto. Steelworker Joe Young and auto worker Bonita Murdock are the Communist League candidates in Vancouver, British Columbia. In Montreal, steelworker Michel Dugré and auto worker Rosemary Ray are running on the Communist League ticket.

Berman pointed out that the New Democratic Party (NDP) government released its report on medicare fraud after announcing that it intended to cut 140,000 immigrants and refugees from medicare services.

"The government says immigrants from Third World countries and U.S. citizens are stealing by coming across the border and getting 'illegal' health care such as appendectomies," Berman said. "They say they

want to prevent misuse of medicare by establishing ID cards with your personal history on microchips.

"These police tactics are aimed at working people to get us to think that government health care is a privilege and not a right," Berman continued. "But quality health care is never a problem for the rich. They can get it anytime, anywhere, in any country — and they do."

"The whole idea of 'illegal' health care is inhuman and absurd," said Berman. The Communist League proposes an expansion of the health-care system. Working people should be able to walk into any medical facility without a card and get the care we need. Canada's borders should be open to immigrants and refugees who should receive the same services as anyone else. More doctors should be trained to provide care in every corner of Canada and around the world.

"Despite its economic difficulties that's what socialist Cuba does," continued Berman. "If health care was centered on people's needs and not profits for the drug and medical industry, then we could do that here too."

"Prime Minister Kim Campbell, Liberal Party leader Jean Chretien, New Democratic Party leader Audrey McLaughlin, the leaders of the Reform Party and the Bloc Quebecois will be making a lot of promises," stated Berman. "This is not what the Communist League campaign is all about."

"Our campaign is about joining with all those who are fighting back. Wherever there is a picket line of striking workers, or a protest against racism or cop brutality, or young people defending abortion clinics from rightists trying to shut them down, the Communist League candidates will be there," she said.

Community college student Selvi Cakmak, who recently decided to campaign with the Communist League candidates, also spoke at the meeting.

"When I grew up in Turkey I faced discrimination as a Kurdish person," she said. "Now that I'm living here I want to do something."

Cakmak described her experiences in distributing the campaign newspaper, the *Militant*, to striking coal miners in the United States, and in joining abortion rights fighters on the streets of Cleveland to defend clinics against right-wing antiabortion forces. She described her participation in the fight in Toronto against racist violence against immigrants.

"All these struggles here and all over the world are linked up," she said. "I want to help the Communist League campaign so people can learn that injustice everywhere comes from capitalism."

## SOCIALIST CAMPAIGN IN THE NEWS

THE BIRMINGHAM NEWS

### Ms. Farley seeks seat as Socialist

By Roy Williams  
News staff writer



Frances Farley

Frances Farley, a Socialist Workers Party member active in the fight for abortion rights, has announced her candidacy for the Birmingham City Council.

Ms. Farley, 40, is seeking the District 8 seat held by Councilman Roosevelt Bell. Council elections will be held Oct. 12.

District 8 includes Ensley, East Thomas, and parts of the Five Points West area.

A member of Alabamians for Choice, Ms. Farley helped protect abortion operators against Operation Rescue's blockade attempts in Jackson, Miss. last month.

"The counter mobilization taking place in Jackson and other cities deserves the support of the labor movement, youth, fighters for black rights and all who struggle for progressive change," she said.

If elected, Ms. Farley pledged to actively protect the city's abortion clinics. "The city should take a strong stand on the side of a woman's right to choose," she said.

Ms. Farley said she opposes Summit Medical Center's protest asking the federal government to not issue community block funds to Birmingham

because of inadequate protection against abortion foes.

"We need more money, not less," she said.

Ms. Farley is employed by U.S. Steel in Fairfield and is a member of United Steel Workers Local 2122. She said as a council member she will speak out for union rights.

She also pledged to be a voice for the working class who would be affected by President Clinton's proposed cutbacks in Medicare and Social Security.

"The working people shouldn't have to pay for the deficit," Ms. Farley said. "We oppose all taxes, including Birmingham's sales tax and the proposed gasoline tax."

If elected, she also will push for more federal and state money to give more people access to affordable housing and help the homeless in Birmingham, Ms. Farley said.

Ms. Farley, who is married to John Hawkins, lives in Ensley.

### Socialist seeks seat on council

By Roy Williams  
News staff writer



Shelton McCrainey

Calling himself a man who will speak out for the working class, Shelton McCrainey of the Socialist Workers Party has announced his candidacy for the Birmingham City Council.

McCrainey, 45, said he is seeking the District 4 seat currently held by Councilman Aldrich Gunn.

City council elections will take place Oct. 12.

District 4 includes Inglenook, North Birmingham, Kingston, Collegeville, Woodlawn, Airport Hills and North Avondale.

"I offer an alternative to the Democratic and Republican parties," he said. "The workers' perspective has been lacking in solidarity in government here."

McCrainey, who works at Pemco Aeroplex, is a member of United Auto Workers Local 1155. He said as a councilman he would be a voice for union rights, particularly those involved in the United Mine Workers of America's ongoing strike against the Bituminous Coal Operators Association.

"What the miners are fighting for is just and reasonable — job security, union recognition, and no take backs in medical care and other benefits," he said. "That alone is reason enough for trade unionists, youth and

fighters for black, women's and democratic rights throughout the area to step up our support of the miners."

McCrainey, who participated in the 8 1/2-month long strike by United Steelworkers of America Local 9226 against Trinity Industries in Bessemer, said the preparedness for battle by unions is more important today than ever before.

"Those companies most severely affected are challenging the unions more directly," he said. "More and more the capitalists who own these outfits are resorting to rougher methods. Increasingly the cops intervene against strikers, while private gun thugs use force and violence to break unions."

If elected, McCrainey said he will also work to protect a woman's right to an abortion. He said he helped protect abortion clinics against Operation Rescue's protests in Jackson, Miss., last month.

McCrainey lives in Avondale and has four children: Heshimu, 19, Dannelle, 16, Kenisha, 14, and Patrick, 13.

# WHERE WE STAND

**BEGINNING OF DRIVE**

	The MILITANT GOAL	PERSPECTIVA MUNDIAL GOAL	NEW INTERNATIONAL GOAL
<b>UNITED STATES</b>			
Albany	5	2	—
Albuquerque	2	1	—
Atlanta	80	10	20
Baltimore	70	10	20
Birmingham, AL	75	10	20
Boston	115	30	45
Brooklyn	130	40	50
Chicago	130	30	35
Cincinnati	10	2	3
Cleveland	75	5	25
Denver	10	2	5
Des Moines, IA	90	40	40
Detroit	85	10	30
Greensboro, NC	75	10	30
Houston	60	15	15
Los Angeles	185	95	95
Miami	100	40	50
Morgantown, WV	65	3	15
New Haven, CT	15	3	10
New York	135	45	55
Newark, NJ	130	40	70
Philadelphia	90	20	20
Pittsburgh	85	10	20
Portland	15	2	10
Salt Lake City	85	15	35
San Francisco	120	35	70
Seattle	70	15	25
St. Louis	75	8	30
Twin Cities, MN	110	18	30
Washington DC	75	15	20
<b>U.S. Total</b>	<b>2,367</b>	<b>581</b>	<b>893</b>
<b>AUSTRALIA</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>BELGIUM</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>BRITAIN</b>			
London	65	5	25
Manchester	40	1	20
Sheffield	35	3	15
<b>Britain Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>CANADA</b>			
Montreal	70	12	40
Toronto	80	15	45
Vancouver	70	10	30
<b>Canada Total</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>115</b>
<b>FRANCE</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>ICELAND</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>NEW ZEALAND</b>			
Auckland	65	6	15
Christchurch	35	1	5
<b>New Zealand Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>PUERTO RICO</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>SWEDEN</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,945</b>	<b>677</b>	<b>1,191</b>
<b>DRIVE GOALS</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>1,200</b>

## IN THE UNIONS

	The MILITANT GOAL	PERSPECTIVA MUNDIAL GOAL	NEW INTERNATIONAL GOAL
<b>UNITED STATES</b>			
ACTWU	32	12	16
IAM	90	30	20
ILGWU	—	—	—
OCAW	—	—	—
UAW	100	10	25
UFCW	—	—	—
UMWA	85	3	25
UTU	86	2	27
<b>U.S. Total</b>	<b>393</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>113</b>
<b>NEW ZEALAND</b>			
EU	7	—	2
MWU	2	—	0
UFBGWU	8	—	3
<b>New Zealand Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>SWEDEN</b>			
Food workers	3	—	5
Metal workers	5	—	2
Transport workers	2	—	2
<b>Sweden Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>9</b>

ACTWU — Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union; AEEU — Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Workers Union; AMEU — Automotive, Metal and Engineering Union; CAW — Canadian Auto Workers; EU — Engineers Union; FPU — Food Preservers Union; IAM — International Association of Machinists; ILGWU — International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union; MWU — Meat Workers Union; NUM — National Union of Mineworkers; NUW — National Union of Workers; OCAW — Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; RMT — Rail, Maritime, and Transport Workers; TGWU — Transport and General Workers Union; UAW — United Auto Workers; UFBGWU — United Food, Beverage and General Workers Union; UFCW — United Food and Commercial Workers; UMWA — United Mine Workers of America; USWA — United Steelworkers of America; UTU — United Transportation Union

# Ireland team kicks off drive

BY IAN GRANT AND JOYCE FAIRCHILD

DUBLIN, Ireland — A four-person team of *Militant* supporters spent nine days in Ireland August 20-28 selling the socialist press and Pathfinder books.

The team spoke to workers on strike here. It visited trade unionists at the Dupont chemical factory in Derry and activists challenging state frame-ups in Belfast, both in the six counties in the North occupied by Britain. It also interviewed representatives of Sinn Fein and abortion rights campaigners. Part of the team met with the family of republican prisoner Brendan Donaghy, and visited him in Long Kesh prison, scene of the 1981 hunger strikes.

"Our goal was to find out how workers, both in the 26 counties of the Irish Republic, and 6 counties of Northern Ireland, are facing the growing economic and social crisis affecting workers everywhere in the world today," said Tony Hunt, an engineering worker and member of the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union living in Sheffield, England.

"In Dublin, people's eyes opened wide when they saw the material on the stall," said Joyce Fairchild, an airline catering worker and member of the Transport and General Workers Union based in London. "We discussed world politics with people from all walks of life, all ages, and several nationalities almost nonstop for four or five hours."

Team members sold 38 copies of the *Militant* and 1 renewal subscription, along with copies of the *Communist Manifesto*, books by Malcolm X, and the Pathfinder pamphlet *Che Guevara and the Fight for Socialism in Cuba Today*.

"Young people are especially keen to discuss abortion rights," continued Fairchild, "and have gained confidence from the advances won as a result of the 'X case' in 1992, where demonstrations by thousands helped reverse an attempt by Irish courts to prevent a 14-year-old woman from traveling to Britain for an abortion."

"But rightist forces are mobilized too," Fairchild stated. "At one point our book stall was harassed by members of Youth Defence, an anti-abortion organization whose tactics aim to intimidate free speech and broader discussion among workers and youth."

In Belfast city center, where pedestrian areas are patrolled by armed British soldiers in combat dress, the team sold 4 copies of the *Militant* in less than an hour. During the three days the team spent in Belfast several bombs exploded, a Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) armored vehicle was the target of a rocket attack, and Loyalist

paramilitary units launched an attack on a bar playing Irish music.

In Derry the team set up a stall near the shopping center. "One young worker we spoke to explained he wanted the *Militant* because he was particularly interested in the U.S. miners' strike and the paper's international cover-

er to a group of students from Brazil.

### Single issues sales campaign

To complement and reinforce the subscription effort, distributors will launch a single-issue sales campaign in mid-September. Both these efforts increasingly grow out of the



Militant/Arthur Hughes

Promoting special offer to *Militant* — subscription and copy of *Malcolm X Talks to Young People* for \$15, at march on Washington.

age," stated Hunt. "The shopping area was constantly patrolled by the British army and the RUC police, reminding us that although it's been 21 years since 13 civil rights demonstrators were gunned down by the British army in these streets on 'Bloody Sunday,' the forces of occupation still remain."

Around the world, distributors of the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and *New International*, like those who traveled to Ireland recently, have begun a 10-week international sales drive, which started August 28 to win new readers to the working-class publications.

As we go to press, the drive is just underway. The scoreboard in next week's issue will report results from the first week of the campaign.

Initial sales reports have started to trickle in from various cities. Gary Boyers in **Detroit** reports that distributors there are off to a strong start, with 14 *Militant* and 2 *Perspectiva Mundial* subscriptions sold already. Detroit supporters who participated in the August 28 march on Washington sold 4 subscriptions there, including one to a Vietnamese vendor and another

involvement of *Militant* supporters in a wide variety of political activities.

Dozens of subscriptions were sold at the August 28 march. Miami supporters sold 2 of them, along with 20 single issues of the paper.

*Militant* supporters who were drivers on the recent Friendship caravan to Cuba sold 26 subscriptions to opponents of the U.S. government's blockade of that country.

In **Des Moines, Iowa**, the drive started off with a bang, with 1 *New International*, 2 *PMs*, and 11 *Militant* subs reported sold already. Some of these sales were a product of reaching out rapidly to students on campuses that have just opened in the area.

Supporters will note that local goals do not yet add up to the international targets. Distributors in local areas are encouraged to discuss raising their goals.

A reminder to distributors: To have the most recent figures from your area included on the chart, subscriptions must be received in the business office by 12 noon EDT each Tuesday.

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# Forums discuss political openings in Iran

BY GREG McCARTAN

WASHINGTON, D. C. — Several dozen young people and political activists attended meetings sponsored by the Militant Labor Forum here and in Baltimore to discuss recent political developments in Central Asia with Ma'mud Shirvani.

Shirvani is the coauthor of the introduction to the new Pathfinder book, *To See the Dawn: Baku, 1920 — First Congress of the Peoples of the East*. Held August 21 and 22, both meetings were built as celebrations of the publication of the book. Shirvani was visiting the area as a part of national speaking tour.

"The historic conference was held in Baku, Azerbaijan, in 1920, during the first years of the Russian revolution," Shirvani said. "There, working-class leaders of industrialized countries met as equals with representatives of the oppressed peoples of colonial countries of the East to map out a common strategy for the emancipation of the toilers of the world. The perspective laid out at that conference can help fighters see the road forward in the unfolding political situation in the world today."

Shirvani has traveled extensively in the region of Central Asia, most recently to attend the sixth international Tehran Book Fair. Along with a team representing Pathfinder, he also visited Baku.

A dozen activists who are native to Iran and had been involved in political activity in that country attended the forum here. They, along with others at the forum, welcomed the slide show Shirvani presented as part of the program because of what it showed about the new political openings in Iran and the Central Asian Republics. The slides depict the large Pathfinder booth at the Tehran Book Fair and the many discussions on Pathfinder's titles with students, workers, and others. Books on the Cuban revolution, the fight for women's rights, and

fundamental works on the communist movement were snapped up by those attending the fair.

Several forum participants questioned Shirvani as to how the government in Iran would allow such titles to be displayed, purchased, and distributed in the country. Shirvani said that in Tehran participants at the book fair would ask Pathfinder representatives a similar question about the United States. "How is it possible for these revolutionary books to be published in the USA?" they'd say. These Iranians would cite the reactionary record of Washington against the Iranian revolution and its assault on the Iraqi people in the Gulf War. "The world is opening up to books, political discussions and revolutionary literature," Shirvani explained.

"The capitalist government in Iran is attempting to reintegrate itself into the world market system," he said. "Along with this comes the need to open up some and allow books from established publishers to be displayed."

"In addition," Shirvani continued, "the working people and peasants in Iran have not been crushed. The government was able to make some inroads into the gains of the



Militant Pathfinder books were well received at Tehran Book Fair. Many Iranians were surprised to see revolutionary titles published in the United States.

revolution that overthrew the U.S.-backed Shah in 1979, but the working population is neither defeated nor demoralized."

During the war by the Iraqi regime of Saddam Hussein against Iran which lasted

for most of the 1980s, working people in Iran faced a double challenge, he said. "First and foremost they had to defend their revolution against what they correctly saw as an imperialist-inspired aggression. At great cost and sacrifice they accomplished this goal. At the same time the Iranian regime used the war to its own advantage. They were able to push back the rights, independent organization, and demands for land, jobs, and other measures by working people." Defending both the country and these social gains was not possible given the organization and political leadership of the workers and peasants.

"But the government's successes along these lines could not be sustained for long after the war ended. There are increasing signs of resistance among workers and peasants in the country," Shirvani said.

Some \$100 was collected at the two meetings to help Pathfinder defray the costs of the recent trip.

## U.S. government frames Muslim cleric

Continued from front page

est of charges about Abdel Rahman's alleged involvement in assassination attempts or bomb plots. Instead, it alludes to his role as the leader of a conspiracy ring.

The law does not require the government to prove that Rahman and the other defendants committed any overt acts to further their "conspiracy," or even that they knew about each others' activities. The indictment

charges that Rahman "was a leader of the organization with whom others consulted in pursuing and planning bombings, murders and other acts of terrorism in furtherance of the objectives of the conspiracy."

The big-business media and capitalist politicians are whipping up a terror scare to bolster these accusations. "Snared in the Terrorist Web," said the headline in the September 6 issue of *Newsweek*. The editors of the *New York Times* wrote that "New Yorkers especially have felt vulnerable to international terrorism." Accusing the Egyptian cleric of "inflammatory preaching" and "bloody deeds attributed to his followers," the *Times* editors said Rahman has "come to symbolize the danger."

A few lines later, however, the *Times* was forced to admit that "Federal investigators still have not been able to pin any direct involvement in overt terrorist actions on Sheik Abdel Rahman."

At the August 26 arraignment, where Rahman pleaded not guilty, police blocked off streets and erected barricades around the courthouse. This reinforced the desired image of a siege by dangerous terrorists.

### FBI informant

Much of the indictment is built around the claims of FBI informant Emad Salem, a former colonel in the Egyptian army. Salem produced tapes that he made allegedly of conversations with defendants in the case.

Siddig Ibrahim Siddig Ali, one of those indicted in the supposed plot to blow up the United Nations, said in a *Washington Post* interview August 19 that Salem's story took things "out of context." Pointing to entrapment by Salem, Siddig Ali "asserted in the interview that Salem boasted that he prepared the explosives that blew up the lower levels of the World Trade Center on February 26," said the *Post*.

"Ali's attorney . . . has asked prosecutors here for a tape of the day, June 23, when Siddig Ali says the comment was made. But U.S. Attorney Mary Jo White's office has not yet produced such a tape, and Kate Cosenza, a spokeswoman for White, declined to comment," the story continued.

Salem stands to make half a million dollars from the government for his efforts.

Meanwhile, a new development emerged last week that could prove embarrassing to the White House. It appears that Salem also made tapes of his conversations with his FBI "handlers." Defense lawyers, who are working to get the material turned over rapidly, say the tapes could show Salem being coached to seek specific evidence, which they could argue pointed to entrapment.

The indictment also charges El Sayyid Nosair with the killing of Meir Kahane, being part of the conspiracy, and participating in a plot to kill Mubarak.

Nosair, originally from Egypt, was acquitted of the 1990 killing of Kahane, leader of the rightist Kach party in Israel. He has been incarcerated on gun possession and assault charges since the trial.

Attempting to try someone twice on the

same charges constitutes an undemocratic practice known as double jeopardy. The government is attempting to sidestep this. Andrew McCarthy, an assistant U.S. attorney, said the government will use a rarely used doctrine in criminal law that allows separate prosecutions for the same crime by "different sovereigns," or jurisdictions. Now it is the federal government prosecuting, before it was New York state.

U.S. attorneys have yet to explain how Nosair conspired to bomb buildings in New York and assassinate the Egyptian head of state from a prison cell at Attica.

"He's got a pretty good alibi," said Nosair's lawyer, John Elmore. "He was in jail when all of this happened."

The sheik has been in a federal prison since July 2 in Otisville, New York. Government attempts to deport him have proven as yet unsuccessful.

The other 14 accused men are being held in New York City.

Originally from Egypt, where he was a critic of the government, the blind cleric visited the United States several times between 1986 and 1990, each time traveling on visas approved by the Central Intelligence Agency, according to a report in the *Washington Post*. The *New York Times* reported that the sheik worked with U.S.-backed rightists in Afghanistan. He has lived in the United States since 1990.

Like other figures who have previously worked with U.S. spy agencies, such as Manuel Noriega of Panama, Rahman's usefulness to Washington has apparently dried up.

Some big-business newspapers are taking a more cautious approach to Rahman's trial. The *Washington Post*, while lauding the government for "keeping an informant so near the center of this circle," warned that the appearance of a fair trial is important. "The sheik and his co-defendants are entitled to the same protections, the same due process and the same fair trial as any American in our courts."

Tamar Lewin expressed a similar concern in a news analysis article in the August 28 issue of the *New York Times*. "Some criminal defense experts say the law comes perilously close to punishing people for their beliefs or speech," she wrote.

"I think it's wrong," said New York defense lawyer Michael Deutsch of the government's plans to "use the speeches of the sheik and his religious teachings, to say it was likely he was involved in a conspiracy to overthrow the government. . . . It's also risky with a jury, since there's a tradition in this country that we don't prosecute because of a person's beliefs, and some jurors take that very seriously."

Sen. Alfonse D'Amato said Rahman should be executed if convicted.

Up to nine of the indicted men began a hunger strike to protest prison conditions. They include Mohammed Salameh, the first person arrested in the World Trade Center bombing, who has been in solitary confinement along with other defendants since March. They are locked in their cells 23 hours a day.

## Sedition laws make ideas a crime

BY SARA LOBMAN

Seditious conspiracy — the charge levied against Omar Abdel Rahman and 14 others — has long been used by the U.S. government to target those it doesn't like. These laws, which allow prosecutors to charge a defendant with the broad crime of plotting against the government and thus avoid the necessity of pinning a specific action on an individual, are ideal for going after working-class fighters, immigrants, and others.

The first sedition laws in U.S. history were passed as part of the Alien, Sedition, and Naturalization acts of 1798. The laws, which made the expression of certain ideas a crime, were steamrolled through Congress to help the wealthy merchants and landed gentry put down the democratic movement of working farmers, mechanics, craftsmen, and day laborers who were fighting to extend and defend the gains of the revolution.

The Naturalization Act, which required 5 to 19 years' residence in the United States, was aimed at immigrant workers who were playing a key role in the trade unions and other democratic organizations and societies. The Alien Act empowered the president to deport, at his own discretion, any immigrant he considered dangerous to "the peace and safety of the United States."

The Sedition Act imposed a fine of up to \$2,000 and imprisonment of up to two years for anyone who should "write, print, utter, or publish . . . any false, scandalous, and malicious writing or writings against the government of the United States, or either house of the Congress of the United States or the President of the United States with intent . . . to bring them . . . into contempt or disrepute."

One of the earliest victims of the 1798 Sedition Act was David Brown, a mechanic from Massachusetts who the ruling Federalist Party labeled the "Wandering Apostle of Sedition." He was sentenced to 18 months in jail and a \$400 fine. His crime? Erecting a liberty pole on which he pinned a leaflet that said in part, "There [always] has been an actual struggle between the labouring part of the community and those lazy rascals that have invented every means that the Devil has put into their heads to destroy the labouring part of the community. . . . I never knew a Government supported long after the confidence of the people was lost, for the people are the Government."

Following the U.S. rulers' entry into World War I, the government launched a

campaign to crush the union movement, and particularly the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), whose leaders had spoken out against the war. Laws against espionage, sedition, and "criminal syndicalism" served as tools for widespread and simultaneous arrests. The criminal syndicalism acts, for example, were specifically drawn to cover the advocacy of doctrines as well as the commission of acts.

"It was not necessary," Philip Foner explains in his history of the U.S. labor movement, "to establish that members knew each other or the details of the plan or organization, provided only that the accused knew the purpose of the organization and agreed to participate in a plan to achieve that purpose." These laws, including the Espionage Act of 1917 and the Sedition Act of 1918, were used to justify massive raids by federal troops against IWW offices throughout the United States.

The Smith Act, adopted in 1940 as the U.S. government prepared to enter World War II, was also used to go after unionists, socialists, and opponents of war. Its first victims were 18 members of the Socialist Workers Party and Teamsters Local 544 in Minneapolis, who were sentenced to 12 to 16 months in prison for their opposition to the imperialist war.

### Puerto Rican nationalists

According to the *New York Times*, the seditious conspiracy law that the government is using to go after Abdel Rahman has its roots in a Civil War statute that was aimed at halting the secession of southern states.

It makes it illegal for two or more people to "conspire to overthrow, put down, or destroy by force the Government of the United States." It has been used only a few times this century, primarily, according to the *Times*, to prosecute "radical leftists, Puerto Rican nationalists, and white supremacists."

The law was used in 1985 to convict four Puerto Ricans advocating independence for the island, who the government accused of dozens of bombings in New York City. Two years later, four other Puerto Ricans were convicted on conspiracy charges under the same law after being accused of trying to free a member of their organization from a Chicago prison. The 1987 convictions were the last to date under this statute.

## To See the Dawn

### Baku, 1920 — First Congress of the Peoples of the East

BY JOHN RIDDELL  
AND MA'MUD SHIRVANI

Following are excerpts of the introduction to the new Pathfinder book *To See the Dawn: Baku, 1920 — First Congress of the Peoples of the East*. It is scheduled for publication in September. The subheadings are by the *Militant*. Copyright © by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission.

The First Congress of the Peoples of the East, held Sept. 1–7, 1920, in Baku, capital of Soviet Azerbaijan, registered a new stage in the emancipation struggle of colonial and oppressed peoples and in the world struggle for socialism. This stage had been opened by the October 1917 revolution in Russia, in which the Bolshevik party had led in the establishment of a revolutionary workers' and peasants' republic.

The congress in Baku was an event without precedent. Delegates from more than two dozen peoples of Asia met in joint conference with leaders of workers' parties in Russia, Western Europe, and the United States to hammer out a common policy in the fight against imperialist domination and capitalist exploitation.

Comments of some of the more than 2,000 delegates reflected a conviction that a new age had begun for the toilers of the East, ending the epoch in which seemingly blind forces had ruled the lives of oppressed working people. "A new world is awakening to life and struggle: the world of the oppressed nationalities... of the East," began greetings from the Azerbaijan Communist Party.

Karl Radek, a leader of the Communist International, reporting to the congress on the world political situation, noted that increasingly the peoples of the East refused to perish in bitter resignation. "They have hope," he stated, "they feel their strength."

According to Bibinur, a woman delegate from what is now Kazakhstan, the advent of Soviet power meant that "a bright sun has reached us, warming and comforting us... the first we have known." Another woman delegate, Najiye Hanum from Turkey, was confident that present trials were leading to a new day: "To see the dawn one has to pass through the dark night."

Previously, struggles aiming to lay the foundations for democracy, independence, and social progress had been stifled by the landlords, moneylenders, petty manufacturers, and other exploiting layers. If the traditional authority and organized violence of the local rulers proved insufficient, then the struggles by peasants, youth, and workers had been crushed by the military might of the colonizing powers. Although traditional social systems were disintegrating under the impact of capitalist economic penetration, the road to industrialization and social advance was blocked off by imperial rule. Colonial societies remained hopelessly mired in poverty and social decay.

#### Capitalism shaken by war and revolution

Yet as congress delegates gathered in Baku, capitalism as a world system — shaken by war, economic dislocation, and revolution — was undergoing the most severe crisis it had yet experienced. Workers and peasants in the vast territory of the former tsarist empire of Russia had broken free of capitalist rule. They had organized a number of revolutionary governments of workers and peasants, voluntarily joined in a federative alliance led by the Soviet republic of Russia.

One of the Russian Soviet government's first actions had been to proclaim the right of all the subject peoples within the boundaries of the old tsarist empire, which encompassed many Asian peoples, to "free self-determination up to and including the right to secede." Finland, Estonia, and other states had acted on this pledge, establishing their independence.

Another early Soviet appeal pledged to Muslim workers



Some of the more than 2,000 congress delegates. A core of experienced Bolshevik leaders and leading figures new to the revolutionary movement for Soviet power attended the conference. At left, Bibinur, a woman delegate from what is now Kazakhstan; beside her Thomas Quelch from Britain. Seated, bottom at right, with arm upraised, John Reed from the United States.

and farmers that "henceforth your beliefs and customs, your national and cultural institutions are declared free and inviolable." Declaring null and void all the treaties through which tsarism had lorded it over and looted the Eastern peoples, the appeal called on them to "build your national life freely and without hindrance." This promise was subsequently concretized through treaties with China, Iran, and other countries which, among other measures, canceled the debts owed the tsarist regime.

The October 1917 revolution led to the formation of the Communist International (or Comintern), on the initiative of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks), which led the workers and peasants of Russia to victory. In July 1920 the new International convened, in Petrograd — St.

#### Congress marked a new stage in emancipation struggle of colonial and oppressed people and in world struggle for socialism

Petersburg — and Moscow, its Second Congress, whose three weeks of sessions adopted a line of march for worldwide socialist revolution.

On June 29, three weeks before the Comintern congress opened, the International's Executive Committee had issued a call to all peoples of Asia to send representatives to a congress in Baku. Comintern chairman Gregory Zinoviev later told the Baku gathering that its sessions were "the complement, the second part, the second half" of the world congress that had just been held.

Within the Comintern's predecessor, the Socialist (or Second) International, the idea had been widespread that the relationship of workers in the advanced capitalist countries toward the East consisted chiefly of an obligation to be filled after formation of a Socialist government. Such a government would then act to make the fruits of Western progress available to the "backward" peoples of Asia and

Africa. This notion, sharply contested by the Bolsheviks, helped to justify the opportunism of the Socialist International's majority leadership, who from 1907 began to advocate a "reformed" colonialism — and contributed to that International's ignominious collapse in 1914.

#### The communist view

In contrast to this view, the Communist International viewed the oppressed peoples as already constituting a decisive battalion in the international class struggle. It was true that mechanized industry and its complement, the industrial proletariat, was small or nearly nonexistent in most of Asia and Africa. But independent organizations of peasants and other urban and rural toilers — including some proletarian and even communist organizations — were found in several countries.

A year before the Baku congress, Bolshevik leader V. I. Lenin observed that the oppressed masses, who until then had been merely "objects of international imperialist policy, existing only as material to fertilize capitalist culture and civilization," would now "rise as independent participants, as builders of a new life."

As a result, Lenin noted, "the socialist revolution will not be solely, or chiefly, a struggle of the revolutionary proletarians in each country against their bourgeoisie. No, it will be a struggle of all the colonies and countries oppressed by imperialism."

Through the actions of the Communist International of Lenin's time, revolutionary workers the world over reached out their hands to ally with toiling masses who

formerly had no hope of liberation. Moreover, the workers' and peasants' republic in Russia stood ready from the outset to assist peoples struggling to break free of imperialist rule. With these developments in mind, the Baku congress set its sights on nothing less than "a single union of the working people not only of Asia and Europe but of the entire world, so as to put an end to capitalism and begin a new and better life."

In his closing remarks to the conference, Zinoviev stated that it was now possible to supplement and broaden the call with which Karl Marx and Frederick Engels in 1848 closed *The Communist Manifesto*, the fundamental programmatic document of the modern communist movement. Zinoviev proposed the amended wording, "Workers of all lands and oppressed peoples of the whole world, unite!"

Just as the revolution of oppressed peoples needed the support of allies in the imperialist countries, the Communist International asserted, the proletariat in the industrially advanced lands, too, could not triumph except in alliance with the peoples of the colonial and semicolonial countries. For the first time, therefore, urgent necessity had laid the material basis on both sides for an alliance of working people of the East and West in a common international movement.

#### The message of the Baku congress

The guiding ideas advanced by the organizers and many delegates at the Baku congress had been debated and adopted the previous month by delegates — including a number from Asia — to the Comintern's Second Congress. These revolutionary perspectives were codified in the resolution on the colonial and national questions approved by the congress. Lenin drafted the resolution and reported on it to the congress.

The key points advanced by this resolution and by related Second Congress documents can be summarized as follows:

- There was no truth in the claims of the great capitalist powers to be leading the colonial peoples toward independence and prosperity. In reality, the colonizing powers that had emerged victorious from World War I were moving to consolidate their grip on Asia and Africa and deepen the enslavement of the peoples of the East.

As for promises to colonies of independence (usually

honored in the breach), the Second Congress resolution explained, "The imperialist powers, with the help of the privileged classes in the oppressed countries, are perpetrating a fraud. They are creating state structures that pose as politically independent states but are economically, financially, and militarily totally dependent upon the imperialist powers."

● The struggle for national liberation was part of an international class struggle against exploitation and oppression by the ruling capitalist families in a handful of imperialist countries, as well as by local landowning and monied classes. The national policy of Communists, the Second Congress resolution explained, should "clearly differentiate between the interests of the oppressed classes, the toilers, the exploited, and the general concept of the so-called interests of the people, which means the interests of the ruling class."

Further, it continued, this policy "should with equal precision distinguish between the oppressed, dependent

## A new world is awakening to life and struggle: the world of the oppressed nationalities . . . of the East.

nations that do not have equal rights, and the oppressor, exploiting nations that do, in order to counter the bourgeois-democratic lies that conceal the colonial and financial enslavement of the immense majority of the entire world population by a narrow minority of the richest, most advanced capitalist countries."

### Need for agrarian revolution

● No popular mobilization for national freedom could take place in colonial countries unless the peasantry was able to launch an agrarian revolution, which was essential to mobilizing it as an active revolutionary force. The goal of this struggle should be to free the land from burdens of landlordism, indebtedness, and predatory taxation, placing power in the hands of the toilers. The Second Congress adopted programmatic theses on the peasantry and the land question that served as the foundation for the more specific, and to some degree fuller, agrarian resolution adopted by the Baku congress.

"We must particularly strive to give the peasant movement the most revolutionary character possible," the Second Congress resolution on the national and colonial questions said. Reporting to the Second Congress on this resolution, Lenin stated, "Peasants' soviets, soviets of the exploited, are a weapon that can be employed not only in capitalist countries but also in countries with precapitalist relations."

● Working people could find no salvation in a struggle to preserve their traditional societies, including native exploiters and their institutions of rule. The national ruling classes had ruthlessly enslaved and pillaged their subjects prior to colonial conquest, and they continued to do so as best they could under conditions of foreign domination. Now, under the impact of world capitalism, these societies were in hopeless crisis, unable to defend the toilers from ruin.

Local exploiting classes sought to rationalize their own privileges and power — and extort for themselves a few more crumbs from the table of their imperialist overlords — by extolling the alleged virtues of traditional customs, values, and practices that had long been used to keep the

producing majority in submission. Working people had no interest in these demagogic efforts.

● Peasants and other working people in colonial countries should support all genuine revolutionary movements for national liberation, even when led by local capitalist forces. But Communists, while actively participating in such movements, should not accept the program and strategic perspectives of the bourgeois leaderships. Instead, they should combat the influence of all the local exploiting layers — both feudal and bourgeois — and consistently defend their own interests as toilers. In the words of the Second Congress resolution, they should "maintain the independent character of the proletarian movement, even in its embryonic stage."

● A nationalist ideology would obstruct, not aid, the liberation struggle. Peoples of the East should come together on the basis of their common class interests in combating imperialist domination and local exploiters, setting aside any trace of the national exclusiveness or ethnic hostility that had been used for so long by the rulers to keep them weak and divided. Their goal should be to overturn the power of capitalism on a world scale and to join in a world federation of free workers' and peasants' republics. "Federation is a transitional form toward full unity of the toilers of all nations," the Second Congress resolution explained.

● Given the existence of a powerful workers' and peasants' republic, oppressed countries could achieve industrialization and social progress without passing through an epoch of capitalist development. Even in very poor countries, where no separate working class had yet emerged, the struggle must begin for a Soviet system, that is, a state based on revolutionary councils of the peasants and other toilers, where modernization could proceed along a path that would overcome the division between rich and poor.

● Toilers of the East would find an indispensable ally in the revolutionary working class of the advanced capitalist countries. By the time of the Second Congress, the International's affiliates included workers' parties in most countries of Europe, several of them numbering tens of thousands of adherents. The rapid growth of these parties held the promise that colonial peoples could now ally with sizable contingents of revolutionary-minded workers within the colonizing powers. Moreover, the Russian Soviet Republic would render consistent political and material support to all colonized peoples.

● The resolution of the Second Congress concluded: "The class-conscious Communist proletariat of all countries therefore has a responsibility to give particular care and attention to the survivals of national feelings in the long-enslaved countries and peoples, while making concessions to overcome more rapidly this mistrust and these prejudices. The victory over capitalism cannot be successfully accomplished without the proletariat and with it all working people of all countries and the nations of the entire world voluntarily coming together in a unified alliance."

● At the Second Congress and the Baku congress, leaders of the Communist International aimed not merely to forge an alliance with liberation fighters from oppressed nations but to win them fully to communism. Revolutionaries from countries imprisoned by imperialism in stagnation and backwardness were now summoned to become equal participants in the Comintern and leaders of the worldwide movement for social revolution.

In 1914 irrepressible economic and political rivalries among the great capitalist powers plunged them into a world war, resulting in immeasurable destruction of productive wealth, in famine and destitution for working people across Europe, and in the slaughter of millions. The war's impact heightened class antagonisms,



Bolshevik leader Zinoviev speaks with workers and soldiers during stopover on road to Baku. "Workers of all lands and oppressed peoples of the whole world, unite!" he told the conference.

driving opposed classes toward a confrontation.

By the end of 1918, revolutions in Russia, Germany, and Austria-Hungary had swept away governments and monarchs across Eastern and Central Europe, forcing an end to the slaughter. Even France, Britain, and the other victor powers were deeply shaken by worker and peasant struggles and by the deep discontent among soldiers and sailors. And in Russia, working people achieved a decisive victory in November 1917, establishing the Soviet government.

In 1919 the upsurge in Europe was set back, particularly in Germany, where a murderous war was waged against the workers' movement, and in Hungary, where a revolutionary government formed on the Soviet model was crushed. Yet initial steps were being taken to build Communist parties firmly rooted in the working class that might contribute to victory in further confrontations. Meanwhile, profound economic dislocation continued to undermine the capitalist regimes of Europe. Workers' resistance continued with renewed vigor into 1920, and nationwide struggles took place in Germany, Italy, France, and Britain.

The rebellious ferment faced by the Allied powers at home and in their colonies was fed by these governments' campaign to overturn Soviet Russia and the allied Soviet republics. From mid-1918, Soviet territory was invested by a ring of counterrevolutionary White Guard armies, propped up and supported by invading forces of more than a dozen other governments and by a stringent Allied blockade along Soviet borders. During 1919 Red Army forces drove back the White Guards and Allied interventionist armies, but the war still raged on several fronts as the Baku congress convened.

### Journey to Baku

The Baku congress was organized by a committee based in Baku that included Azerbaijani Communists Nariman Narimanov and M. D. Guseinov, Said Gabiev of Dagestan, and Turkish Communist Party leader Mustafa Subhi, as well as G. K. Ordzhonikidze and Yelena Stasova, representing the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Russia.

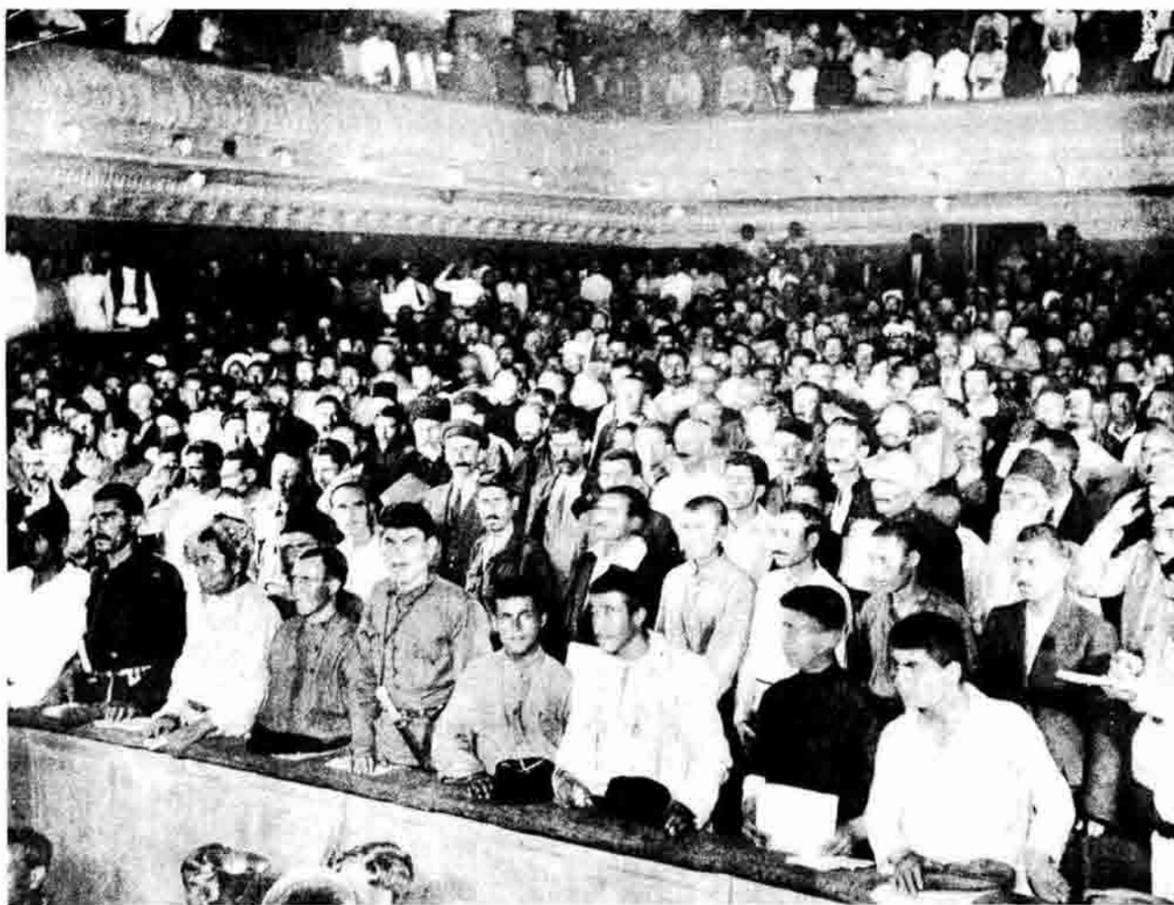
Delegates from Communist parties in all the major imperialist powers traveled to the congress together with a group of leaders of the Communist Party of Russia aboard a special train from Moscow, taking part in the many meetings and celebrations organized along the route. They crossed areas where White Guard forces were active, passing a major station in Ukraine, Lozovaya, that had just suffered a destructive White attack. On the return journey, their train was blocked at one point because another band of Whites had torn up the tracks, derailing a locomotive; the nearby station at Naurskaya had also been assaulted. For a time the Baku congress train was stranded and in great danger, but the Whites moved off without attacking.

"Most of the stations had been destroyed, and everywhere the sidings were full of the half-burnt wrecks of coaches," recalls Alfred Rosmer, a delegate from France. "When the Whites had been beaten they destroyed everything they could." The fuel shortage was so acute, Stasova tells us, that on occasion passengers disembarked at stations and took down fences and gathered other wooden materials for the firebox.

Across all the Soviet-held territories of Asia, an extensive campaign of public education took place to provide a



Repairing tracks near Naurskaya after sabotage by White Guards, counter-revolutionary forces. "When the Whites had been beaten they destroyed everything they could," recalled French delegate Alfred Rosmer.



**Congress in session.** In its call for the Baku congress, the Communist International spoke in the name of the revolutionary working masses of Europe who, "awakened by the thunder of the World War and driven by hunger . . . have risen up so that they may work not for the rich but for themselves."

basis for the popular election of delegates. Several "agit-trains" were sent out to organize this work, including the "V. I. Lenin," the "Red East," and the "Soviet Caucasus"; some "agit-ships" also served in the campaign. Rallies and meetings were held throughout the Soviet East. As delegates made their way to Baku, they were met by celebrations; in the town of Agdash, a Baku newspaper reported, one hundred sheep and goats were slaughtered in honor of the congress. Another form of participation was the holding at many points in the Soviet East of special Baku congress *subbotniks* — a day of volunteer labor for economic reconstruction. Twenty-five thousand volunteers participated in the largest of the *subbotniks* in Baku.

**Imperialist hostility**

The British government did what it could to block delegates' journeys to Baku. A steamship carrying delegates

**A nationalist ideology would obstruct, not aid, the liberation struggle**

from Enzeli in Iran was attacked by British military airplanes; two delegates were killed and several wounded. Two other delegates were killed at the Azerbaijan border by Iranian police. British warships patrolled the Turkish Black Sea coast to bar delegates from setting sail from Turkey for Soviet territory. But a timely gale blew up, forcing the British flotilla to return to Constantinople (Istanbul); revolutionaries from Turkey immediately set sail and completed the risky voyage successfully. In the Transcaucasus — between the Caucasus Mountains, Turkey, and Iran — the two bourgeois republics of Armenia and Georgia banned attendance at the Baku congress, but many delegates managed to slip across the borders undetected.

In the months before the Baku congress, thousands of militant Muslims left India and headed west, hoping to prevent the Allied powers from dismembering Turkey, then the seat of the caliph, who was seen as the head of world Islam. Many of these fighters reached Kabul, where about 150 of them formed the pro-Soviet Indian Revolutionary Association at the beginning of 1920. A group of 28 of the most committed members set out for Turkestan. After an arduous journey through the Hindu Kush and Alai mountains, they arrived in Tashkent on July 2. Others soon followed this route.

Meanwhile, some Indian soldiers in Britain's Mideast army defected to the Soviet side and made their way to Baku. By the end of 1920, more than 200 Indian revolutionaries were on Soviet soil. Fourteen of them attended the Baku congress, as did a smaller number of Korean and Chinese workers living in Russia and a delegate from Japan.

**Who the delegates were**

The delegates present at Baku included a core of leaders of long experience in the Bolshevik movement, such as Narimanov and Ahmed Sultanzadeh, a Communist leader from Iran. Many other leading figures in the congress were fighters against tsarist oppression who had only recently joined the revolutionary movement for Soviet power.

Among them were Turar Ryskulov, who led the faction of Communists of Muslim origin in the Turkestan party, and Narbutabekov, a leading spokesman for the nonparty delegates at Baku.

The delegation from Khiva (Khorezm) was headed by a Muslim cleric, Bekkhan Rakhmanov, who had recently joined the Khiva Communist Party — a fact that provoked derision from some Western European critics of the Comintern. The delegates in Baku from parties in the West, who came from diverse political backgrounds, were equally recent recruits to communism.

The total number of registered delegates at the congress was about 2,050. The most detailed available political breakdown lists 55 percent as Communist Party members, another 20 percent as supporters, and 25 percent as "non-party." Non-Communist participants, whom Zinoviev later reported to have been actually much more numerous than members of the Communist fraction, held their own meetings at Baku in the "nonparty fraction."

This fraction "broke down in turn into two groups," Zinoviev added. "First there were the genuinely nonparty forces, in which we must include the representatives of the peasantry and the semiproletarian urban population. Then there were those persons who claimed to be nonparty but in fact belonged to bourgeois parties."

Best known among the bourgeois political figures at Baku was Enver Pasha, former leader of the Young Turk movement and of the Turkish government during World War I. In exile following Turkey's surrender, he had arrived in Moscow August 14 seeking Soviet arms and money to build an international Islamic revolutionary organization with the stated goal of driving the Allied invaders from Turkey.

Many working people in Baku looked on Enver as a heroic figure who had led Muslim resistance during the

war against the Western powers, especially Britain. But among congress delegates, Enver was widely despised for his government's role in driving the Turkish workers and peasants into World War I and for inciting the slaughter of Turkey's Armenian population. After initially deciding to permit Enver to address the congress, the Presiding Committee ruled to exclude him from the sessions, in view of the likely negative response of most delegates.

Enver took part in discussions on the fringe of the Baku congress that led to the formation of two anti-Communist political parties: ERK (Will), later named the Group of Turkestan Socialists, and the Central Committee of National Muslim Unions. Both groups opposed Russian influence and favored political unification of the Muslim peoples of the former tsarist empire.

Another bourgeois current from Turkey also sent a delegation to Baku: the national independence movement in Anatolia led by Mustafa Kemal. Statements by a representative of this movement and by Enver were read to delegates during session 4.

**The course of events at Baku**

The Baku congress brought together representatives of peoples long divided by the structures of tsarist rule, by the shifting boundaries of civil war, and by mistrust bred of ethnic and religious provocation fostered by local exploiting layers and encouraged by the colonial power in Moscow. Indeed, in Baku itself, the rivalries of bourgeois nationalist parties had led to assaults in 1918 on first the Muslim and then the Armenian quarters, which left thousands of victims.

The congress, by contrast, took on the colors of a festival celebrating the unity of the nationally oppressed toilers. Many participants brought with them locally made goods, which they exchanged or traded with other delegations.

Some delegations submitted statements on political questions faced by the peoples they represented. A declaration by delegates from Armenia condemns the Armenian government's responsibility in the "cleansing" operations against minority ethnic groups and in military conflicts in the region. The statement counterposes a course of revolutionary struggle as the road to unity among working people of the Caucasus.

Three statements, published for the first time in English in this book, presented to the congress conflicting views on the Zionist project to settle Jews in Palestine. The first, a declaration by Mountain Jews, was made by revolutionaries from an indigenous, Eastern Jewish community who were influenced by Zionism. The Poale Zion statement was written by a Zionist group that supported Soviet power and for a time moved closer to the Communist Party.

The response of the Jewish sections of the Russian Communist Party presents the Comintern's analysis of Zionism, which the Second Congress resolution on the national question had summed up as "a crass example of Entente imperialism and the bourgeoisie of the relevant country working together to swindle the working classes of an oppressed nation."

On the day following the congress, September 8, a large assembly was held to mark the burial of the remains of 26 leaders of the Baku Soviet murdered in 1918 by White Guards with British complicity. A Conference of Youth of Asia, attended by more than 100 representatives from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bukhara, Georgia, Iran, Khiva, Turkestan, and Turkey, took place in Baku September 9-10.

**Many languages at congress**

Congress sessions resounded with translations into a variety of languages of Asia, many of which had been stifled in the days of the tsars. Most of the delegates from Europe and America also understood no Russian and

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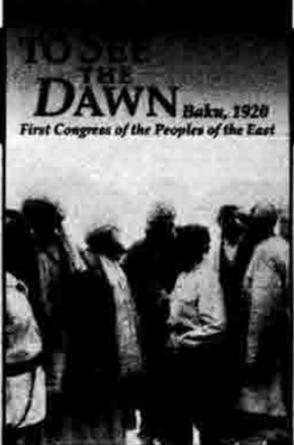
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Left: Demonstration of Baku Women's Union, Aug. 22, 1920. On banner at right Azerbaijani text reads, "Long live the world revolution"; Russian text links "liberation of women" with "liberation of the world's toilers." Right: From left, delegates Bibinur and Khaver Shabanova. A small but significant number of women — about 55 — took part in congress, and women's struggle for liberation was addressed several times.

needed translation. Following each speech, debate halted to permit a rendering into major Asian languages in turn. Sometimes limited to summaries, translations were often far longer than the original speech.

John Reed later joshed British Communists about the experience of one of their compatriots, presumably Thomas Quelch. According to Reed, the British delegate's timid and hesitant remarks were translated by Peter Petrov with such enthusiasm and such a spirit of invention that the hall soon erupted with cheers and shouts of "Down with British imperialism!" as swords and rifles were brandished in the air. The dismayed British delegate was said to have protested, "I'm sure I never said anything like that; I demand a proper translation."

Soon the proceedings were lagging far behind the planned agenda, and in session 4 stricter rules of order had to be adopted. Translations from the podium were now given only in Farsi (Persian), Azerbaijani, and Russian, and were restricted in length. Delegates gathered in groups for renditions into other languages.

A small but significant number of women — about 55 — took part in the congress, and women's struggle for liberation was addressed on several occasions during congress sessions. A proposal to elect three women to the Presiding Committee, Zinoviev later reported, aroused strong objections from some nonparty delegates, and a lengthy debate ensued. When three women were unanimously elected to the committee in session 5, however, the entire congress rose to greet them in a thunderous ovation. In session 7, two women delegates spoke on the liberation of women of the East.

In session 3, Narbutabekov, a non-Communist delegate from Turkestan, called for action against chauvinist abuse of the indigenous peoples by some Soviet officials in Central Asia. A resolution arguing the case against such abuse was submitted by Communist delegate Turar Ryskulov and 20 other delegates from a number of nationalities.

Communist leaders repeatedly denounced such chauvinist practices, which had been carried over from the former tsarist administration, where they were rampant. In December 1922 Lenin warned of the danger that "the 'freedom to secede from the union' by which we justify ourselves will be a mere scrap of paper, unable to defend the non-Russians from the onslaught of that really Russian man, the Great-Russian chauvinist — in substance a rascal and a tyrant, such as the typical Russian bureaucrat is."

The problem was exceptionally acute in Turkestan, which from early 1918 had been cut off from Soviet Russia by White Guard forces. The Turkestan government followed a blatantly chauvinist course. Operating under the Soviet banner, the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party later noted, "old servants of the tsarist regime, adventurers and kulaks [rich peasants] . . . began to persecute the indigenous population in a most brutal manner."

As a result, working people in Turkestan had been pushed into the arms of the reactionary ruling layers there. In the fall of 1919, Turkestan soviets broke from this disastrous policy and set out on a revolutionary course. Nonetheless, chauvinist abuses had been far from fully overcome at the time of the Baku congress.

In his closing remarks to the congress, Zinoviev pledged corrective action on the points raised by Narbutabekov. This began immediately, as 27 congress delegates traveled

to Moscow, where they discussed their criticisms and proposals with the Communist Party Political Bureau.

A resolution was adopted, based on a draft by Lenin and incorporating several points made in the document presented to the Baku congress by the 21 delegates. Appendix 8 contains the resolutions of the congress delegates and the Political Bureau along with one of the statements made as part of its implementation; all three documents, newly available, lay hidden for many decades in closed Soviet archives.

Resolutions adopted by the congress included a manifesto to the peoples of the East, an appeal to workers of the advanced capitalist countries, and theses on the agrarian question and on Soviet power in the East. Its final decision was the election of an executive body to continue its work:

**Advent of Soviet power meant 'A bright sun has reached us, warming and comforting us . . . the first we have known.'**

the Council for Propaganda and Action.

The Baku congress's call for united action against British imperialism corresponded to a vital turning point in the struggle against colonial rule in Asia.

As World War I ended, the example of the Russian revolution helped unleash a new wave of anticolonial struggles across the Asian continent. Another element feeding this upsurge was popular opposition to the Treaty of Versailles, imposed by the Allied powers in 1919. The treaty confirmed the partition of almost all of Africa, much of Asia, and substantial territories in the Caribbean and the Pacific into colonial empires ruled by Britain, France, the United States, and other powers.

The few independent countries of Asia, such as Turkey, Iran, and China, remained subject to infringements of their sovereignty and economic disabilities imposed by the capitalist powers. Meanwhile, advancing from their bases in Egypt and India, contingents of the British army fanned out over much of the Near East and Central Asia.

#### Struggles in Iran, Turkey

By mid-1920 anticolonial struggles had put imperialism on the defensive across much of Asia. Across Turkey, proindependence forces were taking up arms against the Allied occupation forces. In Iran, much of which was under British occupation, uprisings took place in the northeast and northwest against the Tehran rulers, and a mass movement arose against a treaty that would have made the country a de facto colony of Britain. In the northern province of Gilan, Communists joined in early 1920 with national independence fighters in establishing a revolutionary government. Meanwhile, British and French rule in the Middle East provoked popular uprisings and sharp clashes during 1919–20 in Egypt, Syria, and Mesopotamia (Iraq).

When the congress convened, the British government had been forced by this resistance and by the advance of

the Soviet revolution to withdraw from Afghanistan, Turkestan, the Transcaucasus, and part of northern Iran. Adding to London's difficulties, a month before the Baku gathering the Indian National Congress, led by Mohandas Gandhi, launched a campaign of noncooperation with British rule that rapidly assumed mass proportions.

In China, the Versailles settlement sparked a student protest in Beijing on May 4, 1919, which in turn opened up nationwide agitation for China's national sovereignty and a profound radicalization among its youth.

When delegates at Baku spoke of the East, it was Asia and Africa that they usually had in mind. John Reed, however, a delegate from the United States, told the congress of the yoke of U.S. domination in the Caribbean and in Mexico, where a revolution was under way to "keep the wealth of Mexico for the Mexicans," as well as of the mounting antiracist resistance of Black people in the United States.

The upsurge among colonially oppressed peoples also found expression within former tsarist Russia, where Asian peoples' support to Soviet rule helped sway the balance in the civil war and push back imperialist invading armies. By early 1919 close to 250,000 working people of Muslim origin were serving in the Red Army under the command of Muslim officers. These forces made up almost half the officers and soldiers of the Soviet Sixth Army, the main force resisting White commander Kolchak on the Siberian front.

Red Army contingents were formed from among the more than 1 million Asian immigrant workers. Tens of thousands of Chinese workers joined the Soviet forces, a development that provoked noisy alarm among anti-Soviet propagandists. Indeed, the Red Army was built not as a Russian but as an international force pledged to serve the cause of world revolution.

During the early months of 1920, the revolution advanced deeper into Asia as the working people of the North Caucasus, Azerbaijan, and Khiva established Soviet republics. Elsewhere in Soviet territory, many Asian and other peoples were setting up autonomous republics. In Turkestan, the Red Army advanced toward the frontiers of Iran, Afghanistan, and China.

Participation in the Baku congress by revolutionaries from across Asia was a tangible act of solidarity with the embattled Soviet republics. Delegates sought to defend the historic gains of the Russian revolution, such as the overthrow of tsarist autocracy, land reform, and the freeing of captive peoples. But the most effective defense, in the delegates' view, would be for workers and peasants of the East to take advantage of the world capitalist crisis to prepare new Soviet revolutions in Iran, Turkey, and elsewhere in Asia.

#### Impact of the congress

Assessing the joint results of the congress in Baku and of the second Comintern congress that preceded it, Lenin noted that their achievements, while they "cannot be immediately assessed or directly calculated," were "of greater significance than some military victories." The Baku congress showed that the banner and program of Bolshevism "are an emblem of salvation, an emblem of struggle to the workers of all civilized countries and the peasants of all the backward colonial countries," Lenin continued. "That which was achieved in Moscow in July and in Baku in September will for many months to come provide food for thought and as-

similation by the workers and peasants of the world."

The call of the congress for a "holy war for the liberation of the peoples of the East . . . for the liberation of all humanity from the yoke of capitalist and imperialist slavery" won an immediate response from toilers in countries close to Baku. The sense of liberation from age-old fetters was recalled decades later by Babayev, who attended the congress as a young Muslim Azerbaijani serving as a guard. When the call to prayer came, he found it natural to set aside his gun during devotions, after which he would "go back to defend with our blood the conference and the revolution." Inspired by the "declaration of holy war against the enemy of revolution," he explains, "thousands of people, convinced there was no contradiction between being a Bolshevik and a Muslim, joined the Bolshevik ranks."

The outstanding achievement of the Baku congress was to speed the formation and development of Communist parties in the East. Many working people in the Caucasus, Iran, Turkey, and the Arab East first heard of the accomplishments of the Baku congress through the work of the ongoing executive body it established, the Council for Propaganda and Action. This body, based in Baku, rapidly published congress decisions in Farsi, Turkish, and Arabic.

In the first 10 weeks of its activity, the council trained and sent out 170 educators and organizers. It established a cadre school, whose first class of some 50 students graduated in January 1921. They were backed up with a supply of books and pamphlets: available records of one two-week period show that 1,270 pieces of literature were shipped, of which 433 were in Farsi and 176 in Turkish. One issue

### Prospects for realization of goals of Baku congress are today better than at any time since early 1920s

of a magazine, *Narody Vostoka* (Peoples of the East) was published in October in Russian and Turkish, bearing the Baku congress slogan, "Workers of the world and oppressed peoples, unite!"

The Baku congress rapidly provoked a sharp protest from the British government, which complained on October 1 of a "real hurricane of propaganda, intrigue, and conspiracy against British interests and British power in Asia." Nonetheless, the Soviet government was able to make rapid progress toward a trade agreement with Britain; its signing in March 1921 forced a decisive breach in the anti-Soviet blockade.

During the year following the congress, Soviet governments were established in Armenia and Georgia, while a pro-Soviet revolution triumphed in Mongolia. Soviet Russia defeated the final White Guard armies, forced the invading Polish government to make peace, and brought the devastating civil war to a close.

In Turkey, however, while national independence was secured, a bourgeois government under Mustafa Kemal quelled the revolutionary upsurge. A similar development took place in Iran, where a new government crushed the uprising in Gilan province; the establishment of the Pahlavi dynasty followed in 1925.

The third Comintern congress, meeting in July 1921, noted a temporary restabilization of capitalism on a world scale. To adjust to changed conditions, and also to better centralize the work of the Comintern, the Council for Propaganda and Action was wound up early in 1922, and its activities were continued as part of the work of the Comintern center in Moscow.

#### Rise of Stalinism

Over the three years following the Baku congress, capitalist reaction — aided by the proimperialist Social Democratic current that headed a section of the workers' movement — regained for the moment the upper hand across most of Europe.

Even more deadly for the prospects of an alliance of workers and oppressed peoples was the growing hold in the Communist Party of Russia and the Comintern of a reactionary petty-bourgeois layer rooted in the party and state bureaucracy. This layer drew strength from the heavy toll of death and destruction that exhausted the working class during years of civil war and imperialist intervention, and from the impact of the Soviet republic's isolation following on defeats of the working class in Europe.

Campaigning against the danger represented by this reactionary layer, Lenin drew particular attention in December 1922 to its bullying attitude toward the peoples of the smaller republics in the Soviet Union that had been oppressed under tsarism. Outlining sweeping corrective measures, Lenin fought against bureaucratic practices that undermined the alliance of workers and the oppressed peoples. He wrote, "It would be unpardonable opportunism if, on the eve of the debut of the East, just as it is awakening, we undermined our prestige with its peoples, even if only by the slightest crudity or injustice towards our own non-Russian nationalities."



Delegates of the Sarts, trading people of Central Asia, at Red Army Club. Soviet Union declared beliefs, customs and national and cultural institutions, "free and inviolable."

In March 1923 Lenin was incapacitated by a stroke, ending his political activity. In the years that followed, the petty-bourgeois forces gained the upper hand in the Communist Party leadership, finding their personification and leader in Joseph Stalin. Increasingly abandoning revolutionary internationalism, these forces put the Communist Party, Comintern, and Soviet state on a counterrevolutionary course. With their triumph, the Soviet working class was driven out of politics, and the opening for a world alliance of the oppressed and exploited was closed off. Ultimately, the continuity of Marxism in the Soviet union was extinguished.

Under Stalinist rule, the Soviet republics in Asia were subjected to bureaucratic centralization, chauvinist and Russifying policies, forced collectivization, counterrevolutionary terror, and mass murder. Among the victims in the ensuing frame-up purges were Dadash Buniyatzadeh, Jalalutdin Korkmasov, Narbutabekov, and Turar Ryskulov — indeed, all the speakers from Asia at the Baku congress who were within Stalin's reach and whose fate is known. All were killed except for Khaver Shabanova, who was jailed but escaped execution. Nariman Narimanov, congress cochairman and first president of the Azerbaijan Soviet republic, died before these purges in 1925. Yet even he was posthumously denounced and vilified. The republics of Central Asia and the Caucasus came to resemble Bantustans, excluded from any role in world politics beyond occasional folkloric display and administered by corrupt and violent chieftains dependent on Moscow's favor.

Comintern policy under Stalin's leadership went over to the nationalist ideology of "socialism in one country." Revolutionary workers' and peasants' movements were subordinated to bourgeois nationalist political currents and to the narrow national interests of the bureaucratic caste ruling in the Kremlin. The initial, disastrous results of this policy were recorded in the defeat of the 1925-27 revolution in China.

#### The Baku congress today

Six decades later, in late 1989 and early 1990, working people of Baku entered the political arena once more, solidarizing with antibureaucratic struggles across Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. The Moscow regime unleashed a military counterattack, known as bloody January, to suppress this movement. The people of Baku responded by demonstrating 1 million strong, dealing a hard blow to the murderous regime. Political life began to open up to working people in Azerbaijan and the other Soviet republics.

On a world scale, the prospects for realization of the goals of the Baku congress are today better than at any other time since the early 1920s. Today the world capitalist economy is gripped in a profound and extended crisis of

stagnation and decline. Its world political system is one of growing disorder, marked by increasingly uncontrollable economic conflicts, military interventions, and wars. Working people in oppressed and imperialist countries alike are increasingly confronted with the need to take the path of militant struggle to defend their most elementary class interests. The obstacle posed by Stalinism to taking this path has been decisively weakened.

In these conditions, the conceptions of united world struggle for political and social liberation mapped out at Baku and

by other Comintern congresses in Lenin's time will now find new life and expression in the struggles of workers and farmers in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, as well as of those in the imperialist heartlands.

New exponents of revolutionary internationalism will lead working people in taking up and acting on the basic ideas of the early Communist International and the Baku congress. They will stand on the achievements of outstanding internationalist fighters who have proven in life the validity of these principles in the decades since Lenin's death.

Among such fighters can be counted Carlos Fonseca, founder of the Marxist movement in Nicaragua; Maurice Bishop, leader of the 1979-83 workers' and farmers' government in Grenada; Thomas Sankara, leader of the 1983-87 revolution in Burkina Faso; Malcolm X, outstanding fighter for revolutionary internationalism; and Nelson Mandela, head of the African National Congress. Key principles proclaimed in Baku have above all been upheld by Fidel Castro, Ernesto Che Guevara, and other leaders of the Cuban revolution, and defended by the Cuban people through more than 30 years of defiant struggle.

\* \* \*

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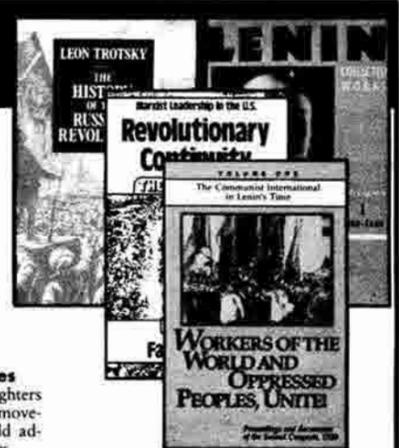
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# Auto bosses demand serious concessions

BY AMY HUSK SANCHEZ AND PETER THIERJUNG

CLEVELAND — Contracts between the United Auto Workers (UAW) and the "Big Three" auto companies — Ford Motor Co., Chrysler Corp., and General Motors — expire September 14. Preliminary press reports indicate that the auto bosses are demanding serious concessions from workers.

The UAW contracts cover some 425,000 workers at the Big Three. Contracts with the Canadian Auto Workers union expire September 27.

Ford and Chrysler handed the UAW their contract proposals at the end of August. General Motors has refused to place an offer on the table prior to the union's selection of a negotiating target. UAW officials have traditionally targeted one of the Big Three to negotiate the first and pattern-setting contract for the industry.

UAW officials announced Aug. 30 that Ford will be the negotiating target.

Ford, which netted a second-quarter profit of \$367 million compared to \$42

million a year ago, is calling for lump-sum bonuses instead of wage increases and additional bonuses if the union accepts a contract longer than the traditional three years.

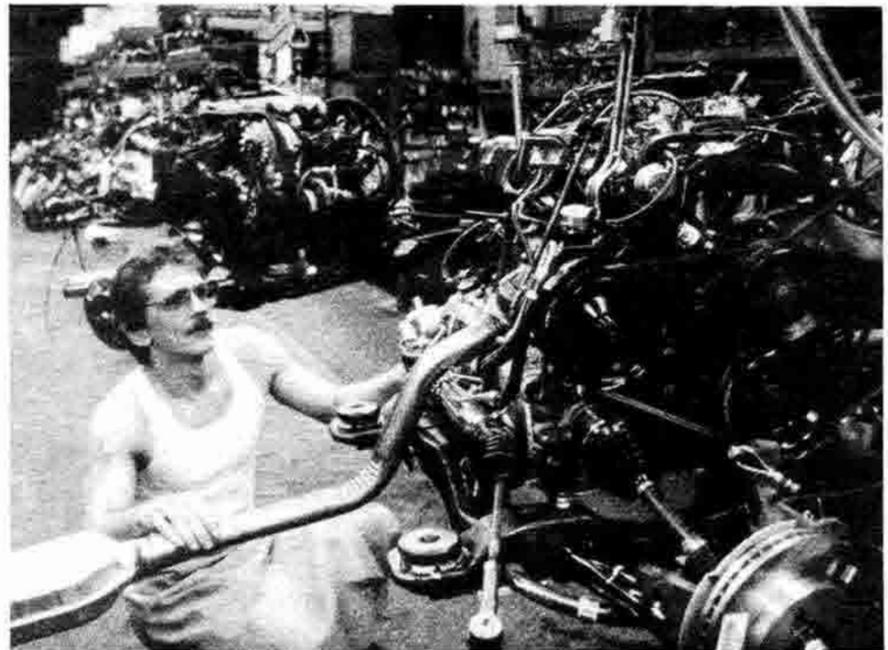
Ford wants employees hired after a new contract is ratified to carry the brunt of any new concessions. The scope of the takeback demands are enormous when one considers statistics showing that more than one-third of the Big Three's 425,000 union employees will be eligible to retire in five years.

The average age of workers is 46 at Ford and Chrysler and 45 at General Motors.

According to the *Morning Journal* of Lorain County, Ohio, Ford's proposals for new hires include:

- Cutting starting pay of employees hired after a contract settlement to 60 percent instead of the current 85 percent, with a provision that it take new hires six years, not the current 18 months, to reach full pay.

- Copayments of 20 percent for the cost of medical coverage and annual deductibles of \$150 for single individuals and \$300 for families. New employees would



Auto worker handling engine at GM plant. UAW picked Ford as negotiating target.

have to pay 50 percent of the cost of covering dependents until they reach 10 years of service.

- Company-provided eye, hearing, and dental care would be eliminated and the traditional pension plan would be dropped

in favor of an annual 2 percent payroll deduction that would be placed in a retirement savings plan.

Chrysler has put forward many of the same proposals, but also wants health insurance concessions along the same lines from current employees.

Takeback demands by General Motors are expected to be more far reaching. The economically troubled automaker is currently closing 21 plants and eliminating some 74,000 jobs. Until recently, General Motors reported substantial profit losses in its North American vehicle operations.

While UAW officials have dismissed Chrysler's demands for concessions from current employees, Ernie Lofton, chief UAW negotiator with Ford, told reporters he saw enough in Ford's proposals "that leads me to believe that if we were the target we could come out with an agreement by the deadline."

Press reports on negotiations between the UAW and the Big Three have been published in some parts of the Midwest, particularly in Michigan and northern Ohio, and have sparked discussions on the shop floor. Lapel buttons saying, "I don't want to strike, but I will!" have been distributed by the union at some plants.

However, auto workers in other parts of the country have been left in the dark.

At the Ford assembly plant in Avon Lake, Ohio, many workers are angry at the company's takeback demands. About 50 percent of the work force at the plant has been hired in the last three years under current two-tier wage provisions. Many are younger workers.

One worker at the plant said in an interview that the company "wants us to screw the young guys." Some workers opposed establishing additional wage and benefit tiers for new hires. "We already have enough divisions in this plant," said another worker.

Amy Husk Sanchez is a member of UAW Local 2000 in Avon Lake, Ohio, and Peter Thierjung is a member of UAW Local 538 in Cleveland.

## Minnesota public forum debates NAFTA

BY DOUG JENNESS

ST. PAUL, Minnesota — Sharply counterposed views on the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) were presented at a public forum here on August 28. Speaking in favor of the trade pact, which requires the approval of Congress before it can go into effect Jan. 1, 1994, Hector Garcia said, "Nobody should be unconcerned about loss of jobs. NAFTA will mean job growth resulting from growth of the export market." If current trade patterns continue, he argued, "Mexico will become the number one market for U.S. products."

Garcia, executive director of Minnesotans for NAFTA and president of Mex-U.S. Interinvestment, an international consulting firm in St. Paul, stated that there has been a consistent job loss in the United States for some time, "but this has nothing to do with NAFTA, which hasn't even gone into effect yet, or with Mexico." He attributed the job loss in the United States to stepped-up competition with Japan and western Europe.

Bill McGaughey, an activist in the Minnesota Fair Trade Coalition and the author of *A U.S.-Mexico-Canada Free-Trade Agreement: Do We Just Say No?* (Thislerose Publications, Minneapolis, 1992), strongly denounced NAFTA and called for its defeat. The Fair Trade Coalition includes all the central trade union bodies in Minnesota, many union locals, farmers' organizations, peace, and environmental groups.

McGaughey contended that NAFTA will "politically ratify the job loss to low-income countries." Moreover, he said, "there's no data that there will be a job gain in the U.S." as a result of NAFTA. He cited the "free-trade zone" on Mexico's border with the United States where U.S. companies have established plants called *maquiladoras*. "These are the prototype of what will happen with NAFTA." These plants have led to less jobs for U.S. workers, he said.

Referring to the recently negotiated side agreements to the trade pact that are supposed to provide greater protection for workers and the environment, McGaughey said they still don't make the multinational "polluters pay for pollution." He said a shorter workweek to provide more jobs and other measures to improve conditions of workers are good, but "we must first get rid of the threat of NAFTA."

Tom Laney, former recording secretary of United Auto Workers Local 870 at the Ford truck plant here and a member of the New Directions Caucus in the union, argued that "it would be useful for labor to defeat NAFTA, but it shouldn't be its number one campaign." He said the main problem working people face is that the union officialdom has become "corrupt" and is "promoting labor-management collaboration."

The Ford assembly worker said the UAW should provide funds to help organize workers in Mexico and that U.S. and Mexican workers should join forces to fight for a shorter workweek. But, unfortunately, the UAW is currently "in shambles," he said. "It



Militant/Selva Nebbia New Yorkers protest NAFTA in May. Sachs argued that the labor movement should be opposed to all protectionist restrictions on trade and advocate opening the borders for travel and immigration.

is no longer the community-based organization that it was in the 1930s and '40s."

The final speaker was Kari Sachs, also a Ford worker and member of UAW Local 879, as well as the Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of St. Paul.

Sachs stated that NAFTA was "neither a bogeyman nor a savior" for workers in North America. She said the main problem workers face in the discussion around the trade accord is miseducation by the labor officialdom. "They cry crocodile tears for Mexican workers," but their stress on saving U.S. jobs "pits workers in the United States

and Mexico against each other and reinforces chauvinism, which only helps the bosses." Sachs argued that the labor movement should be opposed to all protectionist restrictions on trade and advocate a policy of opening the borders for travel and immigration for all workers.

High unemployment, even during an economic recovery in the business cycle, is a result of the workings of the capitalist system in a period of depression, the socialist candidate said. The anti-NAFTA campaigners, Sachs stated, avoid a real fight around workers' interests, including for jobs. They've put the anti-NAFTA campaign in first place and hardly do "anything to publicize and build support for striking coal miners who are in the forefront of fighting the employers today."

The socialist candidate also noted that ultrarightist and fascist-type figures such as 1992 presidential candidate Patrick Buchanan are slamming NAFTA, connecting it to their anti-Mexican and anti-immigrant propaganda. She cited Buchanan's statement at an August 26 news conference, where he asked, "Why should the American people be responsible for cleaning up the pigpen that the Mexicans have made on their side of our common border?"

Sachs called for seeing working people in Mexico and other countries neither as victims or as "pigs" but as "potential political fighters and allies," in the fight to better "our common interests, including for a shorter workweek with no reduction in pay and for canceling the Third World debt" to foreign bankers.

A lively discussion followed the presentation at the meeting, which was sponsored by the Militant Labor Forum.

## Immigration cops step up raids in Minnesota

BY TONY LANE

MINNEAPOLIS — In just one week in August, 200 suspected undocumented workers were arrested here by immigration officials and other local police agencies. The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) raided GFI America, a local meat packing plant on August 17. Armed with a search warrant for the arrest of 99 workers, INS agents detained 77 of these workers along with 7 others who were picked up in the sweep. Immigration officials said the raid was the "largest round-up ever in the state."

These raids, which followed earlier such sweeps this year in Minnesota, especially in Marshall and Willmar in western and southwestern Minnesota, have brought the number of immigrants arrested in the state this year to almost 1,000, twice the amount of previous years. Speaking of the week's raids, Carl Houseman, the district director for the INS, said, "I don't think we've had anything like that before."

In addition to the raid on the meat-packing plant, the INS actions involved a

sweep of the city — including city parks, under bridges, laundries, and a plastics manufacturer. INS officials said that those picked up were "street people suspected of making their living by criminal means." City police teamed up with the INS for these raids.

Roy Garza, who heads the Spanish-Speaking Affairs Council, criticized the raids for "targeting the Mexican community. There is an anti-immigrant hysteria sweeping the country and Minnesota," he said. Garza pointed out that while Mexicans make up about a quarter of the undocumented workers in that state, "they make up 100 percent of the raids."

Garza said that the civil rights of Chicanos were being violated. "Three of those arrested at GFI America were Mexican-Americans," he pointed out.

Garza also asked what business the Minneapolis and Park Board police have in enforcing the immigration law, a federal law. He said that the cops picked up three people off the street in south Minneapolis, arrested them, and then handed them over to the INS.

Kari Sachs, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of St. Paul, visited the GFI America plant and spoke with workers there. "They told me their friends and family are in fear and hiding. Many workers said the raids show that 'Clinton doesn't like Mexicans.'"

In a statement released to the press, Sachs said, "These raids are not an attempt to get rid of so-called illegal immigrants, but to make workers in this position more fearful. These attacks are also aimed at scapegoating immigrant workers for the deepening economic and social crisis."

Sachs also pointed to the danger of the INS justifying a raid on the basis that it was against "criminals" and "street people."

"Outrageous as the raid against a meat-packing plant is, does describing it as an attack on 'criminals' mean that scouring of streets, parks, and under bridges is okay?"

Tony Lane is a member of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 6-717 at Greif Bros. in Rosemont, Minnesota.

# Fiji gold miners fight for union recognition

BY BRENDAN GLEESON

SUVA, Fiji — Though it's been more than two and a half years since going on strike, miners here are continuing their fight for improved working and living conditions and for recognition of their union.

"It is probably the longest industrial strike that has ever happened in this country. I'm sure it can reach three years," explained Kavekini Navuso, the general secretary of the Fiji Mine Workers Union (FMWU), in an interview in August.

Seven hundred workers struck Emperor Gold Mines at Vatukoula in the northwest of Fiji's main island of Viti Levu on February 23, 1991. According to Navuso, about one-third of that number remain actively involved in the fight today, organizing picket lines at the mine gates six days a week.

"The mine strikers are still there," he said. "The families still remain in the houses that the company had wanted them to vacate within five months of the strike. The workers are very strong in their minds. They are determined to stay there until they get what we want."

Fiji is a group of islands in the South Pacific with a population of 750,000. Gold mined at Vatukoula is the country's third-largest export after sugar and garments.

The Emperor Gold Mining Co. has a 50-year history of hostility to unions. Workers face brutal conditions at the one surface and three underground mines, including extreme heat, poor drainage, and lack of safety equipment. Work injuries are frequent, resulting in many deaths over the years prior to the strike.

The renewed drive to form a union began five years ago following the introduction of a new contract work system. Under this scheme, workers are paid according to productivity. "Work-related expenses," such as the cost of helmets, overalls, boots,

gelignite (dynamite), and other equipment, are deducted from wages, as is rent and electricity for company-provided accommodation.

At the time of the strike, workers received a minimum wage of 60 cents an hour. After company deductions, it was possible to receive zero income.

## Housing 'unfit'

The miners' housing was described as unfit for human habitation by the Department of Health. "The conditions are very poor," emphasized Navuso, "with old, dilapidated houses. The water is not treated. It is polluted with the toxic chemicals used in the mining process. Children are drinking it and swimming in it. The children are just pathetic — weak bones and weak hearts."

The company claims it has recruited as many as 1,500 replacement workers. The total work force when the strike began was 1,150.

However, Navuso disputes company claims that production is back to normal. "We know the company is lying. The company has always lied over the past half century. It is saying what is good for business."

"These are very inexperienced workers. How could the mine be operating at full capacity? A lot of them have been killed since we went on strike. In one instance, in November last year, two fatal accidents occurred in the space of one week. The company then celebrates 500,000 hours accident free. At the same time as these deaths are occurring, the company is celebrating. It is saying Vatukoula mine is accident-free. It's a tub of lies."

A report by a board of inquiry commissioned by the director of mines into one of these deaths was released in July and was front page news in the *Fiji Times*, the main daily newspaper. The report recommended

that the Office of Public Prosecution explore the viability of filing charges against Emperor for contravening mining regulations.

The FMWU is urging the government to proceed with a prosecution on the basis of the evidence found by the inquiry. "That is a very good basis for the government to go right ahead," said Navuso.

However, Director of Mines Alfred Simpson says the report is not a matter of priority. "I will deal with it in the normal course," he told the *Fiji Times*.

The FMWU has been striving to win replacement workers to the union. "After the recruitment of this scab labor we did quite an intensive recruitment of these workers and we recruited about 850," said Navuso.

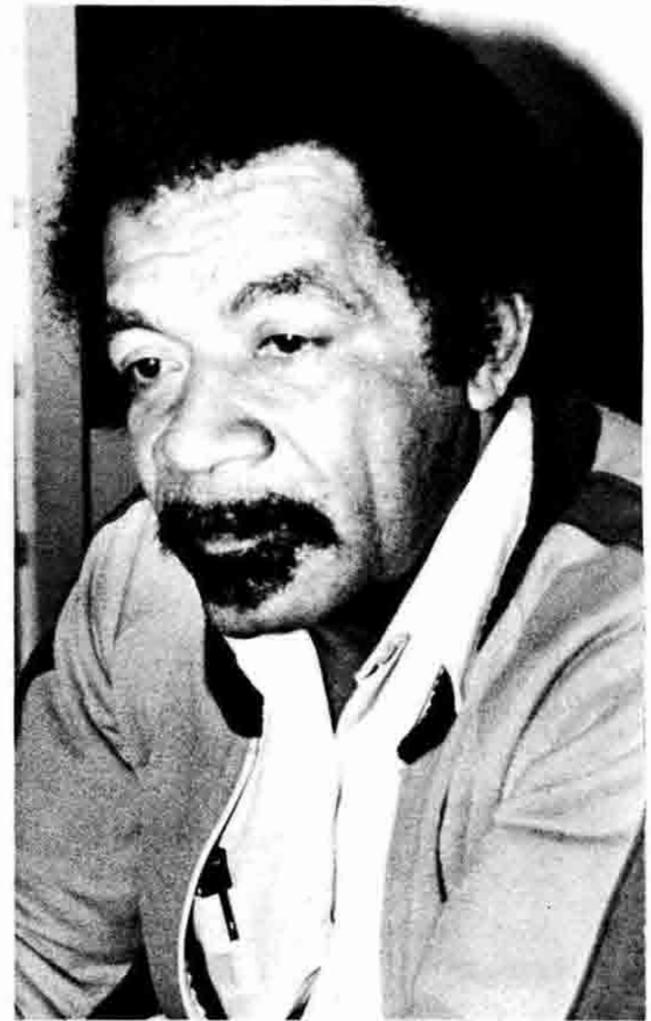
"There is a problem though. The company set up another 'union' called the Vatukoula Mine Workers Council. The company is falsely claiming that the 850 workers we have recruited, who have signed registration cards with us, are members of the Vatukoula Mine Workers Council, which is an in-house union, a company union."

## Legal blows

In their fight for union recognition, the miners have also faced blows from the government and legal system.

Originally, explained Navuso, "the government went through our document and found the Fiji Mine Workers Union had the majority of members, so it gave a compulsory recognition order to the company to recognize the FMWU as the rightful organization to represent the workers at Vatukoula mine." However, Emperor took this to a judicial review and got the order overturned.

Then, prior to elections last year, the Interim Government, which had been es-



Militant/Russell Johnson  
Kavekini Navuso, general secretary of Fiji Mine Workers.

established following two 1987 military coups in Fiji, decreed a series of new labor laws. "So, before a union can go on strike, before we can lodge a trade dispute, the law requires us to apply for voluntary recognition with the company," explained Navuso. "The unions in Fiji face a union-busting tactic."

The striking miners have won widespread sympathy among working people in Fiji, as well as international attention. Attempts early in the strike to use cops and security guards to break the picket lines and evict the strikers from company housing acted to deepen support.

The strike remains a central issue in Fiji politics. "Last week there was a cabinet decision to have a commission of inquiry into Vatukoula instituted to investigate the conditions of work there," reported Navuso.

"I see that as positive for us," he said. "This can give us good ground to expose a lot of these conditions, a lot of these activities that have not been known to the public and the international community."

"At the same time, the patience of the miners will only go so far," Navuso said. "You cannot legislate against anger and emotion. So far, my members have been good enough and strong enough to see what the government can do."

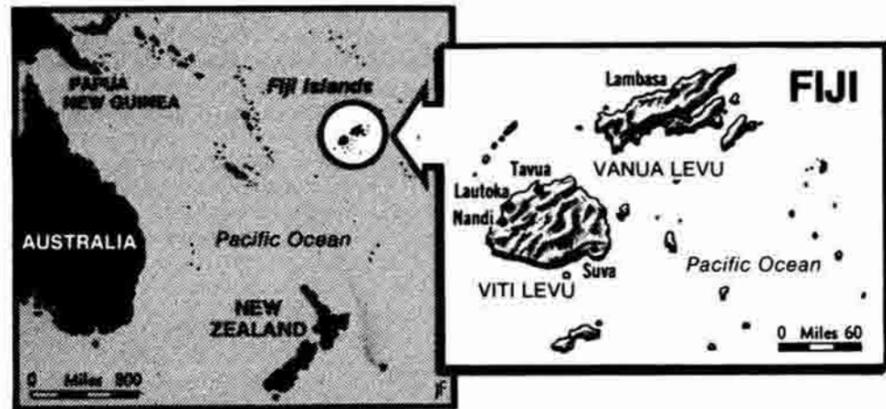
## International solidarity

International solidarity with the Fiji miners' fight is a pressing need, Navuso stressed. "I need more help from the international community. For unions in Fiji, despite the more democratic government, things are still in the employers' favor. The government has not done much for the benefit of workers, and at the same time the Fiji Trade Union Congress is not able to make much headway because of the antiunion stance of the cabinet."

The FMWU faces difficulties in keeping up contacts with unionists in other countries as it lacks funds. "But I know the moral support is still very strong," said Navuso.

Solidarity messages and financial support can be sent to: Mine Workers Union, c/o Trade Union Congress, P.O. Box 1418, Suva, Fiji. A video about the Vatukoula miners' strike, "Na Ma'e. Na Ma'e.", is available from Fiji Independent News Service, P.O. Box 78, Balmain, NSW 2041, Australia.

Brendan Gleeson is a member of the Dairy Workers Union in Auckland, New Zealand.



# Striking coal miners tour Alabama

BY JOHN HAWKINS

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama — "If the BCOA wants a fight we're more than ready to give them one," said Mike Blair, a striking coal miner from Illinois, speaking at the August 25 meeting of the Jefferson County Labor Council.

"In fact the UMWA, with the support of the rest of the labor movement will crush them."

Blair, a member of United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) Local 9152 at Ziegler Coal Holding Co.'s Mine 11 in Coulterville, Illinois, is speaking to trade unions and other organizations here along with Cletus Lloyd, another striker from Illinois.

The tour of the two strikers, organized by UMWA District 20, is mobilizing support for the miners' strike and helping to build area participation in Labor Day weekend activities in Evansville, Indiana.

Seventeen thousand UMWA members are on strike in seven states fighting for a contract with the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA).

Thanking the Jefferson County Labor Council for previously inviting mine workers to Alabama, and for helping kick off strike support efforts in the state, Blair invited the delegates to come to Evansville and bring as many of their members as possible.

"The fight the mine workers are waging — for job security and against union busting — is an important fight for all working people. And the rally in Evansville will be an important demonstration of solidarity with our fight."

In addition to the Jefferson County Labor Council, Blair and Lloyd spoke this week to the Building Trades Council, Walker County Labor Council, Tuscaloosa County Labor Council, and Gadsden Labor Council, where delegates from a Paperworkers local donated \$500 on the spot.

The strikers also met with officials from District 36 of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) and received an invitation to address all USWA locals in Alabama.

At a meeting of United Auto Workers (UAW) Region 8 Community Action Program (CAP) Council, the miners received a similar response. In the discussion following the miners' presentations, several of the delegates pointed to the support received by the fledgling auto workers union from the UMWA in the 1930s as one motivation for UAW locals backing the miners' fight today.

The miners' presentations to the meeting were videotaped for future use and they were invited to address UAW locals throughout the state.

Trade union activists here are organizing a Labor Day caravan to Evansville. Sponsored by UMWA District 20, the caravan is endorsed by the Jefferson and Walker County Labor Councils; Jim Albright, president of the Alabama AFL-CIO; USWA District 36; and UAW CAP Council.

Union locals throughout the area are raising funds as part of a food drive, which they plan to deliver to UMWA Region III at the Labor Day events.

Former strikers at Trinity Industries, members of USWA Local 9226, and strikers

at National Standard in Columbiana, members of USWA 15015 are being sponsored to attend the Evansville rally by USWA District 36.

Blair and Lloyd also visited the picket line and exchanged experiences with strikers at Johnson Casting in Bessemer, where workers recently organized themselves into the USWA.

The two strikers, accompanied by local UMWA officials and activists, have also spoken with hundreds of fellow UMWA members over the past week at local meetings and at bathhouses. In discussions they have pointed out that the fight for a decent contract with the BCOA will have a big impact on miners here, despite the interim agreement reached with the Independent Bituminous Coal Bargaining Alliance.

Miners on strike against the BCOA companies, they explain, are front-line troops in the battle for a decent contract for all miners, who need the active support of the entire union in order to win.

Miners here readily agree on the stakes involved in this fight, not only for the UMWA but for the labor movement as a whole.

The tour has also broken through the local media blackout of the strike. Articles have appeared in the *Birmingham News* and *Jasper Daily Mountain Eagle* that explain the stakes in the fight and what area unionists and others are doing to build support for it.

John Hawkins is a laid-off miner and member of United Auto Workers Local 1155.

# Washington intensifies war in Somalia

Continued from front page  
secretary of defense Les Aspin. Aspin defended the Clinton administration's plans to step-up military operations in Somalia. He vowed an open-ended stay for U.S. troops in the Horn of Africa.

Speaking to a meeting of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Aspin stated that U.S. troops will not leave until "order" is restored to Mogadishu, the capital city; weapons are confiscated from the vast majority of the Somali people; and "credible police forces" are set up in the country's major cities.

Without this course of action, asserted Aspin, "political chaos will follow... the situation will return to what existed before the United Nations sent in its troops."

U.S. troops invaded Somalia last December in what then-President George Bush presented as a short term humanitarian mission to feed starving Somalis. In early May, Washington handed over military command of the operation to the United Nations, which currently has some 24,000 troops in

the country. The U.S. military still maintains 1,400 infantry soldiers and 3,100 logistics troops in Mogadishu.

The U.S. defense secretary also urged other nations to contribute more troops to the UN force in Somalia, which remains 4,000 troops short of its goal of 28,000. Washington is worried that some governments currently supplying soldiers, such as France and Belgium, may withdraw before others have arrived to take their place.

Aspin's speech came shortly after U.S. president Bill Clinton dispatched 400 specially trained Army Rangers to augment the U.S. troop presence in Somalia. The arrival August 26 of the first 65 rangers from this elite U.S. military unit coincided with demonstrations by Somalis who set up roadblocks and threw stones at UN troops conducting a search for weapons in a neighborhood on the south side of Mogadishu.

According to an article in the August 27 issue of the *New York Times*, "The United Nations soldiers were forced to cut short

their search and had to be assisted by troops in armored personnel carriers, as Somalis angered by their presence took to the streets throwing stones and burning tires. . . . As the troops retreated into their compounds, the roadblocks multiplied."

## Army Rangers aim to capture Aidid

One of the central goals of the Army Ranger unit is to capture General Aidid. The Pentagon blames Aidid for deaths and injuries incurred by U.S. and UN troops occupying the country, including the 24 Pakistani soldiers killed in clashes June 5, the four U.S. GIs killed in an explosion in Mogadishu August 8, and six other U.S. soldiers wounded August 22.

The longer U.S. and UN troops remain in Somalia, the greater becomes the anger and hostility of the Somali people toward them. UN soldiers closed Mogadishu's main airport to all civilian traffic for a week at the end of August, allegedly to counter a possible attack by Aidid's forces.

According to the Caritas Association, a

German charity organization, about 50 UN troops forced their way into the Benadir Hospital in Mogadishu August 16 damaging the children's ward there. The soldiers, who were supposedly searching for weapons, kicked in doors, ransacked medicine cupboards, and forced the doctors and patients to leave the premises.

## Ruling-class debate

The continued U.S. military operations in Somalia have led to a debate within ruling class circles about the wisdom of the Clinton administration's current course. "Why are we still there?" writes Charles Krauthammer in an August 13 *Washington Post* opinion column, "Playing God in Somalia."

"The problem," Krauthammer says, "is that [the] final stage is nowhere in sight. On Tuesday, [August 10] David Shinn, the U.S. special coordinator for Somalia, spoke of getting out in 1994 or 1995. This is light-at-the-end-of-the-tunnel talk."

"What is our purpose? What is the cost? And how long do we stay?" asked Senate minority leader and Kansas Republican Robert Dole at a news conference after Clinton announced sending the 400 Army Rangers to Somalia.

Right-wing politician Patrick Buchanan called for retaliating against Aidid and then "get[ting] the hell out." This point of view was also presented in a recent editorial in the *New York Post*, entitled: "Somalia: Time to come home."

Democratic California congressman Ronald Dellums, chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, supports continued U.S. participation in the UN operation in Somalia. He is, however, uneasy about sending the Army Rangers, since their deployment is directly under U.S. command rather than as part of a UN "solution."

Randall Robinson, executive director of TransAfrica, said it would be a mistake for U.S. forces to kill Aidid. Robinson suggests as an alternative that the U.S. government arrange "permanent exile" for Aidid to another country.

# Georgia antigay measure stirs debate

Continued from back page  
library for carrying plays by Shakespeare? They don't support family values. What about the museums?"

"Who is going to define what are the programs that 'advance and support strong community, family oriented standards'?" asked Cherry Spencer-Stark, chairperson of the board of Theatre in the Square.

Rightist groups, however, succeeded in mobilizing more people. Several Cobb churches urged members to attend the meeting. Members of Pat Robertson's Christian Coalition activated phone lines. Right-wing columnist Patrick Buchanan's supporters showed up as well and spoke in support of "Judeo-Christian values." "I'm a Christian and I don't want my children taught that homosexuality is an acceptable lifestyle," Letha Faulkner told the *New York Times*. Outside, a commission supporter waved a cardboard sign saying, "Praise God for AIDS."

Boosted by this turnout, the board passed a motion proposed by Commissioner Gordon Wysong stating that "life styles advocated by the gay community . . . are incompatible with the standards to which this community subscribes." The resolution concluded, "[We] send this message to policy makers of this country such that a previously silent voice will now be heard."

## Arts funding and 'family values'

At the same meeting, the commissioners proposed an ordinance to restrict public funding to arts projects that advance and support "strong community, family oriented standards."

Spurred on by this setback, opponents of the commissioners' decisions began to organize. The Cobb Citizens Coalition was formed to fight censorship and discrimination against gays and lesbians. Two hundred opponents of the legislation demonstrated in Marietta Square August 14 and hundreds more at a "Queer Family Picnic" August 22. Democratic rights activists outnumbered right-wingers at a widely publicized organizing meeting of the Christian Coalition in Atlanta.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and People for the American Way threatened to bring suit against any motion to restrict arts funding based on "family values." The Cobb County Community Relations Council went on record against the commission's decisions.

The far-reaching scope of the Cobb Commission's proposals has sparked a wide-ranging debate both in the Atlanta

area and more broadly. Cobb County has been deluged with phone calls. Local newspapers have been filled with letters to the editor on the issues. The controversy has been the subject of numerous national newspaper and TV reports. For instance, Wysong and commission opponents were featured on Buchanan's TV show "Crossfire."

On August 24 the commission returned to the debate on the proposed cut in arts funding. This time "family values" supporters were outnumbered by hundreds of supporters of equal rights for homosexuals and opponents of art censorship, who held a rally and picket line outside the meeting.

Rather than face an ACLU lawsuit, the commissioners voted unanimously to withdraw all funding for the arts (a total of \$110,000 in 1994) and to spend more on police dogs and video cameras for cop squad cars.

The director of the Academy of Fine Arts noted in the debate that by cutting funding for all the arts, the commissioners are "throwing the baby out with the bath water." It means cutting programs for children and senior citizens and those who can't afford to pay, leaving art as a luxury item for the rich.

On August 26 Cobb Citizens Coalition and the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation called for a boycott of Cobb County's new \$43 million convention center to protest the commission's decisions.

The same day, after a complaint by Cobb

Right to Life, Commission chairperson Bill Byrne ordered an end to insurance coverage of elective abortions for Cobb's 3,700 employees.

As the debate unfolds, opponents of the decisions by Cobb County commissioners are winning more and more support. A poll released by the *Constitution* August 24 showed nearly 60 percent of Atlanta area residents supported "equal treatment" for gays and lesbians. Nearly two-thirds of metropolitan area residents, including a majority in Cobb County, said they believed the resolution condemning homosexuality was the effort of a few individuals and does not reflect "community standards."

Bob Braxton is the Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Atlanta and a member of United Auto Workers Local 882.

# MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

## WASHINGTON Seattle

**The Freedom Struggle in South Africa Today.** A panel discussion. Speakers: Pamela Doan, Service Employees International Union; Fred Dube, professor, Evergreen State University; and Stuart Crome, Socialist Workers Party. Sun., Sept. 12, 4 p.m. 1405 E. Madison. Donation: \$3. Tel: (206) 323-1755.

**Socialist Campaign Rally.** Speaker: Chris Hoepfner, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Seattle, just back from Cuba after participating in the Friendship caravan. Sat.,

Sept., 18, 7:30 p.m. 1405 E. Madison. Donation: \$3. Tel: (206) 323-1755.

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**GEORGIA: Atlanta:** 172 Trinity Ave. Zip: 30303. Tel: (404) 577-4065.

**ILLINOIS: Chicago:** 545 W. Roosevelt Rd. Zip: 60607. Tel: (312) 829-6815, 829-7018.

**IOWA: Des Moines:** 2105 Forest Ave. Zip: 50311. Tel: (515) 246-8249.

**MARYLAND: Baltimore:** 2905 Greenmount Ave. Zip: 21218. Tel: (410) 235-0013.

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**MICHIGAN: Detroit:** 7414 Woodward Ave. Zip: 48202. Tel: (313) 875-0100.

**MINNESOTA: Twin Cities:** 508 N. Snelling Ave., St. Paul. Zip: 55104. Tel: (612) 644-6325.

**MISSOURI: St. Louis:** 1622 S. Broadway. Zip: 63104. Tel: (314) 421-3808.

**NEW JERSEY: Newark:** 141 Halsey. Mailing address: 1188 Raymond Blvd., Suite 222. Zip: 07102. Tel: (201) 643-3341.

**NEW YORK: Brooklyn:** 59 4th Avenue

(corner of Bergen Zip: 111217 **New York:** 214-16 Avenue A (between 13th & 14th) Zip: 10009. Tel: (212) 727-8421; 167 Charles St. Zip: 10014. Tel: (212) 366-1973.

**NORTH CAROLINA: Greensboro:** 2000-C S. Elm-Eugene St. Zip 27406. Tel: (919) 272-5996.

**OHIO: Cincinnati:** P.O. Box 19484. Zip: 45219. Tel: (513) 221-2691. **Cleveland:** 1863 W. 25th St. Zip: 44113. Tel: (216) 861-6150.

**OREGON: Portland:** 2310 NE 8th #1. Zip: 97212. Tel: (503) 288-0466.

**PENNSYLVANIA: Philadelphia:** 1906 South St. Zip: 19146. Tel: (215) 546-8218. **Pittsburgh:** 4905 Penn Ave. Zip 15224. Tel: (412) 362-6767.

**TEXAS: Houston:** 6969 Gulf Freeway, Suite 250. Zip: 77087. Tel: (713) 644-9066.

**UTAH: Salt Lake City:** 147 E. 900 S. Zip: 84111. Tel: (801) 355-1124.

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**Auckland:** La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Road. Postal Address: P.O. Box 3025. Tel: (9) 379-3075.

**Christchurch:** 199 High St. Postal address: P.O. Box 22-530. Tel: (3) 365-6055.

## SWEDEN

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

# CALENDAR

## MINNESOTA

### Minneapolis

**Come to a Victory Celebration!** Hear the details about the triumphant Second Pastors for Peace Friendship Caravan to Cuba. Videos, slides, discussions, refreshments, and Cuban music. Sun., Sept. 12, 4-6 p.m. Organized by the Twin Cities Cuba Friendship Committee, Plymouth Congregational Church, 1900 Nicollet Ave. (Near Franklin). Donation: \$3. Tel: (612) 378-0062.

**Militant subscription, anyone?**  
— When the State Dept. agreed to let that little yellow school bus continue toward Cuba, the *Los An-*



Harry Ring

*geles Times* ran a pint-sized story, neatly tucked away at the bottom of page 15. And when Fidel Castro saluted the school bus hunger strikers, the *Times* ran an even smaller story, in the same location. But when the bus actually crossed the Mexican border, it did run a

news brief at the top of page 15.

**Sleep well** — At the Hanford Nuclear Reservation in Washington, 51 construction workers were sent home without pay and won't be allowed back until they complete safety "retraining." Officials didn't say how much training they had to begin with. The emergency step was taken after a worker was contaminated while lowering a rock on a rope into a radioactive storage tank.

**The sane society** — The Hanford Reservation is the largest U.S. nuclear waste dump, with 177 underground tanks containing 61 million gallons of radioactive waste left over from decades of plutonium production for nuke

weapons. According to Associated Press, many of the tanks "have leaked and others are at risk of exploding."

**"Books on lung cancer? Sorry."** — Los Angeles officials moved to sell a landmark library building to Philip Morris, the coffin-nail folk. Philip Morris will lease back the library, and enjoy a federal tax credit for helping to preserve an historic building. The city payments will come from a project intended to build low-cost housing and will slash the program.

**The Golden Years** — About eight out of ten coming U.S. retirees will have less than half the income

needed to live comfortably. Among women — who mostly have less savings and live longer — the poverty rate will be double. An expert said people don't save enough for retirement because they underestimate how long they'll live, and overestimate how much employers and the government will do for them.

**Just prophesizing?** — Eugene Lumpkin, a Baptist minister, was removed from the San Francisco Human Rights Commission after he declared homosexuality an abomination and noted the biblical admonition that gay men should be stoned to death. Lumpkin denied he had advocated killing homosexuals, but had merely agreed with a talk

show host that the Bible advocated doing so.

**We're talking flatulence?** — Successories, a chain operation, reports a brisk business in motivational items for businesspeople. Like, a line of Art of Achievement posters. At \$69.95 apiece, one features a photo of a sailboat race and an adage, "We cannot direct the wind, but we can adjust the sails."

**Like truth in packaging** — Contrary to what the name suggests, Fritos Crisp 'N Thin contain 7 percent more calories and 15 percent more fat than the standard Frito-Lay chip. A spokesperson explains the new ones are "lighter, longer and thinner."

# 'Antipornography' laws weaken women's rights

BY JOAN SHIELDS

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand — In an attack on democratic rights, government politicians are promoting new legislation that tightens censorship laws. This "gift to women" comes as New Zealand marks the 100th anniversary of women's suffrage.

The Films, Videos and Publications Classification Bill — the title of the new law — was passed by Parliament in mid-August. Member of Parliament (MP) John Carter, who chaired the select committee's public hearing on the bill, claimed that it would "turn back the tide of pornography" washing

## AS I SEE IT

over New Zealand. His government, and the select committee, "have been determined to re-establish good moral values," he told Parliament.

The legislation covers films, video recordings, books and magazines, sound recordings, and other publications, including computer discs and computer-generated games. A single body — whose members will be directly appointed by the government — is established to classify material.

The legislation focuses on explicit sexual material that is violent or involves children. Censors will decide whether material is "objectionable" and "injurious to the public good" and the extent to which it "demeans, degrades, or dehumanizes" any person.

The legislation gives police the right to search private residences and seize property as long as a search warrant has been obtained.

For the first time, it becomes an offense to simply possess prohibited material, as well as to sell or distribute it. This applies whether or not the material has been classified at the time it was seized.

This retrospective liability clause has drawn protests from a number of civil libertarians and lawyers. It means that someone charged under this legislation will not be able to argue in their defense that they did not know the material they possessed was objectionable, or likely to be objectionable, simply because the censors hadn't ruled on it.

Labour Party MPs voted against this clause, but supported the legislation as a whole.

Labour Party MP Elizabeth Tonnet told Parliament last December that the bill defends women's rights.

"Pornography is degrading and, in fact, it

is a form of discrimination against women and children, because it depicts them only as sex objects, not as human beings," she said. "Pornography also promotes violence and sexual abuse against women and children, and that is not acceptable.

"People are now seeing the linkages between pornography and violence, and are seeing the issue more and more in terms of a law and order issue," she added.

Many supporters of women's rights have echoed these sentiments and have come out in support of the new legislation.

I believe that taking this approach means falling into a trap. Censorship laws are not a weapon in the fight for women's liberation.

### Rulers seek to restrict rights

The tiny class of capitalists who run this country profit both economically and politically from women's oppression. They seek to discredit views that challenge the racist, sexist status quo. And through the government — whose power is at their disposal — they put restrictions on the circulation of such views.

This is especially true today, as the employers and their government deepen their assault on working people at home and abroad. They need the ability to restrict democratic rights if they are to be able to curtail active opposition to their reactionary course and to divide and intimidate the victims of the capitalist crisis.

This is the framework in which we must evaluate any proposals to strengthen the government's ability to censor.

The National Party government is not a pro-woman government. As minister of women's affairs, Jenny Shipley wraps new censorship restrictions in the language of opposition to violence against women. But as minister of social welfare, Shipley has directly presided over many of the attacks on social rights that have hit women particularly hard.

Some supporters of women's rights have argued that feminists could enforce the anti-pornography laws differently than the government and its right-wing backers want. But working people, or feminists, don't run the government — the employers do.

The enforcement is left to a government that doesn't act in the interest of women — a capitalist government. Such a government always uses censorship laws the way it wants.

One of the main justifications used by antipornography campaigners is that pornography causes rape, wife beating, and child abuse. Such claims were a prominent feature of the parliamentary debate on the new legislation.

This is false. Pornography does demean women. And there is a link between pornography and violence against women and children. But pornography is not the cause of these things.

Antiwoman violence is caused by the entire unequal relationship between the sexes, with women the inferior sex, in this class-divided society. Sexism and women's social powerlessness — rooted in their economic dependence — cause violence against women in a society where violence and alienation are integral aspects of social relations.

Pornography is a particularly vicious part of the sexist ideology that permeates all of class society. It fosters an image of women as less than human. But along with rape and wife-beating, it is one symptom — not the

cause — of the second-class status of women in capitalist society. Pornography as we know it — mass produced for a mass audience, using primarily photograph, film, and video — is a recent invention. Women's oppression, unfortunately, came long before porn.

The idea that pornography causes violence against women takes the spotlight off the real cause — the capitalist system itself. As far as our rulers and their representatives in Parliament are concerned, it is much better to point the finger at individual men, individual shopkeepers, or individual pornographers, than at the whole class of profiteers.

Pornography is part of the reactionary ideological pressures bearing down on us — and should be confronted accordingly. It is an image and an idea that is harmful and should be struggled against and stamped out. Censorship laws, however, won't accomplish this.

Endorsing censorship measures such as the Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Bill, undercuts efforts to defend and extend democratic rights, including the rights of women.

It falsely pits the fight for full human rights for women against the fight to oppose

every restriction on free speech by the government and all its agencies.

It pits women against unionists fighting for their rights, antiwar activists, fighters against racism and national oppression, and all those who will be the victims of restrictions on free speech.

The degradation and violence that women are subjected to in New Zealand and elsewhere will not be alleviated by siding with and relying on the most deadly enemies of women's equality and the rights of all working people.

These censorship laws and the publicity around them are part of the offensive in the war of ideas that the ruling class is waging; part of preparing the ground for future attacks against all working people.

To respond effectively to this offensive, we need the broadest possible democratic rights. That's why supporters of women's rights should oppose any form of censorship law, no matter how progressive it may be painted up to look.

Joan Shields is a member of the New Zealand Meat Workers Union at Alliance Sockburn.

## — 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —



Thirty-eight black GIs at Fort Hood, Tex., face trials by courts-martial for allegedly having demonstrated against being sent to Chicago to serve as "riot troops" during the recent Democratic national convention there. The men are among the 60 soldiers Army sources say held an all-night sit-in August 25 on a Fort Hood road to protest their deployment to Chicago. The 38 are charged with having disobeyed a lawful order of a superior officer.

Michael Kennedy, staff counsel of the National Emergency Civil Liberties Committee, which is providing legal defense for the accused soldiers, stated that 43 of the 60 were held incommunicado for 48 hours, "despite repeated attempts by lawyers to visit them or telephone them.

"During this period," Kennedy continued, "they were held in the provost marshal's building in detention cells and subjected to long and intensive interrogation. . . . At least two men were brutalized by the military police and required medical treatment; one of the men was hospitalized."

Eight of the GIs are due to be tried by a general court-martial and face possible five-year prison sentences if convicted. The other 30 are to appear before special courts-martial, which can impose a maximum punishment of six months' imprisonment.



September 11, 1943

Gomperism, the policy of "rewarding your friends and punishing your enemies,"

which has kept AFL workers tied to the Democratic and Republican machines for decades, is now being promoted by the top bureaucrats of the CIO under the new name of labor political action. The rising tide of opposition to capitalist politics was shown by the large number of votes cast in last fall's elections for ALP [American Labor Party] candidates in New York and Farmer-Labor Party candidates in Minnesota. It was expressed even more dramatically by the demand of the majority of the Michigan CIO delegates at their July convention for an independent labor party. Hillman, chairman of the CIO Political Action Committee, is working overtime to direct this sentiment into the pro-Roosevelt stream.

In Minneapolis a Labor Day Victory banquet held under the auspices of the Minneapolis AFL Central Labor Union anticipated Hillman's projected visit to Minnesota next month, by formally opening a drive for a Roosevelt fourth-term. Two hundred eighty representatives of the AFL, CIO, Railroad Brotherhoods and farm cooperative organizations heard speaker after speaker urge "unity of all liberals" in order to secure the re-election of Roosevelt and of a Congress favorable to him.

A hint as to the type of "unity" they desire was given by Toastmaster Hubert Humphrey — labor-endorsed candidate for Mayor of Minneapolis in the spring election, who declared that "after all the talk of unity there must be some place to come home to" — and then introduced the Democratic State Chairman!

The increasing strength of labor party sentiment among the masses of workers can be judged by the desperation with which the Hillmans, Murrays and Greens as well as all the lesser bureaucrats of the labor movement, are working to stem the tide and to deflect the movement into safe pro-Democratic Party channels.

FROM **PATHFINDER**

**Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women**

by Joseph Hansen, Evelyn Reed.

Introduction by Mary-Alice Waters.

138 pp. \$11.95

Available from bookstores listed on page 16 or from Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, New York 10014. Please include \$3.00 for postage and handling for first title, \$5.00 each additional title.

## Drop the conspiracy charges!

The indictment of Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman and 14 other people on charges of seditious conspiracy is a flagrant travesty of justice.

The Clinton administration has presented no evidence that Rahman committed any specific criminal act. Instead it is mounting a hue and cry over the threat of "radical Islamic fundamentalism" and "terrorism" in an effort to win public opinion to its trampling of democratic rights.

By painting Rahman as the head of a "secret brotherhood" whose members consider themselves to be "Islamic warriors," the big-business media attempts to tie Rahman to supposed international terrorism in Africa and the Middle East. This follows Clinton's repeated bombings of Iraq, killing innocent civilians; proscribing Sudan as a "terrorist nation"; threatening Iran; and attacking rights of immigrants at home.

Washington hopes that due process and constitutional rights will be buried under the avalanche of the anti-Arab terror scare.

Seditious conspiracy laws give the government broad powers to try and convict its political opponents.

The first sedition laws, passed in 1798, made the expression of certain ideas a crime. Their aim was to aid wealthy merchants and landlords in suppressing the democratic movement of working farmers, craftsmen, and laborers fighting to extend the gains of the revolution against the British crown.

These laws are weapons against the labor movement and should be opposed by all defenders of democratic rights.

The grand jury added the seditious conspiracy charges

against El Sayyid Nosair in order to get around the fact that the government is invoking double jeopardy, the unconstitutional practice of trying someone twice for the same crime.

This offers another example of how the U.S. justice system is stacked against working people and is designed to protect the interests of the ruling rich.

In 1988 coal miner Paul Smith was found not guilty of federal charges stemming from a government frame-up against five union miners in eastern Kentucky. The United Mine Workers of America members were accused of conspiring to interrupt interstate commerce by damaging trucks used to haul coal in mines owned by A. T. Massey Co. during a 1984-85 strike. One scab driver was killed in an incident. The minute the not guilty verdict was read, however, a U.S. marshal announced that Smith was wanted for murder on state charges. He was immediately arrested by Kentucky state cops.

Victimizations like this will become more common as the bosses and their government use rougher methods to counter resistance to their takeback demands and wars abroad.

In the current "sedition" case, Washington has gone so far that even some columnists in the big-business press — cheerleaders of the campaign against "Islamic terrorism" — are expressing doubts about the government's case, since it is built around vague allegations utilizing the conspiracy charge.

The labor movement should demand that the charges against Abdel-Rahman and the 14 other men be dropped. The Egyptian cleric should be freed from jail immediately.

## U.S. out of Somalia

Just one year ago, the idea that U.S. troops would be fighting in a small-scale war on the African continent, shooting kids in the streets, and dropping bombs on civilians in neighborhoods, would have seemed out of the question to many people.

But that is exactly what Clinton's White House is up to in Somalia. In fact, the recent deployment of additional "elite" troop units, and the "search" missions conducted with the aid of U.S. helicopters in Mogadishu, point to deeper intervention.

In his August 27 speech, U.S. defense secretary Les Aspin inadvertently gave lie to the claim of "humanitarian" purposes for the invasion. "Reports we have from Mogadishu say that there is more than enough food to feed the Somali people," he said. Why then do more than 24,000 troops under command of the imperialist powers stay?

U.S. officials claim their troops will now stay until a stable government, that is a regime to their liking, is firmly in place. But what gives Clinton the right to determine who will govern the Somali people?

Washington's aim is to advance its military, economic, and political interests in the Horn of Africa, and against its rivals in Europe and Japan. These interests have nothing to do with the Somali people, who are simply a convenient excuse for the U.S. warlords. Somalia is strategically located. In addition, U.S. aggression there provides Washington with the opportunity to reassert its "right to intervene."

In a world marked by economic depression and increas-

ingly harsh clashes between imperialist powers, the Clinton administration is dutifully using every opening to assert Washington's right to set in motion its gargantuan war machine whenever and wherever it chooses, without apology.

The latest in a string of fiascoes ensued as the Rangers attacked a UN building and "captured" some UN employees and foreign aid workers. U.S. Major David Stockwell, commenting on this raid, stated, "We're absolutely not embarrassed. We will not apologize for it."

The first contingent of Army Rangers landing in Somalia were met with demonstrations and rocks. The longer Washington stays, the more resistance mounts to the invaders.

The aim of capturing Somali militia chief Aidid is a political message to the world's toilers: Those who do not heel to Washington's imperial dictates will be punished. Aidid is to be made an example of.

Clinton's war against the Somali people fits hand-in-glove with the Pentagon's military strategy just announced September 1. While slightly paring the size of its enormous armies, Washington will prepare to fight two "regional" wars at a time.

The plan will be directed against "trouble spots," meaning, in addition to Somalia, potential wars against the peoples of Sudan, Iran, Korea, and Yugoslavia.

Working people have no interest in expanding the beat of the world cop. The U.S. and UN troops should be pulled out of Somalia now!

## Health care is a human right

The Clinton administration's "health-care reform," which the U.S. president outlined in an August 26 speech to the National Governors' Association in Tulsa, Oklahoma, has nothing to do with improving the medical care of working people and others in the United States. Rather, it is part and parcel of the generalized assault against workers and farmers that Clinton is carrying out as the representative of the ruling class.

That's why the heart of Clinton's proposals is deeper cuts in health-care entitlements such as Medicaid and Medicare. The U.S. president is now testing the waters to see if he can get away with gutting workmen's compensation as well. The Clinton plan will also hurt small businesses, many of which do not have the resources to pay insurance premiums for all their employees.

Health care is a central concern of working people. More than 37 million people in the United States have no medical insurance whatsoever. Millions more are underinsured. And even workers with adequate coverage find they are being forced to pay a larger percentage of their paycheck to maintain it.

Clinton's record as president already disproves his claim to support universal health care. Less than 60 percent of preschool children get the vaccines that doctors recommend. But President Clinton rejected a proposal for the government to purchase vaccines, at half the cost charged to private doctors, and distribute them to all children.

The situation has gotten so bad that a government study of the health gap between poor and higher-paid people in the United States reported that in 1986 those families with incomes less than \$9,000 a year had a death rate three to seven times higher than those with family incomes of \$25,000 or more.

Clinton claims, however, that "the [health-care] system works for most Americans." But this is a lie. A system where millions do not have access to adequate medical care; where families must pay to have their children immunized against deadly diseases; where politicians debate whether it is more worthwhile to spend money on health care for the elderly or for children; and where even one person dies because they could not afford available tests or treatment, is not a system that is working.

The great advances in human knowledge and medical technology that make it possible for people to live longer, healthier, and more productive lives should not be the private property of a few individuals or institutions to be sold or rented to the rest of us — if we are fortunate enough to have the money to pay. Rather, they are the birthright of humanity as a whole. Hillary Clinton is wrong. We are entitled to free health care, simply because we are human.

The labor movement should fight for universal health care free of charge for all. The problem with the Clinton health plan is not Bill Clinton. The fact is that the economic crisis ravaging the entire world capitalist system forces the bosses and their governments to take away rights that toilers have won. Health care, like education, housing, and jobs, are expendable as the ruling rich seek ways to boost their sagging profits.

It's not that "the health-care system doesn't work." It's that for the majority of humanity *capitalism doesn't work*. The only road forward is for workers and oppressed peoples around the world to fight together to defend our rights. In doing so working people will gain the confidence they need to overthrow the rulers and their system and replace it with a society that places human needs before profits.

## Tel Aviv agrees to limited self-rule for Palestinians

Continued from front page

affect the more than 120,000 Palestinians that work inside Israel, forming an essential part of the labor force. Tel Aviv had sealed off Israeli borders to these Palestinian workers several times this year, causing protests by some Israeli business owners.

The agreement was worked out in Oslo, Norway, between a high-ranking PLO official — reportedly finance officer Ahmed Krai — and Israeli foreign minister Shimon Peres. It is expected to be signed soon in Washington, D.C., at the 11th round of negotiations among Israeli and Palestinian representatives and several other Middle Eastern governments. The agreement, dubbed "Gaza and Jericho first," breaks from Tel Aviv's rejection of "land for peace" proposals initiated at the opening round of Mideast talks in October 1991 in Madrid.

The Israeli regime, hit hard by the worldwide capitalist economic crisis, has been forced to make concessions. Unemployment stands at more than 11 percent. In 1991, 11 percent of the population lived below the poverty level.

Tel Aviv was dealt a setback in the aftermath of the U.S.-organized Gulf War. U.S. imperialism established closer ties with capitalist Arab regimes, costing Israel its special place as Washington's watchdog in the Middle East. This weakened Israel's influence with the U.S. government, and thus its leverage in wresting U.S. economic and military assistance while at the same time attempting to block such U.S. aid to regimes in the Arab countries. Tel Aviv was also pushed back by the *intifada*, the sustained rebellion by Palestinian working people in the West Bank and Gaza that began in December 1987.

The fight for the national rights of the Palestinian people remains the axis of the class struggle in Israel, and throughout the areas that constitute Palestine. Every move by Tel Aviv to incorporate the occupied territories into "greater Israel" has run into explosive resistance, including from Palestinians inside Israel, deepening the social polarization in the country. At the same time, every advance in the Palestinian struggle for national liberation is an internal social and political crisis for the Israeli government.

### Polarization around the accord

The accord has received both praise and criticism from Palestinians and Israelis. "This is a step toward an independent state and this autonomy is better than nothing," Mohammed Kasas, a 37-year-old construction worker from Gaza said. But Ramzi Salem, an 18-year-old carpenter, had a different opinion. "This is a failure of the peace process and an attempt to liquidate the Palestinian cause," he said.

Ziyad Abbas, a Palestinian journalist from Bethlehem, traveled through the region to report on peoples' response to the agreement. In a telephone interview from Jerusalem, he said that Palestinian students at universities in the West Bank are throwing parties to celebrate the announcement of the accord. On September 1, hundreds demonstrated in Jerusalem supporting the proposals. An equal number rallied, however, against the Israeli-Palestinian agreement, Abbas said.

There were celebrations welcoming the document in Gaza as well as demonstrations opposing the agreement. The protests there were organized by Hamas, which has substantial support in the Israeli-occupied territories. Hamas leader Abdul Aziz Rantisi called the accord a "catastrophe."

The group attracts support using militant rhetoric and promising to return land stolen from Palestinians since the 1947 partition of Palestine. At the same time it advances a rightist program seeking the expulsion of Jews from Palestine; equating democracy, socialism, and communism with "cultural imperialism"; calling for second-class status for women; and defending capitalism.

Others opposed to the accord have issued threats against PLO leaders. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine General Command issued a statement saying, "We remind Arafat of the fate of Sadat . . . Arafat and his entourage will pay the price." Anwar Sadat was the Egyptian leader assassinated after signing a 1978 agreement recognizing Israel. The PLO chairman dismissed the threats saying, "Our forum is a democratic forum, and we welcome any criticism."

There were no big celebrations in Jericho, but most merchants and small business owners supported the agreement, Abbas said. "This is our chance to prove that we can control our own lives," said Imad Salem, a toy store owner.

Many Palestinians are cautious, waiting to see how the agreement is implemented. "People want to believe, but they still have doubts," said Ahmad Kurishi, a tailor in Jericho. "Maybe this is the first step towards a Palestinian state," Abbas said. "But we have to see what really pans out from negotiations."

Jewish settlers in the territories were also divided. Rightists in a Jericho settlement pledged a campaign of civil disobedience and launched a hunger strike to oppose Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's proposals. Benjamin Netanyahu, leader of the Likud Party, visited Israeli settlers in Jericho August 31, raising an Israeli flag on a Palestinian house to rally opposition to the agreement.

Several settlers, however, while expressing dissatisfaction with the accords, expressed willingness to leave. Abbas reported that one settler said, "This is our settlement, our work, our life. But if the government ordered us to leave, we'll go."

# Mine accidents rise as London closes more pits

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

We invite you to contribute short items to this column for other fighting workers around the world to read about and learn from these important struggles. Jot down a few lines about what is happening in your union, at your workplace or other workplaces in your area, including interesting political discussions.

Three miners were killed, two were trapped, and one narrowly escaped when a cave-in occurred at the Bilsthorpe pit in Nottinghamshire, England, August 18. Two thousand feet below ground, miners were developing a new tunnel — using roof bolting as the only tunnel support — when tons of rubble suddenly crashed down on them.

with management. "Safety is getting worse," he said, "and we feel it is part and parcel of the push for greater and greater productivity."

Despite massive opposition, the British government is continuing a program of mine closures that was announced last year. It plans to privatize the coal industry, which was nationalized following World War II.

The threat of pit closures in areas of high unemployment is used to try and quash demands around workers' safety. The August 20 issue of the *Independent* stated, "Without continued improvements in efficiency, the question of safety will cease to arise — because Britain's coal industry will no longer exist."

At the same time, the government is repealing mine-safety laws that limit underground working hours and provide for mandatory safety deputies and union-elected inspectors. The Mines Rescue Service,



Miners protesting in London against pit closures, October 1992. More accidents have been reported as British government fails to enforce safety laws.

## ON THE PICKET LINE

The safety of the roof-bolting system has been called into question as a result. Roof bolting is a method of holding together layers of strata above the coal seam. Eight-foot steel rods are drilled up into the rock and secured with resin. The technique, favored by management, is estimated to cut development costs in a pit by at least 50 percent.

John Meads, head of the British Association of Colliery Management, insists that roof bolting done properly is "safer than other forms of support."

Brian Langdon, who heads the Health and Safety Executive inquiry into the Bilsthorpe disaster, claims the main cause of the roof collapse was that it was too close to a preexisting tunnel.

National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) president Arthur Scargill stated, "The dash to cut corners in terms of safety in the mining industry is tied up with the drive towards privatization." NUM regional general secretary Dave Hopper also believes the cause of the accident lies

which played a major part in the rescue of the three trapped miners, is also threatened by deregulation. □

### Striking soda ash miners in Wyoming win solidarity

Four hundred eighty United Steelworkers of America (USWA) members of Local 15320 have been on strike against General Chemical in Green River, Wyoming, for more than a month. In this remote stretch of southern Wyoming their colorful picket shack is a beehive of activity. Miners serve up lunch and coffee for pickets and supporters. The shack is surrounded by campers and a large tepee erected by mountain recreation enthusiasts.

The immediate issues are retirement and medical benefits, but several workers summarized the strike as a fight for dignity with big stakes for the labor movement in this largely nonunion state. This contract fight with General Chemical, formerly Allied, will set a pattern for several other plants across the

country with "me-too" agreements.

Wyoming has some of the largest energy and mineral resources, including trona, the ore from which soda ash is produced. Soda ash is the main ingredient in glass and baking soda.

The more than 800 steelworkers at the nearby FMC mine and plant are backing the General Chemical strikers with heavy moral as well as financial support. They have donated \$10,000 and pledged \$1,000 for each additional month of the strike.

Referring to the General Chemical retirees and the many other Wyoming workers who are looking to this strike, USWA Local 15320 vice-president Craig Schmidt said, "We're committed to sit here and fight. We're not going to sell them out." Unionists who want to support this strike can telephone the local union hall at: (307) 675-6919. □

### Steelworkers strike against three-tier wage

Ninety-one members of United Steelworkers of America Local 6546 struck Hankison International July 8 after their six-year contract expired. Hankinson, near Washing-

ton, Pennsylvania, manufactures industrial air driers, which are sold to auto manufacturers, hospitals, and mines.

The company is demanding the extension of the two-tier job classification system and the addition of a third tier on top of the existing two-tier wage scale.

Members of the local have organized support for their strike and solidarity with others on strike, including members of the United Mine Workers of America and Steelworkers on strike against Penn Plastics, down the road from Hankison. The Steelworkers have also organized two solidarity picnics for members and their families.

No local members have crossed the picket line. An alert picket noticed a van with replacement workers going into the plant. As a result of protests by the strikers, the company has stopped using scabs. □

### California workers protest sweatshop conditions

On August 22, 300 people marched down State Street in Santa Barbara, California, to protest Deckers Corp.'s exploitation of its work

force. The march was organized by the International Association of Machinists (IAM) Local 2786. Deckers, located in Carpinteria, produces the high-priced Teva sport sandal under sweatshop conditions.

Marching in support of the workers and displaying identifiable signs were members of the United Farm Workers of America union, Justice for Janitors from Los Angeles, and various IAM locals and district lodges from southern California.

Demonstrators rallied at De La Guerra Plaza. Requests for support of the Teva sport sandal boycott, which was first announced by the IAM June 30, were reiterated throughout the rally.

The Machinists' boycott of the sandal began after the company presented a proposal in which the workers would earn even less in wages because of increased out-of-pocket health insurance costs. The average wage paid to workers at Deckers places them below the federal poverty level. Many of the 140 workers must share living quarters with three or four families.

Hermila Sánchez, a sewing department worker who spoke at the rally, said, "We are asking for a better contract, better working conditions, and the end of the existing system of favoritism and discrimination at work, where you are promoted only if you are a friend or a relative of the supervisor." In recognition of the female workers who participated in and spoke at the rally, chants of "Viva las mujeres!" (long live the women) could be heard on several occasions. □

The following people contributed to this week's column: Paul Galloway, member of the National Union of Mineworkers, and Katharine Lee, member of the Transport and General Workers Union, in Sheffield, England; David Salner, member of USWA Local 8319 in Salt Lake City, Utah; Leroy Watson, member of USWA Local 6546, and Sheila Ostrow, member of USWA Local 7472, in Pittsburgh; and Alejandra Aranovich in Santa Barbara, California.

## LETTERS

### 'Baby Jessica'

The "As I See It" column which appears in the September 6 issue of the *Militant* is a very clear statement of the position which supporters of women's rights should take on the custody issues raised in the "baby Jessica" case.

I agree that the starting point cannot be so-called "father's rights," nor in this case can it be "children's rights." Adopting either such stance obscures the central issue of the right of the woman who bore the child to raise and nurture it.

Given the brief time period between Cara Schmidt's renunciation of maternal rights 40 hours after giving birth and her attempt to reverse that less than four weeks later, it seems entirely reasonable that her right to raise this child should be upheld.

On one point, though, I think the column was in error. In addressing the class character of the different families involved, I think Estelle DeBates makes a mistake. Both families are working-class. According to an article in a March 1993 issue of the *New Yorker*, Dan Schmidt is a truck driver who made about \$25,000 in 1992. Cara Schmidt also worked, although I don't know if she currently works outside the home. Jan DeBoer works as a printer for the University of Michigan and made about \$24,000 in 1992. Roberta DeBoer did not work a job as far as I know. While income alone doesn't deter-

mine whether someone is part of the working class, a truck driver and a printer in a university print shop are both workers.

None of this changes the essential points DeBates makes in the column. In fact, the point she makes about the class biases brought out in this case are right. The media and the DeBoers played up the differences between a university town with implications of greater intellectual opportunity for the child and an unwed mother (at the time she gave birth) in a small, Iowa farm town, with the obvious intent of appealing to class biases and the "best interests of the child."

I agree completely with the positions DeBates takes and I'm glad this issue has been taken up in the pages of the *Militant*.  
Chris Remple  
Des Moines, Iowa

### Leaflet for the 'Militant'

After reading the Aug. 9 issue, I clipped out the editorials titled "Clinton shows his real face" and "End threats against N. Korea," and two articles titled "Clinton threatens N. Korea with annihilation" and "Police lied in killing of Detroit worker." All of this material fit neatly onto a standard-size piece of paper, along with a *Militant* subscription tear-out and a few words of my own regarding news that they're not getting via traditional media, and suggesting the idea of a collective subscription.

All of this took about twenty minutes! Any of you can do this! I park my truck with an attached placard "Cancel the goddamn debt," and I roam around the area with the attached placard "The truth about the federal budget deficit." If a person is ready for the *Militant*, they will be attracted by the placards and stop, discuss, accept my packet of leaflets, and in some cases buy a *Militant* or even subscribe.  
Harrell Schultz  
Cazadero, California

### Agent Orange

The recent release of the most comprehensive study of the herbicide Agent Orange conclusively links it to the development of cancer and Hodgkin's disease.

The study by the National Academy of Sciences Institute of Medicine predicts thousands more cases of lung and prostate cancer among Vietnam veterans. Agent Orange was used by the U.S. government as a defoliant in the Vietnam War from 1962 to 1971, saturating the forests with 19 million gallons.

For years the U.S. government claimed there was no relationship between Agent Orange and cancer and only 1,000 of the 39,000 claims for damages were paid — less than three percent. The figures of the victims doesn't even include the tens of thousands of Vietnamese who were subjected to the deadly chemical.

In 1973 with the end of the war

and the defeat of U.S. imperialism, massive aid was promised to Vietnam to rebuild the devastated country. That aid was never delivered.

Mark Friedman  
Los Angeles, California

### Unity on left

Enclosed is ten dollars for a trial subscription. I usually vote for the Socialist Workers Party in the gubernatorial and sometimes presidential elections, although I've voted for People's Party and New Alliance Party as well as Citizen's Party before. I wish there could be more unity on the left in a nation as needy of change as America. The *Militant* is the only newspaper that I know of that carries electoral coverage of the SWP and I want to vote for its candidates for governor and lieutenant governor in Ohio in 1994.

I went to Rosewood to see Congressperson Dave Hobson today to ask him if I could vote for a third party in the primaries next year. I'd like to vote in the SWP primary, but I guess a third party has to collect about thirty thousand signatures to hold a primary in Ohio.

I became active in politics in the Gay Activists Alliance and later joined the People's Party coalition in 1974 and for a while the Socialist Party.

I believe the left is too occupied with the issue of abortion and not on other issues as much as it should be. We're lucky if a left periodical has one or two articles on the gay liberation move-

ment every month. I think a woman should have an abortion only if her life is at stake; a person should be more responsible for her or his sex life's results.

I think we should really push for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment when it comes up for a vote; it's high time people were legally equals before the law regardless of gender or sexual orientation.

Gary McIntire  
Saint Paris, Ohio

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

The *Militant* special prisoner fund makes it possible to send reduced-rate subscriptions to prisoners who can't pay for them. To help this important cause, send your contribution to Militant Prisoner Subscription Fund, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

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## London police murder immigrant

BY AGGY PARTASIS  
AND CELIA PUGH

LONDON — The killing of Jamaican-born Joy Gardner by police officers here has sparked a national debate and protest actions against the government's immigration policy.

On the morning of July 28 Gardner's solicitor (attorney) received a letter from the Home Office informing him that his client's appeal against deportation had been rejected and that "arrangements will shortly be made for her removal to Jamaica."

What he did not know was that Joy Gardner's home in North London had already been raided without warning by three special deportation police officers, two local cops, and an immigration official. They told Gardner that they had come to take her and her five-year-old son to the airport for a flight that day. She was placed in a special restraining belt with handcuffs and chains. The cops gagged her with tape over her mouth and bound her legs. Gardner's son recounted that she was forcibly thrown to the floor where officers sat on her. Ambulance officers reported that Gardner had stopped breathing and had no pulse. They revived a heartbeat after 45 minutes but Gardner never recovered consciousness. The hospital turned off the life support machine August 1.

Gardner came to Britain in 1987 and had appealed to extend her stay to complete a college course and be near her family. Her mother has lived here for 33 years. The police first claimed Gardner died of kidney failure. However, the first postmortem showed she died of brain damage caused by lack of oxygen. A second postmortem conducted by four pathologists representing both the police and family agreed that death was caused by suffocation.

Shocked reaction to this death sparked a national debate and protest actions. A drawing in the national daily *The Independent* August 9 showed a slave shackled with belt and cuffs with the headline "Importation 1793" next to an image of gagged-and-chained Joy Gardner, headlined "Deportation 1993."

Within days of the announcement of her death, metropolitan police commissioner Paul Condon suspended the three deportation officers involved and said their special unit would not take part in deportations while investigations were carried out. The government Home Office and police headquarters at Scotland Yard have begun an inquiry into methods used during deportations.

Until this death, the existence of the special unit (SO1-3) was not publicly known, nor was the fact that it was allowed to use methods not in the normal police code, like the restraining belt used on Gardner.

### Protests mount

Five hundred angry protesters demonstrated outside the local police station August 3. The next day 500 people packed into the local African Caribbean Centre to map out a campaign. Demands discussed at the meeting included a call for an independent public inquiry, suspension and prosecution of the officers, and an end to forcible deportations. On August 7, 1,200 people marched past the local police station in the largest mobilization of the campaign thus far.

A wide range of local and national anti-racist, church, labor, and political organizations are supporting the protest actions. For many, these demonstrations are the first in which they have taken part. A worker born in Ghana, who had never marched in the streets before, commented, "I just thought of my son and that this could be me one day if we didn't stand up together against this attack." Two young neighbors of Gardner, who are white, said they'd never been involved before but asked when the next protest event would happen.

After *Evening Standard* headlines warning of a "march of hate" and race riots if the August 7 demonstration took place, some



London protest against killing of Jamaican-born Joy Gardner by immigration cops.

local shops were closed and boarded up. However, other shopkeepers expressed their support, saying they had known Gardner and were shocked by her death. One food shop displayed a large window sign stating, "No more deaths at the hands of the racist immigration laws."

At the center of the campaign are Joy Gardner's family and friends. Her mother, Myrna Simpson, has spoken at every event. At the Caribbean center meeting she stated, "Please help me to bring justice to everybody that has been murdered. Help me by demonstrating and marching to demand the officers be charged."

At the demonstration she said, "The police and immigration people are murderers. They are murdering Black people and people of different races. They won't get away with this one. We won't stop until we get justice. We want a full independent inquiry. It's not only about this killing but about those we don't hear about. They hide it and

sweep it under the carpet. But they won't sweep this one under the carpet. They have to pay for this and they'll pay dearly."

On each occasion Simpson appealed for orderly protests, a request that was respected by the participants. Gardner's sister Claudia told the crowd, "We came to this country to do the shit jobs and now we want justice. We're here to stay and we're going to fight. We don't want to keep marching about deaths. We want to have life — so we'll keep marching and campaigning until we get it. We want the officers prosecuted for murder and those who stood by for conspiracy to murder."

Labour Member of Parliament (MP) Jeremy Corbyn said, "We're here because we deplore the racism of the immigration and asylum laws. We demand that all deportations stop."

Dominica Labour Party MP Rosie Douglas joined the demonstration as well. "You are uniting in solidarity against the British

state," said Douglas. "We can't let immigrants be scapegoated for unemployment and their crisis. Joy Gardner did not commit a crime; she was only here to sell her labor. But you're standing up — just like the people of South Africa and Cuba, where they are determined to build an independent existence."

### Press blames victims

Daily press coverage has tried to shift attention to claims that Gardner had a violent past and was illegally drawing resources from taxpayers. Some articles claimed the police have a difficult job restraining illegal immigrants who resist deportation. While calling for an end to extreme methods of restraint and a reform of the processes used, government officials and editorials in the big-business press have promoted the need for deportations and additional restrictions on the rights of immigrants. Gardner's mother answered these attempts to make a criminal of her daughter. "The papers have picked up trash," she said. "Leave the trash behind and pick up the issues, which is that my daughter was murdered and that justice must be done."

The Gardner killing has brought other cases to public attention. The British Council of Churches recently publicized the case of Nigerian-born Dorothy Nwokedi. She was forcibly deported July 9, handcuffed, gagged, and bound for two hours during the flight, and separated from her four-year-old son who was deported with her. She had no money, clothes, possessions, home, family, or job to go to in Nigeria. Her thumbs were broken and she sustained heavy bruising. Rev. David Haslam has demanded that she be returned to Britain.

The *Caribbean Times* reported August 3 that in July an official inquest ruled that Omasase Lumumba was killed "as a result of improper methods and excessive force in the process of control and restraint," while held in a London prison in October 1991.

Lumumba — the nephew of Patrice Lumumba, the first prime minister of Zaire, who was killed by rightists aided by UN troops in 1961 — had claimed political asylum. He was instead detained in prison with no right to bail nor to appeal against his detention. Four other asylum seekers have lost their lives in custody since 1987.

The *London Evening Standard* reported that last year 3,387 people were served with deportation notices for breaching resident conditions. Of those, 57 left voluntarily and 1,726 departures were enforced through deportation or supervision orders. The rest are appealing extradition or are untraceable.

## Georgia county antigay measure stirs debate

BY BOB BRAXTON

ATLANTA — The latest battle in the culture war is now being fought in Cobb County, a suburb of Atlanta.

The Board of Commissioners passed a resolution in August making the county the first in the country to condemn the "homosexual lifestyle." It also cut off all funding for the arts and has ended insurance coverage for abortions for county employees.

In so doing, the commission has stirred up a hornet's nest of protest. Those opposed to discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, censorship, state legislation on morality, and attacks on a woman's right to choose abortion have mobilized against the commission's decisions.

The controversy began in June when Atlanta mayor Maynard Jackson vetoed legislation adopted by the city council that would have extended health benefits to live-in domestic partners of city employees.

Jackson professed concern about the cost of the legislation, but right-wing critics focused on the plan's proposed coverage of homosexual as well as heterosexual partners.

Supporters of the legislation pointed out that what was involved was not special rights for homosexuals, but equal rights and an extension of health-care and other benefits that are in the interests of all.

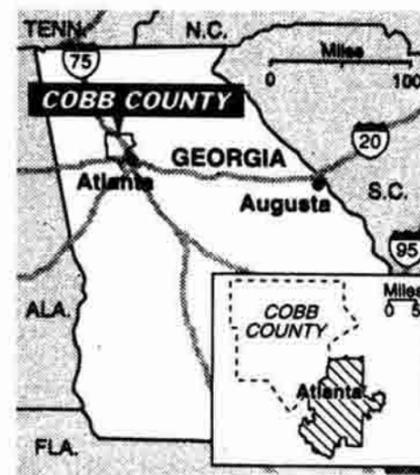
Two months of protests, led by gay and lesbian groups, resulted in the city council readopting the domestic partner legislation August 2.

Cobb County commissioners pointed to the Atlanta debate to justify their attacks on the right to abortion and civil rights for gays. Their pretext was one couple's complaint about a reference to homosexuality in the play *Lips Together, Teeth Apart*, staged by Theatre in the Square in Marietta, Georgia. The theater received \$41,000 of its \$800,000 budget from a county grant.

### Debate at board meeting

On August 10, 800 people jammed into the commission chamber to debate motions condemning homosexuality and cutting off funding for arts projects that don't advance "family values."

Critics of the motions pointed out that the



commission's proposals amounted to censorship. "My tax money doesn't just go to the arts but to the public libraries as well," said Cobb resident Cheryl Davis. "At what point would this body try to shut down the

Continued on Page 16