

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Fascism: What it is and how to fight it

— PAGES 8, 9

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 57/NO. 46 December 27, 1993

U.S. naval station worker wins victory against gov't

Officials won't indict mechanic for alleged Hatch Act violation

BY JIM GOTESKY AND OSBORNE HART

SAN FRANCISCO — "We've won a victory against government political repression. Workers at the Alameda Naval Aviation Depot will now have more political space to express their views and discuss the problems of war, race and sex discrimination, and economic depression that plague our lives," Milton Chee said.

Chee was holding a copy of the U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC) letter informing him of their decision to back down from threats to prosecute him for alleged violations of the Hatch Act.

Chee is an aircraft sheetmetal worker at the Alameda Naval Aviation Depot. He is a

See editorial — page 14

member of the International Association of Machinists Local 1584 and the Socialist Workers Party.

The OSC is the police agency charged with enforcing the Hatch Act for the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), which regulates government workers' conduct. The OSC letter, dated November 23, stated, "[The] OSC has decided not to seek disciplinary action against you . . ."

The government agency began investigating Chee after he ran as a socialist candidate for San Francisco Board of Supervisors in the nonpartisan 1992 city elections. Chee garnered 12,000 votes.

Invoking provisions of the Hatch Act that forbid government employees or workers under government contract from running in partisan elections for public office, the OSC conducted an intensive investigation of Chee, including on-the-job interviews and two three-



Aircraft mechanic Milton Chee at party with supporters in Oakland, California, celebrating victory against government attempt to indict him for his political activities.

hour-long interrogations in the guise of legal hearings. Chee faced possible firing for supposedly violating the Hatch Act.

The aircraft mechanic petitioned and qualified for ballot status in the nonpartisan Board of Supervisors race. The OSC contended that because the Socialist Workers Campaign Committee endorsed Chee's candidacy the race was in fact a partisan election.

Chee's attorney, David Handsher, took issue with this view in a statement released to

the media. "While I applaud the Special Counsel's good sense in not seeking disciplinary action against Mr. Chee, I strongly disagree with its interpretation of the [Hatch] Act and implementing regulations, in that the Special Counsel continues to maintain that Mr. Chee's participation in a local election, which by State law is non-partisan, is restricted because of Mr. Chee's endorsement by the Socialist Workers Party."

Handsher hit on the real reason for the

Continued on Page 12

Miners ratify new contract, ending seven-month strike

BY MARY ZINS

MARISSA, Illinois — Members of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) approved a new contract with the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA) December 14. Sixty-five percent of the miners who cast ballots voted for ratification. This brings the seven-month strike by 18,000 miners in seven states to an end.

Mine workers president Richard Trumka explained his view on the agreement in a press release. "UMWA members are the best coal miners in the world, and we're going back to our jobs with a contract that keeps the American coal industry strong and competitive, honors our productivity and commitment and guarantees our right to jobs with a future," he said. "Today marks the start of a new era in labor-management relations in the coalfields."

As the *Militant* goes to press, final vote tallies are not available. The UMWA Region 3 office reports that unofficial returns in Illinois show 3,107 votes for the contract and 2,220 against, with 953 for and 429 against in Indiana. In Alabama, 52 percent opposed the pact with 48 percent in favor.

The new contract registers the fact that the ranks of the union were determined to stand firm on what they saw as the central issue in the battle with the coal operators. The UMWA demanded that BCOA companies hire at least 60 percent laid-off union miners at new mines and that the companies admit to ownership of subsidiaries, which they have attempted to hide. The new con-

Continued on Page 11

Strong showing of Yeltsin's rivals in Russia elections concerns Washington

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Russian president Boris Yeltsin narrowly won approval of a new constitution in December 12 elections that significantly strengthens his powers. However, the strong showing by Liberal Democratic Party leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy in the parliamentary elections stunned Yeltsin and his supporters in Washington who hoped the vote would set the stage for stepping up so-called market reforms aimed at integrating more rapidly Russia's economy into the world capitalist system.

"While the constitution gives Mr. Yeltsin much-needed powers, the vote Sunday seemed to signal the beginning of the end of the Yeltsin era," stated an article in the December 14 *Wall Street Journal*, which cited a recent poll showing that if elections were held for president only 39 percent would now vote for Yeltsin.

Yeltsin never formally endorsed any of the electoral slates for parliament though eight of his ministers, including chief economic adviser Yegor Gaidar, ran

on the Russia's Choice ticket.

With 77 of Russia's 89 regions and republics reporting, Zhirinovskiy's party won 24 percent of the vote. Russia's Choice had 15 percent, closely followed by the Communist Party, a splinter from the former ruling Stalinist party, with 13 percent.

Half of the 450 seats in parliament are apportioned by the party-preference vote; the other half are filled in district elections. Interfax reported that once the district results are included, Russia's Choice will probably have 94 seats and Zhirinovskiy's party 78.

The 13 political parties that fielded candidates all represent the interests of various sections of the privileged bureaucratic layer that rests on top of the Russian workers state. Zhirinovskiy, who attempted to cast himself as more of a political outsider, describes himself as a child who grew up in poverty, even though his family had been part of Russia's elite for seven generations.

Turnout in a number of areas was quite light as many working people didn't feel they had much of a stake in choosing among the contending gangs of bureaucrats. Only 55 percent of the country's 107 million registered voters cast ballots. In some areas it was much less. The north Caucasian republic of Chechnya took no part in the elections.

Continued on Page 11

Washington wins partial victory in GATT brawl

BY GREG ROSENBERG

Washington manipulated its economic might to shove concessions down the throats of Paris and Tokyo as the world trade talks under the auspices of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) closed December 15. After caving in to U.S. demands to reduce agricultural subsidies, French prime minister Edouard Balladur and governments grouped in the European Community (EC) defied pressures to give up more. As a result, the agreement excludes television and movies, civil aircraft, ocean-going shipping, and banking services.

U.S. president Bill Clinton said December 14 that Washington was "on the verge of a historic victory." Balladur exclaimed, "The cultural identity of Europe is protected."

The *New York Times* pointed out in a December 15 article that the GATT resolution "is smaller in scope than intended and may bear the seeds of future trade wars."

Paris withstood pressure in part due to Bonn's refusal to openly break the Franco-German alliance over the accord.

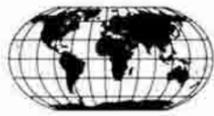
The Clinton administration essentially clinched its demands on agriculture in the talks. Both Tokyo and Seoul agreed under pressure to open their markets to rice imports. Washington offered a small compromise to Paris. EC governments — including

Continued on Page 12



Vladimir Zhirinovskiy (center) whose Liberal Democratic Party led in party-preference vote in Russia.

What's behind media hype of N.Y. train killings? — page 5



Tel Aviv reinforces troops

Just days before the December 13 deadline for beginning to pull out its soldiers from the Gaza Strip and parts of the West Bank, Tel Aviv significantly bolstered its occupation forces there. Thousands of soldiers were sent into the occupied territories, reportedly more than at any point since the Palestinian *intifada* began seven years ago.

Israeli officials insist the buildup is temporary. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin told Israeli newspaper editors that the Israeli government has four times as many troops in the territories as in southern Lebanon and along the Lebanese border. This comes to roughly 14,000 soldiers. Dozens of Palestinians from groups opposed to the Israeli-PLO accord were detained by the army December 8-9.

Three Palestinian workers heading home after a day of building houses in Israel were shot to death December 10 on a West Bank road. Israeli settlers belonging to the right-wing Kach movement took responsibility for the attack.

10,000 casualties in Somalia

Maj. Gen. Anthony Zinni, who directs U.S. military operations in Somalia, has admitted that up to 10,000 residents of that country were killed or wounded between June and October. Two-thirds of the casualties were women or children, opposed to the U.S. and UN occupation force there.

Meanwhile, the UN has spent more than \$300 million in the last six months catering to the needs of its 29,000 soldiers in Somalia and very little on improving the infrastructure of the country. The UN compound in Mogadishu has been modernized with new roads, coaxial cable, and miles of pipe. But outside the compound's walls there is little running water, electricity, telephones, or sewers to serve the city's residents.

Rather than purchasing food from Somalia's abundant supply of meat and fish, millions of dollars are being spent to import these items from New Zealand, the Nether-

lands, and Australia.

4,000 arrested in India

Police arrested 4,000 demonstrators throughout India December 9 who were participating in a strike organized by the right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The protest was called to condemn the arrest of BJP president Lal Krishna Advani and seven other party leaders two days earlier for their role in the demolition of the 16th century mosque in Ayodhya one year earlier. More than 3,000 people were killed in subsequent rioting and police violence.

Bosnia talks still stalled

UN diplomats are hoping to resume talks on Bosnia December 20. A meeting planned for December 12 in Greece was cancelled after Bosnian government representatives said they would not attend. In Sarajevo, 8 people were killed and 26 wounded December 8 by artillery fire from rightist Serb forces who have kept the capital city under siege for the past 20 months.

The governments of the United States,

France, and Britain rejected a request by Moscow to ease economic sanctions to allow large quantities of natural gas to be sent to Yugoslavia this winter to heat homes, schools, and hospitals.

Thousands march in Bucharest

Thousands of working people marched through the streets of Bucharest, Romania, December 8 to commemorate the four-year anniversary of the overthrow of the Stalinist regime of Nicolae Ceausescu and to demand the resignation of the country's current president, Ion Iliescu. Two million workers throughout the country also staged two-hour strikes to protest low wages.

Kazakhstan parliament dissolved

The parliament in Kazakhstan voted December 10 to disband and let President Nursultan Nazarbayev rule the Central Asian republic by decree until new elections in March. The lawmakers also abolished Kazakhstan's more than 200 regional legislatures, leaving local power in the hands of the president's appointed regional administrators. The deputies will keep their salaries and privileges such as legislative immunity until new parliamentary elections. The government has also promised to find them all new jobs. Kazakhstan is one of the former Soviet republics that inherited nuclear weapons after the Soviet Union's collapse in 1991.

Haitian leader visits Vatican

Robert Malval, named prime minister by ousted Haitian president Jean-Bertrand Aristide in August, paid a visit to Rome December 10 to encourage the Vatican to participate in new talks with Haiti's military rulers. The Vatican is the only state entity to have recognized the country's coup leaders.

Malval also reaffirmed his plans to resign December 15, but agreed to stay on as acting

prime minister until a successor is found. A new plan being put forward by Malval calls for "broadening" Haiti's cabinet to include political opponents of Aristide and other supporters of the military.

Report sees explosion risk at U.S. nuclear plants

Eleven nuclear processing factories in six states may be vulnerable to the same kind of chemical explosion that contaminated 50 square miles around the Siberian city of Tomsk-7 last April, according to a report of the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee. At most of these U.S. plants, run by the Department of Energy, plutonium for bombs is separated from other materials in processing tanks.

The committee listed the areas with the highest risk of explosion as Hanford, Washington; the Savannah River Site in South Carolina; Oak Ridge, Tennessee; Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico; the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory near Idaho Springs; and the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant in Ohio.

Charges dropped against ADL

After a year-long investigation into charges that the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) organized a network of illegal spying, the district attorney in San Francisco agreed in mid-November not to file criminal charges against the organization in exchange for its payment of up to \$75,000 to fight "hate" crimes. The group, however, still faces two civil lawsuits accusing them of stealing membership lists and swapping files with the police.

Revelations about this spying operation came to light last year when documents revealed that ADL operative Roy Bullock and San Francisco policeman Tom Gerard, a former employee of the CIA, were selling information to the South African government. Bullock had gathered information on nearly 10,000 individuals and more than 950 groups including the NAACP, Arab-Americans, and anti-apartheid activists.

Under the settlement, no charges will be brought against Bullock, and the ADL pledges not to engage in "improper" information gathering in California.

— BRIAN WILLIAMS

'Militant' holiday schedule

This issue of the *Militant* is the last in 1993. Next week's issue, dated January 10, will be the first in 1994. The *Militant* will take a one-week break during the holidays. Issue no. 2 in 1994 will be printed and shipped to distributors January 6.



Farmers rally December 9 in Tokyo to protest opening of Japan's rice markets to imports.

THE MILITANT

British troops out of Ireland!

British occupation forces in Northern Ireland continue their dirty war to defend the interests of capitalists of London, Dublin, and Belfast. Many people wonder where talks between London and Irish nationalists will lead. What is the way forward to end the occupation and achieve a united Ireland? The 'Militant' provides news and working-class answers. Don't miss a single issue!



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U.S. group launches fund effort for ANC election campaign

BY GREG ROSENBERG

NEW YORK — The Coalition for Democracy in South Africa (CODISA) launched a campaign to aid the African National Congress (ANC) in preparing for the first-ever nonracial elections in South Africa to be held April 27.

Meeting here December 11 at the offices of hospital workers union Local 1199, some 40 people representing different organizations and antiapartheid groups in six cities decided to kick off the effort, called "Dollars for Democracy in South Africa." CODISA also voted to endorse a regional antiapartheid conference in Philadelphia, February 12-13.

The campaign will reach out to trade unions, churches, student organizations, and others. Activists aim for substantial fundraising by South Africa Democracy Week, February 5-11. Solidarity activities will take place in various cities at that time.

"We are not nonpartisan," said CODISA cochair Cleveland Robinson. "We are here to support the ANC. This campaign is for people who will give a dollar, or \$2, \$5, or \$10." Pointing out that "the ANC has struggled for decades for freedom and democracy," Robinson said that "it is my belief that a government in South Africa under the leadership of the ANC will not only benefit working people in South Africa, but worldwide."

Lindiwe Mabuza, chief representative of

the ANC in the United States, said she had just returned from South Africa, where ANC leaders explained fund-raising in the United States is an important part of the international effort to ensure a victory of the democratic movement in the elections. Of the estimated 21 million eligible voters in South Africa, 18 million of them have never voted.

Transitional Executive Council

"These elections are the result of many years of struggles, both in South Africa," said Mabuza, and through the efforts of the worldwide antiapartheid campaign. "We are scoring major victories. The Transitional Executive Council [TEC] went into place this week." The multiparty governmental council has a wide array of decision-making powers, including over law and order, intelligence, finance, regional and local government, foreign affairs, and the status of women. Although the National Party government remains in office, South African president F. W. de Klerk cannot make any major decisions without approval of the TEC.

To stop killings and violence, the TEC ordered police into northern Natal December 9, including parts of the KwaZulu homeland where Inkatha Freedom Party leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi rules. It also instructed a delegation to investigate the activities and open the secret files of the In-



Nelson Mandela, left, and F. W. de Klerk receive Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo, Norway.

ternal Stability Unit, a camouflage-clad police outfit that functions in Black townships.

ANC president Nelson Mandela accepted the Nobel Peace Prize December 10, along with de Klerk. A debate broke out between the two while in Oslo, Norway. De Klerk said the process of eliminating apartheid was due to "a fundamental change of heart." Mandela said it was because of "the millions of our people who dared to rise up against a social system whose very essence is war, violence, racism, oppression, repression and the impoverishment of the entire people." He thanked the "millions of people across the globe" who helped.

Monies raised by CODISA will go to support ANC electoral activities, including voter education and registration. Organizers project "Dollars for Democracy" local campaigns in

Chicago, Houston, New York, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., and other cities.

A majority of meeting participants came from New York City, many of them CODISA members. Representatives from antiapartheid organizations in Albany, Baltimore, Boston, Cleveland, Houston, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C., also participated. Among those in attendance were Rev. Herbert Daughtry and CODISA cochair Lennox Hinds.

Sybil Wong, CODISA coordinator, reported that the Walkathon for Democracy in New York City in October raised \$15,000 for the ANC election effort, of which \$12,000 has been turned over.

Regional Student Conference

Meeting organizers reported that the regional student solidarity conference is planned at Temple University in Philadelphia. Representatives from 14 college campuses in the Philadelphia area met to plan the event to educate and organize solidarity work with the ANC election campaign. Workshops will cover an array of topics, from the roots of violence in South Africa to labor struggles. An address by an ANC representative is planned. Conference organizers are inviting students, union members, and others from throughout the region to attend.

Participants at the meeting in New York reported that coordination efforts are underway between the "Dollars for Democracy" campaign and other fund-raising efforts nationwide.

The Boston-based Fund for Democratic Elections in South Africa (FDESA) will tour Patrick "Terror" Lekota to seven cities February 1-15. Lekota, who earned his nickname for his soccer prowess, is based in Johannesburg. He was imprisoned for his political activity at least twice on Robben Island. He was elected to the ANC National Executive Committee in 1992.

For details on the Lekota tour, contact FDESA at (617) 437-6363.

To make a contribution to "Dollars for Democracy" or obtain organizing materials, contact CODISA at P.O. Box 1005, Cathedral Station, New York, NY 10025. Phone or fax (212) 666-1288.

For more information on the Temple University student conference, call (215) 324-5520 or 224-4627.

Secret nuclear tests leaked radiation

BY HARRY RING

LOS ANGELES — Claiming that it's now possible to tell the truth because the cold war is over, the Clinton administration is being forced to let some of Washington's dirty laundry on its nuclear bomb making program hang loose.

Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary admitted December 7 that of the 1,051 U.S. underground nuclear tests conducted over the years, 204 were done secretly. Of these, she said, 34 leaked radiation into the atmosphere.

O'Leary confirmed press reports that at least 18 people were injected with deadly plutonium without their knowledge.

The *Albuquerque Tribune* had reported this earlier.

O'Leary professed to be "shocked and amazed" at the way the nuclear program has been run.

She said the government's asserted new openness will help build public trust.

Public trust — or more precisely, the lack of it — is really what's behind the White House decision to lift a corner of the lid on its nuclear cesspool. From the outset, the trumped-up claim of a Soviet military threat was the pretext for the secrecy which shrouded the bomb program. The real purpose was to conceal the frightful truth from most people in the United States — particularly workers in the nuclear industry and those living in areas where the ground, water, and air were contaminated with radiation.

But over the years, persistent efforts by those affected, coupled with media exposures, brought many facts to light, and convinced thousands that the government was lying through its teeth.

Rocky Flats disaster

The widely viewed PBS documentary program *Frontline* presented such an exposé recently. The program documented the horrendous story of Rocky Flats, the nuke plant outside Denver.

Built in the late 1940s to make bomb parts, Rocky Flats was a major plant processing plutonium, a bomb ingredient with a lethal half-life of 24,000 years.

Initially, Rocky Flats was a project of the Atomic Energy Commission, predecessor of the Energy Department. The plant was managed by Dow Chemical Corp.

A "top secret" operation, Rocky Flats was even off limits to government regulatory agencies. But what went on behind the walls and barbed wire could not be totally suppressed.

Jim Kelly, president of the United Steelworkers of America local that had unionized the plant, blew the first whistle. Kelly disclosed that hundreds of drums of oil laced with plutonium and stored outside the plant were corroded and leaked dangerous levels of radioactivity.

But the government and Dow Chemical hung tough. Investigators were even barred after it became known that a mass of plutonium had erupted in flames in 1959.

Unable to get inside, one investigator checked the surrounding area. He found land contaminated with radiation at 400 times the "safe" level as far as a mile away from the plant.

The government bought up the contaminated land in the immediate area of the plant and put a fence around it. But residents near the facility filed a damage suit.

Rocky Flats stalled the legal action for a decade. But more evidence emerged in pre-trial proceedings. The government made a \$9 million out-of-court settlement — with the provision that all evidence be sealed.

In the mid-1970s, the Energy Department replaced the Atomic Energy Commission as the nation's bomb maker. At Rocky Flats, Rockwell International Co., a major supplier of war weapons, replaced Dow.

In 1985, the FBI raided Rocky Flats, and emerged with a reported 3.5 million pages of company/government documents.

With that, a special grand jury was convened and a mountain of documents was dumped on their laps.

Composed of area residents, the grand jury proved to be a very stubborn lot. They waded through the mass of documents, and sifted out the evidence buried in them.

Attempted cover-up fails

Meanwhile, the Justice Department and Rockwell began negotiating a deal, unknown to the jury.

Rockwell officials warned that if they were prosecuted, they would prove in court that they had been following Energy Department orders.

Justice instructed the Denver FBI to stop gathering information against individuals.

In a March 1992 plea bargain, Rockwell agreed to plead guilty to 10 violations over a two-year period and to pay a \$18.5 million fine. *Frontline* noted the sum just about equaled the bonuses the company had received during that time.

In return, the government agreed to issue a statement that there was "no contamination danger" outside the plant. The obvious purpose of this bald-faced lie was to fend

off future damage claims.

Informed of the settlement and instructed that their work was over, the grand jurors were stunned and enraged. They took the remarkable step of holding an outdoor press conference where they denounced the decision and demanded an independent investigation.

The jurors went further. Even though their work had been ordered ended, they completed their report. The judge ordered it sealed. But the jurors refused to back down.

Soon after, the plutonium scandal hit the fan. *Westword*, a Denver weekly, came out with a front page story reporting the sealed grand jury findings.

Grand jury findings

With full knowledge that they risked jail for breaking grand jury secrecy, 12 of the jurors told a *Westword* reporter what they had found.

They described a company effort to get rid of accumulated plutonium sludge by mixing it with cement into huge concrete blocks, with the hope of shipping them to some waste dump. But the blocks began turning to mush and are still sitting there.

They had found that year after year, hazardous waste was sprayed on the fields outside the plant. This was called "irrigation."

Buttressing their charge with added information, the jurors branded the relationship between the Energy Department and Rockwell "an ongoing criminal conspiracy."

The Justice Department responded promptly by investigating the jurors for violating the secrecy rule.

In October, Janet Reno's Justice Department announced it would not prosecute the individuals involved. But, it warned, if there are any further disclosures, the department "will reopen the investigation."

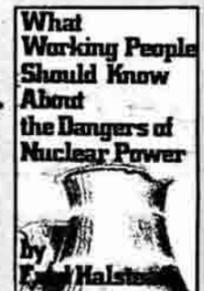
Rocky Flats is no longer making bomb parts. It is now operated by a company named R.G.&G., which is pondering how to clean up the incredible contamination.

If and when this is done, it hopes to convert the area into a sports complex and a golf course.

As a corollary of the blanket of government secrecy over Rocky Flats and other nuke plants is lifted, it shines a spotlight on Washington's contempt for the lives of thousands of working people, its utter disregard for democratic rights, and its sheer hypocrisy when it accuses governments of Third World countries — from North Korea to Pakistan and Iran — of nuclear proliferation.

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What Working People Should Know about the Dangers of Nuclear Power



FRED HALSTEAD

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Cuba activist tours Seattle, urges broad campaign to oppose U.S. trade embargo

BY HARVEY McARTHUR

SEATTLE — "Cuba has given a lot to the world in material and human aid and as an example for all of us. For a long time Cuba was the hope, the example of what human beings should strive for. And Cuba is still fighting today, setting an important example to the poor of the world.

"We in turn need to give a lot to the Cubans — a lot of our time and energy in efforts to end the U.S. economic blockade of Cuba. This is the least we can do for all of us as human beings. If Cuba is destroyed, an essential part of us will have been destroyed as well."

Andrés Gómez brought this call to action through a tour of seven cities in Oregon, Washington, and the Canadian province of British Columbia December 4–10. Gómez is a leader of the Antonio Maceo Brigade, a group of Cuban-Americans that support the Cuban revolution. He is one of the national coordinators of the National Network on Cuba, which includes some 40 organizations that promote solidarity with Cuba.

The meetings organized for Gómez gave renewed impetus to activities in the area in defense of the Cuban revolution. They focused on building the next Cuba Friendship caravan, scheduled for late February 1994. This broad initiative aims at building on the success of the 1993 caravan. In that effort, 300 volunteer drivers in a caravan of 100 vehicles delivered 100 tons of humanitarian aid to Cuba last August. Thousands of others collected aid and organized meetings against the U.S. trade embargo of Cuba in the dozens of cities along the caravan route.

The Portland-based Campaign for Peace with Cuba invited Gómez to the Pacific Northwest and activists and solidarity committees in Seattle, Tacoma, Olympia, and Bellingham, Washington, and Vancouver, British Columbia, joined the efforts. Some 350 people participated in public meetings during the tour and more than 15 indicated they were already planning to go on the next caravan. Gómez also gave interviews to one television and seven radio stations.

The Cuban activist noted recent public statements by U.S. officials reaffirming the Clinton administration's determination to maintain the prohibition on trade and free travel to and from Cuba. "The U.S. maintains this blockade today for the same reason it first installed it: to destroy Cuba and the Cuban revolution,"

Gómez said. "This is a war, and this is how a war is waged."

Havana estimates the embargo has cost Cuba \$40 billion over 30 years due to loss of foreign markets and in higher prices and shipping costs for products Cuba does obtain from other countries, Gómez said. Some foreign companies refuse to do business with Cuba for fear of reprisals and pressure from the U.S. government, he added.

In all his talks, Gómez detailed the current economic hardships affecting the Cuban people and called for greater efforts to end the embargo "to give the Cuban people more time and breathing space as they tackle the challenges they face."

He also took up recent decisions the Cuban government has taken to confront this crisis. These measures include promoting tourism to obtain hard currency, seeking foreign investment in industry and oil exploration, and legalizing possession and use of hard currency by individual Cubans.

"This creates difficulties and dangers," he noted. "After 30 years of building a society based on equality, some people today have a much better life than others, not because they work harder, but because they have access to dollars. And how much foreign investment can you have before you lose control of your country?"

"Is socialism going to be terminated as a result of the policies the government has been forced to implement? This is a big question being discussed in Cuba today," he added. The aim of Cuba's leaders is to "maintain the principles of socialism while adapting to present national and world circumstances," Gómez said.

"We must see that what we do in the United States is important," he told 75 people at a meeting in Seattle. "What Cuba needs is



Militant/Janet Post

The U.S. government maintains the embargo against Cuba "for the same reason it first installed it: to destroy Cuba and the Cuban revolution," Gómez told activists in Seattle. Above: Gómez at a press conference in Miami earlier this year.

space and time to become stronger, to work through these problems and challenges. . . . We must build a broader, more powerful coalition to debate, to pressure the government on the blockade. Most U.S. people don't know what the blockade means or even that it exists. But there are millions who will care if we can put our case to them."

Fifty people attended a meeting in Vancouver sponsored by the Canadian-Cuba Friendship Association and Amigos de Cuba (Friends of Cuba). Gómez urged the audience to build the next Friendship caravan. Local activists announced a planning meeting December 15 to get an organizing campaign underway.

One part of the February caravan will start in British Columbia and have to cross the U.S. border into Washington state on its way south. Solidarity committees on both sides of the border have begun discussing how to

win broad support to pressure Washington to allow the caravan through. Last July, a similar group was denied entry at the start of the Friendship caravan.

Gómez also announced plans for a trination Cuba solidarity conference to be held in Los Angeles in April 1994. Initiated by the Mexican solidarity network *Vapor Cuba*, it will be organized by Mexican, U.S., and Canadian groups.

"This initiative aims at helping all of us better organize ourselves. The blockade is not just an American question. Solidarity work worldwide is of utmost importance. The Cuban people need the best efforts we can give," Gómez told the Vancouver meeting.

Harvey McArthur is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 289 in Seattle.

Toronto meeting builds aid caravan to Cuba

BY NAOMI JOLLIFFE

TORONTO — Eighty-five opponents of Washington's trade embargo against Cuba attended a public meeting December 3 to launch the third Friendship Caravan to Cuba. The featured speakers were John Cox and Lisa Valanti, cochairpeople of the Pittsburgh Friends of Cuba Committee and participants in the second Friendship caravan organized by Pastors for Peace.

The U.S.-Cuba Friendship caravan, scheduled for February 1994, will travel through dozens of cities throughout the United States and Canada. Participants will be campaigning against the U.S. embargo and picking up material aid that will be taken across the U.S.-Mexico border at Laredo, Texas, and shipped to Cuba.

Supporters in Toronto are planning to drive medicines, school supplies, and other needed goods across the Canada-U.S. border at Detroit where they will link up with the caravan. Some are planning to drive all the way to Texas where they will join with hundreds of other volunteers.

The Toronto meeting was organized by the newly-formed Canada-Cuba Friendship Committee and sponsored by the Canada-Cuba Friendship Association (CCFA), Cuba Solidarity Coordinating Committee, University of Toronto Friends of Cuba, and Worker to Worker Canada-Cuba Labor Solidarity.

Dan Heap, recently retired member of Parliament, who made a fact-finding trip to Cuba to get the truth out about how the Cuban people are dealing with the present economic crisis, chaired the meeting. He was introduced by Maria Carrusca, president of CCFA and a leading activist in the Friendship caravan.

"This is a moral issue," said Heap. "This is an extremely important political movement to break the U.S. blockade against Cuba."

Speaking on behalf of Worker to Worker Canada-Cuba Labor Solidarity, Dave Bleakney, a member of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, reported that resolutions demanding an end to the U.S. embargo had recently been adopted by conventions of the Ontario and Newfoundland labor federations.

Cox described some of the social gains of the Cuban revolution, which has all but eliminated illiteracy and reduced the infant

mortality rate to 9.4 percent, less than the rate in many U.S. cities.

"The Cuban working people provide an example for the whole world of a socialist society that is being built on human solidarity," he said. "In their majority they are determined to defend their revolution despite the current severe economic crisis. This is why the Clinton administration, like all previous U.S. governments, is determined to destroy the revolution."

Valanti appealed for people in Canada to get involved in the February Friendship caravan. "The last time we did this the U.S. government did not succeed in stopping us at the Mexican border," she said. "We have to do it again. The Cuban people need us now, but more important, the world needs Cuba."

In her fund appeal, Susan Berman, a member of Canadian Auto Workers Local 1285, said that by expanding the Friendship caravan into Canada "we can win new forces and put pressure on the Canadian government to demand an end to the embargo and renew government aid to Cuba that was cut off in 1975."

Participants donated \$1,450 toward the \$8,000 budget needed to fund trucks, drivers, and the transportation of goods to Cuba. Six volunteer drivers were introduced to the meeting, and 15 people signed up to get involved. For information on the Friendship caravan committee call (416) 947-0603 or write to Box 743, Station F, Toronto, Ontario, M4Y 2N6.

—CALENDAR—

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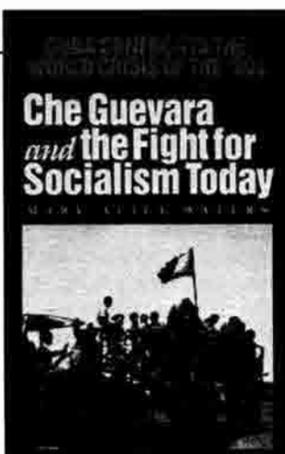
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Clinton downplays meeting with Rushdie

BY PAT SMITH

Salman Rushdie, Indian-born author of *The Satanic Verses*, said his November 24 meeting with U.S. president Bill Clinton was "the most powerful turn of the screw" in his effort to lift a nearly five-year-old death sentence against him.

Clinton, however, sought to minimize the significance of the encounter, saying that he "meant no disrespect" to Muslims for meeting with the author and that he did not necessarily "agree with the attacks on Islam in the book Mr. Rushdie wrote." White House aides told reporters that the discussion between Rushdie and the president in a hallway of the Old Executive Office Building was too short to be described properly as a meeting. Clinton said he had only spent "a couple of minutes" with the writer. "I hope that I will not be misunderstood. I believe I made the right decision," he concluded.

Rushdie went into hiding in February 1989 after then Iranian leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini exhorted Muslims around the world to execute the author and all those who help publish or distribute *The Satanic Verses*. He charged them with blasphemy. Tehran offered a \$2 million reward for his assassination. In July 1991, the book's Japanese translator was murdered. The Italian translator survived a stabbing attack.

Using anti-imperialist demagoguery, Khomeini and other Iranian officials tried to equate their defense of anti-working-class blasphemy laws with the struggles of the op-

pressed and exploited peoples in the Middle East. The book was banned in India, South Africa, Pakistan, Egypt, and several other countries.

Capitalist governments utilized the calls for banning the book to intensify their attacks on working people. London, for example, received aid and comfort in its censorship of 11 organizations in Northern Ireland. It also attempted to block distribution of exposes written by British intelligence agents. Bush administration officials refused to meet with Rushdie.

In an angry response to Rushdie's meeting with Clinton, Ayatollah Mohammed Yazdi, head of Iran's judiciary, called the U.S. president "the most hated man before all the Muslims of the world." That same day the author met for more than an hour



Author Salman Rushdie in London last September displays his latest novel, *Midnight's Children*.

with Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Anthony Lake, the national security adviser.

"President Clinton did a brave and decent thing in meeting with Salman Rushdie, which he muddled by seeming to apologize for it," read a December 2 *New York Times* editorial. The *New York Post* editors agreed, "Even while insisting that he did not regret

having met with Rushdie, Clinton sought to minimize the significance of the session, passing it off as almost a chance encounter in the hallway. . . . We wish he hadn't felt the need to publicize his ex post facto sense of cold feet."

Right-wing politician Patrick Buchanan, on the other hand, blasted Clinton for meeting with Rushdie. In a December 1 opinion column in the *New York Post* he referred to *The Satanic Verses* as a "blasphemous novel" seen in the "Islamic world as insulting to the Prophet."

"Let us face the fact," Buchanan said. "The way in which Rushdie exercised his literary freedom was irresponsible and contemptuous. People of the Muslim faith had every right to feel wounded and insulted."

Rushdie appeared before nearly 600 people November 23 to receive an honorary post as visiting professor of the humanities at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

"I'm afraid I need your help because the only weapon that I have is public opinion," he said. "In the end, the governments of the democratic world will act in this matter only if they believe it's a matter of sufficient interest to their own citizens and voters. They won't do it for me; they might do it for you."

Rushdie said he hoped the recognition would help his campaign to get more support from governments. It was the author's third public appearance in the United States since he went into hiding.

What's behind media hype of N.Y. train killings?

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

On December 7 Colin Ferguson, a Brooklyn resident, stood up in a car of the Long Island Railroad (LIRR) and began shooting randomly at passengers. Ferguson killed 5 people and wounded 18 others before three commuters on the Hicksville-bound train stopped him. One of those injured died a few days later. Four of the deceased were white and two were Asian.

Capitalist politicians from U.S. president Bill Clinton to New York City mayor-elect Rudolph Giuliani are attempting to utilize the outrage engendered by this horrendous act to clamp down on democratic rights, all under the guise of fighting crime.

This is what the hype around the LIRR

NEWS ANALYSIS

killings is all about, not about fighting violent crime.

Commenting on this tragedy, Clinton urged Congress to rapidly pass his crime bill proposals. The legislation allocates \$22 billion to place 100,000 additional cops on the streets and build new high-security prisons. It also establishes boot camps for juveniles accused of crimes for the first time.

This bill, which was already approved by the Senate in mid-November, represents a bipartisan assault on civil liberties and democratic rights won by working people in previous struggles, including the right to presumption of innocence and to a fair trial. Among the provisions included in the Senate package is the institution of the death penalty for 52 federal crimes, limitation on habeas corpus appeals of inmates on death row, and a raft of mandatory minimum sentences.

"The bill that staggered laden out of the Senate on November 19th has something for every senator," commented an article in the November 27 issue of the *Economist*. "Alfonse D'Amato of New York called for the death penalty for drug kings not charged with murder (which is probably unconstitutional). Jesse Helms of North Carolina wanted to ban courts from imposing population limits in prisons. Joining a criminal street gang has been made illegal (so much for freedom of association) and secret hearings will be allowed in certain cases, particularly in those involving deportations."

By a 91-1 vote the Senate also passed the "three strikes and you're out" amendment. Under this provision anyone convicted in federal court of a third felony would automatically receive life in prison without parole, regardless of the offenses.

A joint conference with the House of Representatives, which passed a slightly different version of the crime bill, is now scheduled to work out the final proposals.

In a meeting with the president December 9, 57 mayors and police chiefs demanded extra federal money to pay for more police officers, the prosecution of juveniles as adults, and mandatory minimum sentences for all repeat drug sale convictions. "I think the American people are . . . tired of feeling insecure, and tired of the violence," stated Clinton, who also praised radio stations for banning rap songs that contain lyrics some consider objectionable.

Attacks on democratic rights

Picking up on the law and order theme sounded by Clinton, *New York Times* columnist A. M. Rosenthal wrote, "America is going through a civil crisis of criminality it has never before experienced." His solution? "Special courts and sentences without parole for anybody who uses a gun while committing a crime or even thinks of it by carrying one."

Recent statistics compiled by the University of Michigan in its twice-a-year crime survey, however, show that crime rates against people are actually down by 27 percent and those against property declined 31 percent. At the same time, the number of people incarcerated for more than one year in federal or state prisons rose by 126 percent.

The *Wall Street Journal* laid out clearly what the "anti-crime" campaign is all about in a December 10 editorial aptly titled "Civil Liberties or Civil Security?"

"The problem is in the streets and in the courtrooms. The problem is a panoply of civil liberties rulings," stated the *Journal* editors. "Put bluntly, the reigning civil-liberties model has become dangerous. It needs to be rethought."

But the answer to the so-called crime wave is not more restrictions placed on the rights of the accused or more cops. In fact, as the recent corruption hearings into the New York City police department once again exposed, most cops themselves are up to their necks in drug dealing, bribery payoffs, and other criminal activities.

"How about [setting up] a National Directory of Madmen?" asked the *Wall Street Journal* editorial. In Denver, as in a number of other cities, the cops compiled a secret list of individuals they suspect of being gang members. The roster happened to include two of every three young Black men in the city, many of whom had never even been arrested. Blacks comprise only 5 percent of the city's population.

"They ought to call it the blacklist," com-

mented Rev. Oscar Tillman, an official of the NAACP in Denver. "This is harassment. It's not a crackdown on gangs; it's a crackdown on Blacks."

When news of the shooting on the Long Island Railroad first broke, many reports in the media attempted to portray the action by Ferguson, who is a Jamaican-born Black, as a racial crime aimed at retaliating against whites. Some reports even pitched it as a conscious radical political act. But the murder was not motivated by racism. It was the senseless act of a disturbed man like many others bred by the alienation and breakdown in human solidarity that are rampant in a capitalist society.

Violence and crime have their roots in society divided in social classes. From forcibly driving peasants off the land to toil in the factories to numerous imperialist slaughters of working people around the world — with the U.S.-organized assaults in Panama, Iraq, and Somalia as the most recent — capitalism "comes dripping from head to foot from every pore, with blood and dirt," as Karl Marx described it.

In fact, some of the most notorious world-class criminals sit in the White House and the chambers of the U.S. Congress. Attorney General Janet Reno, who ordered the massacre in Waco, Texas, is a good example.

The vicious dog-eat-dog nature of com-

petition in a capitalist society also creates a layer of people who have lost any sense of human solidarity. Capitalism breeds despair and alienation within the working class as well, leading to all kinds of violence by and against working people, including and foremost within the family.

It's not vulgar rap songs or television shows depicting violence that lead to crime. They are simply a reflection of growing alienation within capitalist society. Censorship of such songs or movies won't solve the crime problem.

Allowing democratic rights to be hacked away only strengthens the real source of violence and crime in this society — the capitalist rulers and their social system.

What's needed is a social movement of fighting workers and their allies to defend themselves from the social devastation brought on by capitalism. Assaults and violence within the working class decline in times of growing politicization, organization, and class-struggle action, accompanied by a growing self-confidence of working people. This was the case, for example, during the rise of industrial unions in the 1930s, the civil rights movement in the 1960s, and during times of revolutionary struggles in many countries around the world.

Human solidarity, which in our epoch means working-class solidarity, is the only answer to the so-called crime wave.

for further reading

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JAMES P. CANNON

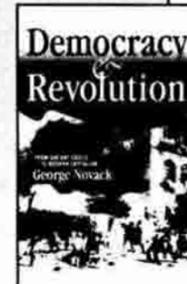
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MILITANT
PERSPECTIVA MUNDIAL
1993 FUND
GOAL \$75,000

'Militant' fund tops \$88,000!

BY SARA LOBMAN

When the *Militant* staff arrived at work the morning of December 14, the envelopes were already piled high on the desk. And they kept coming in. By 12 noon — the official end of the \$75,000 *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* Anniversary Fund — more than \$85,000 had been contributed toward the drive! Twenty-four hours later, when volunteers from New York finally closed the books, the total had climbed to \$88,972.66.

All told, more than 800 *Militant* readers and supporters contributed to the fund. Participants included rail workers, meatpackers, and garment workers, as well as farmers and students. Opponents of Washington's cold war against the Cuban revolution gave generously.

"I am writing this letter to congratulate the *Militant* on its 65th anniversary," wrote Mitch Monserret, a chemical worker from Utah. "I have been a subscriber for two years and have found that the information I can get on the working class and labor union struggles is very hard to find elsewhere."

"For supporting and propagating socialism," Lisa Stolarski penned on the bottom of her check. Stolarski is part of a group of young *Militant* readers from Edinboro, Pennsylvania, who collected \$275 toward the fund.

Contributions didn't just come from across the United States. Supporters in Brussels, Belgium, called the office as the fund campaign drew to a close. A \$100 check was on its way, they reported.

"I don't own stock in IBM and I don't buy South African Krugers," Rosalie Majka explained to an anniversary fund meeting in San Francisco. "I'm an oil refinery worker and what's important to me is knowing that while working peo-



Militant/Ruth Nebbia

Iowa hog farmer Larry Ginter (left) and Barbara Bowman study the display at a December 11 meeting in Des Moines organized to celebrate the 65th anniversary of the *Militant*.

ple don't always win right now, we are fighting back once in a while — that's more than any other newspaper tells me."

San Francisco was one of several cities where supporters organized public meetings to build the fund during the last weekend of the drive. Events in Cleveland, Boston, Des Moines, Iowa, and St. Louis also helped push the drive over the top.

'In full and on time'

The anniversary fund was completed in the best of the *Militant's* traditions — in full and on time. The first time this slogan was used, in fact, was during the \$12,000 fund launched in the pages of the *Militant* in the fall of 1949. Supporters have pledged "to make all the necessary sacrifices to raise their quotas IN FULL AND ON TIME," James Cannon wrote in the article launching that drive.

In the 'Appeal to our readers' that opened the fund 10 weeks ago, we explained that "a working-class newspaper like the *Militant* can

only get the money it needs to publish each week from the efforts and contributions of people who value its revolutionary perspective."

The appeal pointed to two ways for readers to help raise the necessary funds: contribute to the anniversary fund and join in the campaign to win thousands of new readers to the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*. "The sales of subscriptions and single copies are the lifeblood of the socialist publication."

The successful completion of both these campaigns — more than 3,000 subscriptions to the *Militant* and almost 700 to *Perspectiva Mundial* were sold during the international circulation campaign — makes it possible for the *Militant* to continue to provide the news and analysis that fighting workers and youth need to defend ourselves from the bosses' attacks on our rights, our lives, and our dignity.

To all our readers who helped make this drive a success, thank-you and congratulations for a job well done!

	Goal	Paid	Percentage		
Salt Lake City	\$2,500	\$3,402	136%	66,700	
Miami	\$2,000	\$2,607	130%		
San Diego	\$500	\$650	130%		
Atlanta	\$2,750	\$3,562	130%		
Newark, NJ	\$4,000	\$4,959	124%		
San Francisco	\$6,500	\$7,993	123%		58,300
Philadelphia*	\$4,000	\$4,630	116%		
Seattle*	\$3,500	\$4,044	116%		
Des Moines, IA	\$2,000	\$2,305	115%		
Manhattan	\$4,000	\$4,594	115%		50,000
Greensboro, NC	\$2,000	\$2,283	114%		
Boston	\$3,000	\$3,258	109%		
Washington, D.C.*	\$3,200	\$3,446	108%	41,700	
Twin Cities, MN*	\$5,500	\$5,898	107%		
Birmingham, AL	\$2,000	\$2,112	106%		
Houston	\$3,000	\$3,127	104%		
Detroit	\$3,500	\$3,579	102%	33,300	
St. Louis	\$3,350	\$3,425	102%		
Chicago	\$5,000	\$5,110	102%		
Morgantown, WV	\$1,250	\$1,262	101%	25,000	
Pittsburgh*	\$3,000	\$3,016	101%		
Brooklyn	\$3,000	\$3,011	100%		
Cincinnati	\$300	\$300	100%		
Edinboro, PA	\$275	\$275	100%	16,700	
Los Angeles	\$6,500	\$6,500	100%		
Cleveland	\$2,750	\$2,492	91%		
Albany, NY	\$200	\$153	77%		
New Haven, CT	\$500	\$350	70%	8,300	
Belgium	\$100	\$100	100%		
other		\$529			
TOTAL	\$80,175	\$88,972	119%		
SHOULD BE	\$75,000	\$75,000	100%		

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Gov't informant said he built Trade Center bomb

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

NEW YORK — The main government informant in the alleged conspiracy to blow up New York City landmarks said he built the deadly bomb detonated last February at the World Trade Center, tape transcripts show.

The government has tried to tie the conspiracy case to the Trade Center bombing trial, which is now underway.

The informer, Emad Salem, is a former Egyptian army officer. He recorded the tapes secretly during conversations with FBI agent John Anticev. Salem is also an explosive and demolition expert.

Reuters obtained a copy of the transcripts, which have not been made public.

Speaking with the agent about his expenses last April, Salem defends the costs by saying they were pushed higher by the building of the Trade Center bomb.

Told that his expenses had been "out of the ordinary," he replies, "I don't think that because we was start already building the bomb, which is went off in the World Trade Center."

He claims that the bomb was built "by supervision from the Bureau [FBI] and the D.A. [District Attorney]."

"We know that the bomb start to be built. By who? By your confidential informant. What a wonderful great case," Salem says.

The February 26 blast at the world's largest office complex killed six people, injured more than 1,000, and caused a half-billion dollars worth of damage.

Government agents arrested and accused four people of planning and executing the bombing. The Trade Center trial is in its 11th week in federal court. Prosecutors admit they have no eyewitness testimony putting any of the four defendants in the current trial at the scene of the underground garage where the explosion occurred.

In a related frame-up case, the government has charged 15 men, including Muslim cleric Omar Abdel Rahman, of conspiring to "levy a war of urban terrorism against the United States." The men were arrested months after the Trade Center bombing. Charges include the assassination of Israeli ultrarightist Meir Kahane in 1990, an alleged plot to bomb the

United Nations and the Lincoln and Holland tunnels in New York City, and another plot to kill Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak. No evidence has been presented to link the men to any specific illegal act. This trial is scheduled to open early next year.

Government has no evidence

On December 7, one of the prosecution's key witnesses in the Trade Center trial failed to identify any of the defendants. The prosecution had implied that Willie Moosh, a gas station attendant in Jersey City, New Jersey, would point to defendants Mahmud Abouhalima and Mohammed Salameh as the individuals who, nine hours before the explosion, came by the station where he worked driving a yellow Ryder van. Investigators claim one of the defendants rented the van and used it to transport the bomb that exploded beneath the Trade Center. Instead, the witness pointed to two jurors when asked to identify the two men he said he had seen driving the van.

Lacking any hard facts to back up its accusations, the government has tried to build its case with insinuations based on pieces of circumstantial evidence, peppered with warnings of "Arab terror" and "Islamic fundamentalism."

Defense lawyers in the conspiracy trial said they will use Salem's remarks to undermine his testimony, expected to be a key part of the government's case.

"We believe Emad Salem bombed the World Trade Center," said Ronald Kuby, who, with his partner, civil rights lawyer William Kunstler, represents two of the defendants in the conspiracy case. The two lawyers presented their opinion in a letter to Judge Michael Mukasey, who is scheduled to preside over that trial.

In a separate letter to Mukasey, Assistant U.S. Attorney Andrew McCarthy said the defense lawyers' depiction of the tape re-

ording was misleading. McCarthy also asked the judge to stop the lawyers from spreading their opinions. Kunstler responded by citing his free speech rights.

It is unclear from the transcript whether Salem is actually admitting he participated in the bombing or simply that he manufactured the explosive.

FBI spokesman Joseph Valiquette declined to comment on the transcripts.

Salem's credibility as a witness for the government is crumbling, however. The former Egyptian army officer was paid \$1.5 million by the FBI.

During taped conversations, Salem complains that Anticev was "breaking my spirit to work" and that the FBI was "stingy" about paying his expenses.

Ear trouble

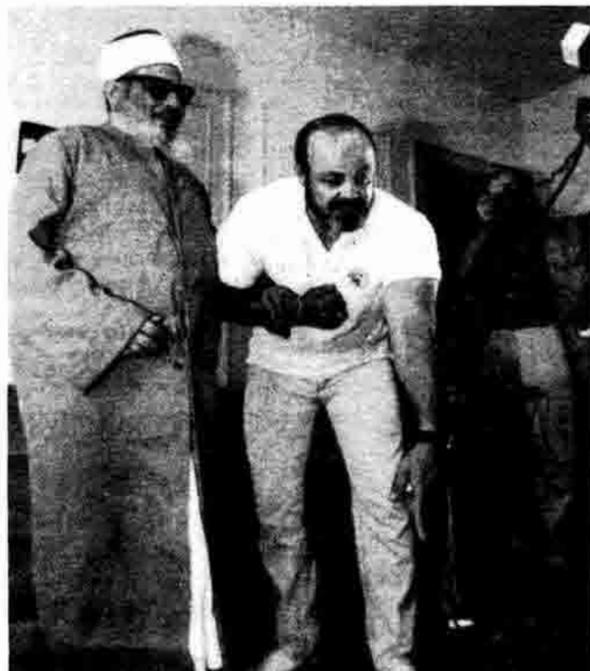
According to the defense, Salem drove the yellow Ryder rental van to the Trade Center garage and then hung around the vicinity waiting for the bomb inside to go off.

"When it went off, the blast caused him to suffer ear damage," Kunstler told Reuters. "Our medical experts have indicated that the symptoms Salem complained of are consistent with exposure to blast concussion or extremely loud noise," added Kuby.

Salem was admitted to St. Clare's Hospital in New York on the afternoon of the noon bombing, according to the lawyers. The hospital refused to confirm whether he was a patient.

But the lawyers said Salem stayed three to four days and was diagnosed as having "vertigo" stemming from a middle-ear disturbance.

These latest revelations may cause the government's frame-up, in both the World Trade Center trial and the conspiracy case, to unravel.



Government informer Emad Salem (center) with Muslim cleric Omar Abdel Rahman at news conference in June.



Militant/Greg Rosenberg

Typesetting and doing page layouts for the *Militant* on computers in composition room in its new location in the heart of the printshop.



Militant/Eric Simpson

Jackhammering to clear away old floor filled with potholes.



Militant/Hilda Cuzco

Leveling out concrete floor in press room to prepare installation of remanufactured web press.

Volunteers upgrade Pathfinder printshop

BY GREG ROSENBERG

NEW YORK — More than 100 volunteers from throughout the northeastern United States poured into the Pathfinder Building over the December 12-13 weekend. With a lot of enthusiasm and careful organization they moved the composition department of the shop that prints Pathfinder books, the *Militant*, and *Perspectiva Mundial* into newly renovated offices at the center of the printing plant.

The volunteers also poured new concrete floors and rebuilt sections of the shop in preparation for a remanufactured web press, to be installed December 18-19.

"The latest stage in upgrading the production of communist books, pamphlets, and newspapers is well on its way to implementation," said Ove Aspoy, plant manager of the printshop.

As the first snowstorm of the season blew an arctic chill into New York City, the Pathfinder printshop became a hotbed of activity. Jackhammers roared and dust flew. Armed with sledgehammers, wheelbarrows, bags of cement, sand, and stones, and using a lot of elbow grease, volunteers from New York, New Jersey, Baltimore, Boston, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., and Houston joined the effort.

Volunteers accomplished their goal: putting the printshop in a better position to meet the growing demand around the world for Pathfinder books by upgrading the facility's physical plant and organization.

As the capitalist system hurdles millions to joblessness, off their land, or to imperialist wars, more working people and youth — from New York to Tokyo — are reaching for socialist periodicals and books.

Pathfinder currently publishes 240 titles. Fifteen of the publisher's books and pamphlets are out of stock at the moment and need to be reprinted. In the next several months, Pathfinder will reprint *In Defense of Marx-*

ism, Dynamics of the Cuban Revolution, Feminism and the Marxist Movement, Fascism: What It Is and How to Fight It, In Defense of Socialism, The Changing Face of U.S. Politics, James P. Cannon's Letters from Prison, and others. This is on top of several forthcoming new Pathfinder titles.

In August, the printshop acquired two new German-made Heidelberg presses. These high technology machines will enable Pathfinder to produce short runs of quality books, at a lower cost. The shorter runs enable the publisher to update book covers, ads, and prefaces more frequently, increasing the attractiveness of books on its backlog.

Composition department

Tamar Rosenfeld coordinated the move of the composition department to its new facilities and the setting up of a new office for the printshop on the third floor. Rosenfeld, the former production coordinator for the printshop, is now joining the composition department. She took a couple minutes out to describe the move, as volunteers painted, installed molding, computer, and telephone wire. "Having the composition department in the center of the printshop will be a big help in upgrading our skills and efficiency," she said.

The composition room is a crucial part of the production operation. It is where all the copy sent by the *Militant* and Pathfinder editorial offices is set and proofread. Setting type in a production area, not in editorial offices, allows the *Militant* and Pathfinder staffs to concentrate on writing, editing, and promotion of the publications. Having the composition room at the center of the printshop facilitates improving skills in order to produce the books and newspapers more attractively and efficiently. The composition department is now the first production area that visitors see when they enter the shop. Workers began setting type for the *Militant* in the department's new location the first

day of the move.

Volunteers completed a second important goal. They ripped out old and worn sections of the printshop floor and poured new concrete floors as part of the preparation for installing a remanufactured web press. The *Militant* is printed on this press.

A boisterous crew crowded the main printshop floor for the concrete pour, which was preceded by jackhammer and sledgehammer teams demolishing the old cratered and uneven sections.

Larry Lane, an experienced millwright, helped organize the pour. He explained that in placing concrete, timing is essential. "It hardens up fast. It's a speed job," he said.

Many of the volunteers had never worked with concrete before. Despite this, the highly choreographed operation was carried out without a single injury during the entire weekend.

Melissa Harris coordinated a group of 20 people on the mixing team. "We've got to make sure that we mix one 94-pound bag of cement, 2 1/2 cubic feet of sand, and 3 cubic feet of stone," she said, to prevent a bad batch. The pour took about 6,175 pounds of cement, 9,000 pounds of sand, and 15,000 pounds of stones. It was accomplished in one day.

As the mixing team raced to keep up, a team of wheelbarrow operators lined up at a churning cement mixer, then took the concrete to the pour areas, where other teams leveled the still wet concrete.

Volunteers also cut new channels for the web press circulation system, poured concrete over new plumbing, and began a fresh paint job on the walls surrounding the area.

Web operator Larry Lukecart said these modifications would result in a safer work place that would help improve efficiency. "The floor in here was getting potholes," said Lukecart. "When we move paper around the shop on dollies, the heavy rolls would get stuck in these craters. The new floor is a big improvement."

The following week, workers will complete the finishing touches on new electrical and plumbing connections for the web.

A special project over the weekend involved collating books and notebooks for the Socialist Workers Party leadership school, which will hold its next session in 1994. "By the end of today," said Maggie Trowe, who attended the school in 1985, "we will have as-



Militant/Eric Simpson

Volunteer Ted Leonard lays out tasks for day at morning huddle

sembled 14 sets of books by leaders of the international working-class movement for students at the next session of the school. Each set consists of 42 books — from biographies of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels to Marx's *Capital*," she said. "In addition, when the school begins, each of the 14 students will bring or buy their own set of the *Collected Works of Marx and Engels*," for the six-month session.

While these projects progressed, other teams cleared ice from sidewalks, repaired the floor in the basement, cleaned out the bottom of the elevator shaft, and stripped and waxed floors.

At the end of the weekend, participants bought 60 books left over from the leadership school project at a special sale. Among the purchasers were several young people who were in the Pathfinder building for the first time.

"The whole effort inspires me with a lot of confidence," said Karl Pupan, a 25-year-old volunteer who came up from Baltimore. This was his first visit to the Pathfinder printshop. The socialist movement "focuses on working-class confidence in ourselves. This project shows that we can do it. We don't need some capitalist politicians to tell us what to do."

One of the things that has made the upgrading of the Pathfinder building and expansion of the printshop possible is contributions by friends and supporters. Rail workers, auto workers, and others have made substantial contributions to the Capital Expansion Fund from bonuses, buyouts, and other windfalls. In addition, those who find themselves in special circumstances can make contributions of \$1,000 or more.

To make a donation write to the Capital Expansion Fund, 406 West St., New York, NY 10014.



Militant/Eric Simpson

Collating works of Marx, Engels, and other working-class leaders.

Fascism: what it is and how to fight it

Newly reprinted Pathfinder pamphlet offers valuable lessons for today

"The historic function of fascism is to smash the working class, destroy its organizations, and stifle political liberties when the capitalists find themselves unable to govern and dominate with the help of democratic machinery.

"The advanced workers must know that they will have to fight and win a struggle to the death."

This is the central message of Russian revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky in the newly reprinted Pathfinder pamphlet *Fascism: What It Is and How To Fight It*. Writing in the heat of struggle against the rising fascist movement in Europe in the 1930s, Trotsky examines the origin and nature of fascism and advances a working-class strategy to combat it.

Today, in a period of worldwide economic depression when incipient fascist movements rear their ugly heads and grow once again, fighting workers, farmers, and young people will find invaluable lessons in Trotsky's writings. We are reproducing below excerpts from this booklet. Copyright © by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission.

BY LEON TROTSKY

Fascism — What Is It?

What is fascism? The name originated in Italy. Were all the forms of counterrevolutionary dictatorship fascist or not (that is to say, prior to the advent of fascism in Italy)?

The former dictatorship in Spain of Primo de Rivera, 1923-30, is called a fascist dictatorship by the Comintern [Communist International]. Is this correct or not? We believe that it is incorrect.

The fascist movement in Italy was a spontaneous movement of large masses, with new leaders from the rank and file. It is a plebeian movement in origin, directed and financed by big capitalist powers. It issued forth from the petty bourgeoisie, the slum proletariat, and even to a certain extent from the proletarian masses; Mussolini, a former socialist, is a "self-made" man arising from this movement.

Primo de Rivera was an aristocrat. He occupied a high military and bureaucratic post and was chief governor of Catalonia. He accomplished his overthrow with the aid of state and military forces. The dictatorships of Spain and Italy are two totally different forms of dictatorship. It is necessary to distinguish between them. Mussolini had difficulty in reconciling many old military institutions with the fascist militia. This problem did not exist for Primo de Rivera.

The movement in Germany is analogous mostly to the Italian. It is a mass movement, with its leaders employing a great deal of socialist demagoguery. This is necessary for the creation of the mass movement.

The genuine basis (for fascism) is the petty bourgeoisie. In Italy it has a very large base — the petty bourgeoisie of the towns and cities, and the peasantry. In Germany, likewise, there is a large base for fascism. . . .

It may be said, and this is true to a certain extent, that the new middle class, the functionaries of the state, the private administrators, etc., can constitute such a base. But this is a new question that must be analyzed. . . .

(Extracts from a letter to an English comrade, November 15, 1931; printed in *The Militant*, January 16, 1932.)



Armed workers' demonstration during 1918 revolution in Berlin. Fascists came to power in Germany and Italy after the Stalinist and social democratic misleaders betrayed the revolutionary movement. The victories of the fascists against the labor movement in the 1930s enabled the capitalist classes to lead humanity into the imperialist slaughter of World War II.

How Mussolini Triumphed

At the moment that the "normal" police and military resources of the bourgeois dictatorship, together with their parliamentary screens, no longer suffice to hold society in a state of equilibrium — the turn of the fascist regime arrives. Through the fascist agency, capitalism sets in motion the masses of the crazed petty bourgeoisie and the bands of declassed and demoralized lumpenproletariat — all the countless human beings whom finance capital itself has brought to desperation and frenzy.

From fascism the bourgeoisie demands a thorough job; once it has resorted to methods of civil war, it insists on having peace for a period of years. And the fascist agency, by utilizing the petty bourgeoisie as a battering ram, by overwhelming all obstacles in its path, does a thorough job.

After fascism is victorious, finance capital directly and immediately gathers into its hands, as in a vise of steel, all the organs and institutions of sovereignty, the executive, administrative, and educational powers

of the state: the entire state apparatus together with the army, the municipalities, the universities, the schools, the press, the trade unions, and the cooperatives.

When a state turns fascist, it does not mean only that the forms and methods of government are changed in accordance with the patterns set by Mussolini — the changes in this sphere ultimately play a minor role — but it means first of all for the most part that the workers' organizations are annihilated; that the proletariat is reduced to an amorphous state; and that a system of administration is created which penetrates

decided with a favorable economic conjuncture, which followed the depression of 1921-22. The fascists crushed the retreating proletariat by the onrushing forces of the petty bourgeoisie. But this was not achieved at a single blow.

Even after he assumed power, Mussolini proceeded on his course with due caution: he lacked as yet readymade models. During the first two years, not even the constitution was altered. The fascist government took on the character of a coalition. In the meantime, the fascist bands were busy at work with clubs, knives, and pistols. Only thus was the fascist government created slowly, which meant the complete strangulation of all independent mass organizations.

Mussolini attained this at the cost of bureaucratizing the fascist party itself. After utilizing the onrushing forces of the petty bourgeoisie, fascism strangled it within the vise of the bourgeois state. Mussolini could not have done otherwise, for the disillusionment of the masses he had united was precipitating itself into the most immediate danger ahead.

Fascism, become bureaucratic, approaches very closely to other forms of military and police dictatorship. It no longer possesses its former social support. The chief reserve of fascism — the petty bourgeoisie — has been depleted. Only historical inertia enables the fascist government to keep the proletariat in a state of dispersion and helplessness. . . .

In its politics as regards Hitler, the German social democracy has not been able to add a single word: all it does is repeat more ponderously whatever the Italian reformists in their own time performed with greater flights of temperament. The latter explained fascism as a postwar psychosis; the German social democracy sees in it a "Versailles" or crisis psychosis.² In both instances the reformists shut their eyes to the organic character of fascism as a mass movement growing out of the collapse of capitalism.

Fearful of the revolutionary mobilization of the workers, the Italian reformists banked all their hopes on the "state." Their slogan was, "Help! Victor Emmanuel, exert pressure!" The German social democracy lacks such a democratic bulwark as a monarch loyal to the constitution. So they must be content with a president — "Help! Hindenburg," exert pressure!"

While waging battle against Mussolini, that is, while retreating before him, Turati⁴ let loose his dazzling motto, "One must have the manhood to be a coward." The German reformists are less frisky with their slogans. They demand "Courage under unpopularity" (*Mut zur Unpopularität*) — which amounts to the same thing. One must not be afraid of the unpopularity which has been aroused by one's own cowardly temporizing with the enemy.

Identical causes produce identical effects. Were the march of events dependent upon the social-democratic party leadership, Hitler's career would be assured.

One must admit, however, that the German Communist Party has also learned little from the Italian experience.

The Italian Communist Party came into being almost simultaneously with fascism. But the same conditions of revolutionary ebb tide, which carried the fascists to power, served to deter the development of the Communist Party. It did not give itself an accounting as to the full sweep of the fascist danger; it lulled itself with revolutionary illusions; it was irreconcilably antagonistic to the policy of the united front; in short, it was stricken with all the infantile diseases. Small wonder! It was only two years old. In its eyes, fascism appeared to be only "capitalist reaction."

The particular traits of fascism which spring from the mobilization of the petty bourgeoisie against the proletariat, the Communist Party was unable to discern. Italian comrades inform me that, with the sole exception of Gramsci,⁵ the Communist Party would

deeply into the masses and which serves to frustrate the independent crystallization of the proletariat. Therein precisely is the gist of fascism. . . .

* * *

Italian fascism was the immediate outgrowth of the betrayal by the reformists of the uprising of the Italian proletariat. From the time the [first world] war ended, there was an upward trend in the revolutionary movement in Italy, and in September 1920 it resulted in the seizure of factories and industries by the workers. The dictatorship of the proletariat was an actual fact; all that was lacking was to organize it and to draw from it all the necessary conclusions. The social democracy took fright and sprang back. After its bold and heroic exertions, the proletariat was left facing the void. The disruption of the revolutionary movement became the most important factor in the growth of fascism. In September, the revolutionary advance came to a standstill; and November already witnessed the first major demonstration of the fascists (the seizure of Bologna).¹

True, the proletariat, even after the September catastrophe, was capable of waging defensive battles. But the social democracy was concerned with only one thing: to withdraw the workers from combat at the cost of one concession after another. The social democracy hoped that the docile conduct of the workers would restore the "public opinion" of the bourgeoisie against the fascists. Moreover, the reformists even banked strongly upon the help of King Victor Emmanuel. To the last hour, they restrained the workers with might and main from giving battle to Mussolini's bands. It availed them nothing.

The crown, along with the upper crust of the bourgeoisie, swung over to the side of fascism. Convinced at the last moment that fascism was not to be checked by obedience, the social democrats issued a call to the workers for a general strike. But their proclamation suffered a fiasco. The reformists had dampened the powder so long, in their fear lest it should explode, that when they finally with a trembling hand did apply a burning fuse to it, the powder did not catch.

Two years after its inception, fascism was in power. It entrenched itself thanks to the fact that the first period of its overlordship coin-

FOR FURTHER READING

Fascism: What It Is and How to Fight It

by Leon Trotsky

Fascism, Trotsky explains, has been able to conquer only in those countries where conservative workers' parties blocked the proletariat from utilizing a revolutionary situation to seize power. Booklet \$3.00

Fascism and Big Business

by Daniel Guerin

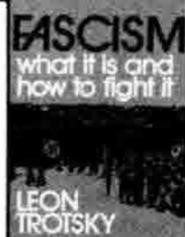
Examines the development of fascism in Germany and Italy and its relationship with the ruling capitalist families there. \$19.95

The Jewish Question

A MARXIST INTERPRETATION

by Abram Leon

Explains the historical roots of anti-Semitism and how in times of social crisis it is used by the capitalists to mobilize reactionary forces against the labor movement and divide working people in face of their common exploiters. \$17.95



Available at bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or at the address below. If ordering by mail, please add \$3.00 for the first title and \$0.50 for each additional book to cover postage and handling.

Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Fax (212) 727-0150

not even allow for the possibility of the fascists' seizing power. Once the proletarian revolution had suffered defeat, once capitalism had held its ground and the counterrevolution had triumphed, how could there be any further kind of counterrevolutionary upheaval? How could the bourgeoisie rise up against itself! Such was the gist of the political orientation of the Italian Communist Party. . . .

The brunt of the blame must be borne, of course, by the leadership of the Comintern. Italian Communists above all others were duty-bound to raise their voices in alarm. . . .

(From *What Next? Vital Questions for the German Proletariat*, 1932.)

Fascist Danger Looms in Germany

The official press of the Comintern is now depicting the results of the [September 1930] German elections as a prodigious victory of Communism, which places on the order of the day the slogan of a Soviet Germany. The bureaucratic optimists do not want to reflect upon the meaning of the relation of forces which is disclosed by the election statistics. They examine the figure of the increased Communist vote independently of the revolutionary tasks created by the situation and the obstacles it sets up.

The Communist Party received around 4,600,000 votes as against 3,300,000 in 1928. From the viewpoint of "normal" parliamentary mechanics, the gain of 1,300,000 votes is considerable, even if we take into consideration the rise in the total number of voters. But the gain of the party pales completely beside the leap of fascism from 800,000 to 6,400,000 votes. Of no less important significance for evaluating the elections is the fact that the social democracy, in spite of substantial losses, retained its basic cadres and still received a considerably greater number of workers' votes [8,600,000] than the Communist Party.

Meanwhile, if we should ask ourselves, "What combination of international and domestic circumstances could be capable of turning the working class towards Communism with greater velocity?" we could not find an example of more favorable circumstances for such a turn than the situation in present-day Germany: Young's noose,⁶ the economic crisis, the disintegration of the rulers, the crisis of parliamentarism, the terrific self-exposure of the social democracy in power. From the viewpoint of these concrete historical circumstances, the specific gravity of the German Communist Party in the social life of the country, in spite of the gain of 1,300,000 votes, remains proportionately small.

The weakness of the positions of Communism, inextricably bound up with the policy and regime of the Comintern, is revealed more clearly if we compare the present social weight of the Communist Party with those concrete and unpostponable tasks which the present historical circumstances put before it.

It is true that the Communist Party itself did not expect such a gain. But this proves that under the blows of mistakes and defeats, the leadership of the Communist parties has become unused to big aims and perspectives. If yesterday it underestimated its own possibilities, then today it once more underestimates the difficulties. In this way, one danger is multiplied by another.

In the meantime, the first characteristic of a really revolutionary party is — to be able to look reality in the face.

* * *

In order that the social crisis may bring about the proletarian revolution, it is necessary that, besides other conditions, a decisive shift of the petty bourgeois classes occurs in the direction of the proletariat. This gives the proletariat a chance to put itself at the head of the nation as its leader.

The last election revealed — and this is where its principal symptomatic significance lies — a shift in the opposite direction. Under the blow of the crisis, the petty bourgeoisie



Storm troopers and Nazis occupy union offices in Berlin in 1933

swung, not in the direction of the proletarian revolution, but in the direction of the most extreme imperialist reaction, pulling behind it considerable sections of the proletariat.

The gigantic growth of National Socialism is an expression of two factors: a deep social crisis, throwing the petty bourgeois masses off balance, and the lack of a revolutionary party that would be regarded by the masses of the people as an acknowledged revolutionary leader.

If the Communist Party is the *party of revolutionary hope*, then fascism, as a mass movement, is the *party of counter-revolutionary despair*. When revolutionary hope embraces the whole proletarian mass, it inevitably pulls behind it on the road of revolution considerable and growing sections of the petty bourgeoisie. Precisely in this sphere the election revealed the opposite picture: counterrevolutionary despair embraced the petty bourgeois mass with such a force that it drew behind it many sections of the proletariat. . . .

Fascism in Germany has become a real danger, as an acute expression of the helpless position of the bourgeois regime, the conservative role of the social democracy in this regime, and the accumulated powerlessness of the Communist Party to abolish it. Whoever denies this is either blind or a braggart. . . .

* * *

From Moscow, the signal has already been given for a policy of bureaucratic prestige which covers up the mistakes of yesterday and prepares tomorrow's by false cries about the new triumph of the line. Monstrously exaggerating the victory of the party, monstrously underestimating the difficulties, interpreting even the success of fascism as a positive factor for the proletarian revolution, *Pravda* nevertheless explains briefly: "The successes of the party should not make us dizzy."

The treacherous policy of the Stalinist leadership is true to itself even here. The analysis of the situation is given in the spirit of uncritical ultraleftism. In this way the party is consciously pushed on the road of adventurism. At the same time, Stalin prepares his alibi in advance with the aid of the ritualistic phrase about "dizziness." It is precisely this policy, shortsighted, unscrupulous, that may ruin the German revolution.

* * *

Can the strength of the conservative resistance of the social-democratic workers be calculated beforehand? It cannot. In the light of the events of the past year, this strength seems to be gigantic. But the truth is that what helped most of all to weld together social democracy was the wrong policy of the Communist Party, which found its highest generalization in the absurd theory of social fascism. To measure the real resistance of the social democratic ranks, a different measuring instrument is required, that is, a correct Communist tactic. With this condition — and it is not a small condition — the degree of internal unity of the social democracy can be revealed in a comparatively brief period. . . .

If the Communist Party, in spite of the exceptionally favorable circumstances, has proved powerless seriously to shake the structure of the social democracy with the aid of the formula of "social fascism," then real fascism now threatens this structure, no longer with wordy formulas of so-called radicalism, but with the chemical formulas of explosives. No

matter how true it is that the social democracy by its whole policy prepared the blossoming of fascism, it is no less true that fascism comes forward as a deadly threat primarily to that same social democracy, all of whose magnificence is inextricably bound with parliamentary-democratic-pacifist forms and methods of government. . . .

The policy of a united front of the workers against fascism flows from this situation. It opens up tremendous possibilities to the Communist Party. A condition for success, however, is the rejection of the theory and practice of "social fascism," the harm of which becomes a positive menace under the present circumstances.

The social crisis will inevitably produce deep cleavages within the social democracy. The radicalization of the masses will affect the social democrats. We will inevitably have to make agreements with the various social-democratic organizations and factions against fascism, putting definite conditions in this connection to the leaders, before the eyes of the masses. . . . We must return from the empty official phrase about the united front to

the policy of the united front as it was formulated by Lenin and always applied by the Bolsheviks in 1917.

(From *The Turn in the Communist International and the German Situation*, 1930.)

1. The fascist campaign of violence began in Bologna, November 21, 1902, when the social-democratic councilmen, victorious in the municipal elections, emerged from city hall to present the new mayor, they were met by gunfire in which tens were killed and a hundred wounded. The fascists followed up with "punitive expeditions" into the surrounding countryside, a stronghold of the "Red Leagues." Blackshirt "action squadrons" in vehicles supplied by big landowners, took over villages in lightning raids, beating and killing leftist peasant and labor leaders, wrecking radical headquarters and terrorizing the populace. Emboldened by their easy successes, the fascists then launched large-scale attacks in the big cities.

2. The Versailles Treaty, imposed on Germany at the end of World War I; its most hated feature was the unending tribute to the victorious allies in the form of "reparations" for war damages and losses. The crisis referred to was the economic depression that swept the capitalist world after the Wall Street crash of 1929.

3. Field Marshal Paul von Hindenburg (1847-1934), Junker general who gained fame in World War I and later became president of the Weimar Republic. In 1932 the social democrats supported him for reelection as a "lesser evil" to the Nazis. He appointed Hitler chancellor in January 1933.

4. Filippo Turati (1857-1932). Leading reformist theoretician of the Italian Socialist Party.

5. Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937). A founder of the Italian Communist Party; imprisoned by Mussolini in 1926, he died in prison eleven years later. He sent a letter from prison, in the name of the Italian party's political committee, protesting Stalin's campaign against the Left Opposition. Togliatti, then in Moscow as the Italian representative to the Comintern, suppressed the letter. Throughout the Stalin era Gramsci's memory was deliberately effaced. In the period of de-Stalinization, however, he was "rediscovered" by the Italian Communist Party and officially enshrined as a hero and martyr. Since then there has been considerable international acclaim of his theoretical writings, particularly his prison notebooks.

6. The Young Plan. After Owen D. Young, American big businessman, who was Agent-General for German Reparations during the nineteen-twenties. In the summer of 1929 he was chairman of the conference that adopted his plan, replacing the unsuccessful Dawes Plan, to "facilitate" Germany's payment of reparations. See note 2.



PATHFINDER AROUND THE WORLD

BY DUANE STILLWELL

Pathfinder, located in New York with distributors in Australia, Britain, and Canada, publishes the works of working-class and communist leaders of the worldwide struggles against exploitation and oppression. Pathfinder bookstores are listed in the directory on page 12.

The Manhattan Pathfinder bookstore took advantage of the special offer featuring the new book *Nelson Mandela Speaks: Forging a Democratic, Nonracial South Africa* and related titles to relaunch their Readers Club newsletter. An attractive package mailed to Readers Club members in New York included the redesigned newsletter along with a special holiday sale offer featuring 17 Pathfinder titles. The package also included a leaflet advertising a series of four classes on Pathfinder's recent title *To See the Dawn: Baku, 1920 — First Congress of the Peoples of the East*, to be held at the Manhattan Pathfinder bookstore.

Nelson Mandela Speaks is the lead title of Pathfinder's most recent Readers Club offer, good through December 31 at all Pathfinder bookstores around the world. The nine related titles will help deepen a new reader's understanding of the unfolding revolution in South Africa.

* * *

A Pathfinder supporter in Caneyville, Kentucky, wrote Pathfinder recently to volunteer his time to set up Pathfinder book tables at area campuses, flea markets, and local events, remembering the favorable response to similar efforts several years ago. He has decided to relaunch Pathfinder sales in Kentucky and sent in his first order for a wide range of Pathfinder titles.

The Miami Pathfinder bookstore had

excellent sales exceeding \$1,000 in both October and November. Three new readers joined the Pathfinder Readers Club. Supporters set up several campus and street book tables and participated in the Miami International Bookfair where they sold \$600 worth of books. Sales at the renovated storefront bookstore averaged \$350 a month during the two months.

* * *

New orders for Pathfinder titles that will be required reading in college courses include *Cuba for Beginners* from the University of Illinois in Chicago; *Women and the Cuban Revolution* from the University of Texas at El Paso; *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Spain* from Hillsdale College in Hillsdale, Michigan; *The History of the Russian Revolution* from the Allegheny County Community College in Pittsburgh; and *Socialism and Man in Cuba* from Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts.

* * *

Pathfinder sales representatives in Britain sold over 500 books and dozens of pamphlets in recent sales trips to Scotland and France. Fifty-seven copies of *Nelson Mandela Speaks* and 23 copies of *The Truth about Yugoslavia* were sold in Scotland. Other big sellers there were titles on women's liberation, including 20 copies of *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women*. In France Pathfinder representatives linked up with volunteers from Paris. Bookstores in Paris bought Pathfinder books in English, Spanish, and French, including 18 copies of *Nelson Mandela Speaks*, 13 copies of *The Truth about Yugoslavia*, and 10 copies of *To Speak the Truth*.

Ottawa bows to Washington, okays NAFTA

Working people must reject 'Canada First' framework of debate on trade pact

BY STEVE PENNER

MONTREAL — After having failed to win a single one of the changes it had insisted were needed in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the Liberal government of Jean Chrétien bowed to pressure by Washington and announced December 2 that it will implement the accord with the governments of the United States and Mexico. Ottawa's announcement cleared the last hurdle before the trade pact takes effect January 1.

Thomas d'Aquino, president of the Business Council on National Issues, welcomed Ottawa's decisions

NEWS ANALYSIS

as signaling the newly elected government's "determination to make Canada an aggressive player in the North American and Latin American markets."

Bill Blaikie, trade critic of the New Democratic Party (NDP), a social democratic party with links to the unions, asserted that "the great sucking sound predicted by [U.S. billionaire] Ross Perot as a result of NAFTA . . . was rivaled by the great swallowing sound of Jean Chrétien as he ate all the promises the Liberals made on NAFTA during the recent election." Perot, a right-wing politician, railed against Mexico in public appearances leading up to the approval of NAFTA by the U.S. Congress November 17.

During parliamentary elections in Canada October 25 the Liberals argued that they could win more trade concessions from Washington than the previous Conservative government. They sought the establishment of a new mechanism for resolving the rising trade disputes between Canada and the United States, new rules on what they considered unfair trading practices, recognition of Ottawa's right to cut oil and natural gas exports to the United States in the event of an energy shortage, and the right to refuse to export water in bulk to the United States and Mexico.

Washington, however, did not accept any of Chrétien's proposals. Instead, the three governments could only agree that they would continue negotiations over the next two years on the "unfair trade" issues raised by Ottawa. They also released a brief joint statement pointing out that NAFTA does not require any country to export water.

In a last-ditch move to save face, Chrétien issued a unilateral declaration that his gov-



Protest by brewery workers in Canada in 1988 against U.S.-Canada Free Trade Agreement. Protectionism of union officials divides working people.

ernment will "take any measures that it deems necessary" to control the export of oil and gas from Canada.

Despite the rejection of all of the Liberal government's demands for changes in the trade pact, the *Toronto Star*, the main newspaper in the country that had opposed NAFTA, argued that while the agreement was not "as much as we would like [it] was probably all that was attainable."

The capitalist rulers in Canada never questioned the basic objective of NAFTA — to create a North American trading bloc that can strengthen the hand of the ruling rich against their competitors internationally and to deepen the penetration of Mexico by U.S. and Canadian capital. The Liberals had merely sought some protection from the trade battles between Washington and Ottawa.

NAFTA does not introduce substantial changes on trading practices between Canada and the United States. It follows on the footsteps of the Free Trade Agreement enacted by the two governments in 1989. Since then, however, the trade conflicts between U.S. and Canadian capitalists have risen sharply. These disputes include bickering over and punitive tariffs on steel, auto, lumber, wheat, and pork exports.

A small imperialist power

These brawls are a reflection of the growing trade rivalries among the world's capitalist rulers in the middle of an economic depression.

Ottawa had no choice but to agree to

NAFTA, despite Washington's rejection of its demands. Canada is a small imperialist power with a domestic market of only 27 million people. Not only are its rulers highly dependent on international trade, more than 75 percent of which is with the United States, but they must try to win some of the trade battles with Washington to gain greater access to the U.S. market — by far the largest in the world.

Ottawa is caught in the cross fire between the major capitalist rivals in the United States, Japan, and Germany. There is no way it can stand aside from the trade wars among them. Because of Canada's proximity to the United States and its dependence on trade with its southern neighbor, Ottawa must ally itself with Washington in the world's trade conflicts, as well as most shooting wars, while trying to win whatever economic or political concessions from Washington it can.

While the Canadian ruling class is relatively weak compared to that of the United States, it rules one of the wealthiest imperialist countries. Canadian capitalist monopolies and banks, which are among the world's major transnational corporations, suck enormous wealth from the semicolonial world through either direct investment or loans.

The Canadian imperialists hope to be able to utilize NAFTA to further these aims. They plan to use it as a weapon to win more favorable terms of trade and investment from countries oppressed by imperialism, especially in Latin America and Asia. Recent headlines in the *Globe and Mail* have underlined this perspective: "Canada seeks trade deal in Asia," and "Liberals seek elbow room from U.S."

For these reasons, only a small minority of Canadian capitalists opposed NAFTA. These wealthy families sought to maintain or strengthen protectionist legislation for their industries — for example in garment, sectors of agriculture, and publishing.

Protectionist campaign

Some of the politicians of the Liberal Party, however, joined together with the NDP, trade union officials, and farm and other organizations in campaigning first against the U.S.-Canada Free Trade Agreement and then NAFTA.

This thoroughly chauvinist and protectionist campaign, led by the trade union bureaucracy, disarmed working people to confront the severe social and economic problems they face.

During the recent federal elections, the Canadian Auto Workers ran a full page declaration in their newspaper by NDP leader Audrey McLaughlin advancing the main arguments of the anti-NAFTA forces.

McLaughlin claimed that the 1989 Free Trade Agreement had "been a disaster for working people" resulting in "staggering job losses" reaching nearly 20 percent of industrial employment. "NAFTA would make things even worse," she said. It adds Mexico to the trading bloc, "dramatically increasing the pressures on Canadian workers to save their jobs at the expense of hard-won wages and working conditions." Not only do Mexican workers earn well under \$2.00 an hour, many of them work in highly competitive, modern industries, the NDP leader warned.

The claim by McLaughlin and other anti-NAFTA campaigners that mass unemployment and plant shutdowns are the result of the U.S.-Canada trade pact, of a "made-in-Canada recession" is totally false. The accelerating trade conflicts between the capitalist powers are the inevitable result of two decades of declining profit rates and the current world depression, not the cause of the economic downturn.

Claiming otherwise misdirects working people from confronting unemployment, the assault on social programs, and other problems, which are products of the capitalist system itself.

Worst of all, the protectionist campaign against NAFTA pits working people in Canada against those in Mexico and the United States in defense of "our" jobs, "our" industries "our" country, and "our" government.

No common Canadian interests

But there are no common Canadian interests. We live in a capitalist society where the overwhelming majority sell their labor power and are exploited to fatten the profits of a tiny handful of billionaires. The government, whether run by the Liberals or Conservatives, serves the interests of the capitalist families, not those of working people.

By accepting the common "Canada First" framework of both the pro- and anti-NAFTA forces, working people become more susceptible to the arguments of capitalist politicians who try to scapegoat workers in other countries, immigrants, Japan, Jews, or others as being somehow responsible for the economic crisis.

There are big stakes in whether or not the labor movement rejects this chauvinist framework.

Instead of echoing the arguments of trade union bureaucrats or government officials who present "American" or "Mexican" workers as competitors, working people should seek solidarity with fellow toilers — in Quebec and across Canada as well as the United States, Mexico, and elsewhere — who can be allies in charting a course to rid the world of capitalism and its horrors of unemployment, racism, and war.



Canadian prime minister Jean Chrétien

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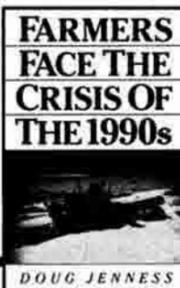
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Miners approve new contract, end strike

Continued from front page

tract contains expanded language granting this demand. The BCOA was unable to force miners to buckle on the issue.

At the same time, the new agreement registers some erosion of the union's strength. On important questions like establishing a seven-day workweek, health-care benefits, and a longer workday, the companies made some headway.

In the 1988 contract BCOA companies agreed that three out of every five jobs at any newly opened BCOA mine would go to laid-off union members from that company.

Before the ink was dry, the companies began violating this provision of the contract. They would open up a new mine under a different name, claiming the new operation had no relation to the BCOA company, even though it was owned by the same people. Miners termed this double-breasting.

Massive job losses resulted as operators squeezed more productivity from miners in order to shore up profits. Faced with a shrinking number of union-organized jobs, as the coal operators shifted more production to their nonunion outfits, many union members considered that the question of whether there would be a mine workers' union was at stake.

The coal operators did not want to abide by the provisions in the 1988 contract, claiming this interfered with their "right" to hire as they so choose.

In the new contract the BCOA agreed that 60 percent of jobs at any new mines opened up by the parent company of BCOA signatories will go to laid-off union miners or working miners who choose to transfer to the new facility. One of the three union members must have worked in that job classification and all must have the ability to step in and perform the job. A labor-management committee is supposed to enforce this.

The UMWA strike began May 10. Union officials decided on a selective strike, calling out miners against certain companies. About two-thirds of UMWA members covered by terms of the contract did not strike.

Many working miners contributed generously to strike solidarity funds. A number of striking locals took initiatives to participate in solidarity tours to tell the truth about the miners' fight and ask for support from other unions. Wherever miners traveled, they found a warm welcome from other workers they spoke to. The UMWA also won some important union-organizing victories in Kentucky and West Virginia during the strike. But the strike never became the cause of the entire labor movement.

In addition, strikers faced unrelenting pressure from the coal bosses, who started up production at some struck mines, organized gun thugs to provoke and attack strikers, and collaborated with the cops in framing eight West Virginia strikers on conspiracy charges in a shooting death.

The new contract expires Aug. 1, 1998, and includes provisions that could radically alter the conditions of work and benefits UMWA members have established in decades of struggle.

The contract includes a new section entitled "UMWA-BCOA Labor Management Positive Change Process (LMPCP)," which provides that at least 10 percent of each signatory's operations LMPCP committees will be established.

For the first time in a UMWA contract, local union officers are charged with working together with mine management to make the mine more competitive by attempting to reduce the number of job classifications and moving toward alternative shift schedules and 24-hour continuous production.

How this will work in practice remains to be seen. "My experience with cooperation is that there is none," said UMWA member David Yard from Freeman United's Crown II mine near Virden, Illinois. "The companies' idea of cooperation is workers' submission," he explained.

Maurice Moorleggen, a member of UMWA Local 2295 at Monterey No. 2 mine, said, "I would have bigger concerns if the contract had attacked our safety rights or not



Militant/Mary Zins

Miners at UMWA Local 2295 meeting in Illinois reading a copy of the agreement

included the job security provisions.

"I think this contract is innovative in a lot of ways and addresses some of the concerns I have," he continued. "The coal industry has always been autocratic in terms of how they run the mines. I like the LMPCP committees. This sets up a little workplace democracy, in my opinion."

The contract also gives the company the right to establish on a mine-by-mine basis a reduction in the number of job classifications and to assign employees to different jobs without regard to seniority, if a majority of the workers affected vote for the changes.

UMWA members have long fought against 24-hour production as a safety measure so that needed "dead work" can be done to ensure the safe operation of the mine. Mandatory overtime after eight hours has also been opposed because it decreases a miner's alertness. The 1993 contract now allows the coal companies to mine coal on Sundays and with partial shifts.

Companies can now institute an "alternative work schedule" at individual mines. The contract says that overall employment at the mine must be increased if the company institutes such a plan.

The company can institute a modified week-day schedule with workers on 10-hour days

Monday through Thursday or Tuesday through Friday for 40 hours' straight-time pay.

They can also set up a "weekend/holiday schedule." Those miners on the weekend shift will work 10 hours on Friday or Monday and 12 hours on Saturday and Sunday, receiving 50 hours' pay.

The employer can choose an "alternative work schedule" plan of its own if the local union votes to adopt it.

While this restructuring may increase employment at a particular mine site, it will reduce jobs and safety overall in the coal industry.

Furthermore, allowing union locals to decide schedules on a mine-by-mine basis can be used to undermine the unity of the union nationally. The companies will use it to try to increase competition and pit miners in one facility against those in another.

Randy Phelps is president of UMWA Local 1148 at Peabody Holding Co.'s Randolph preparation plant and pit No. 6 facilities here. "We fought for the 8-hour workday with John L. Lewis," he said. "To work 10 or 12 hours a day goes against all that. It seems to me that if you want to increase jobs in the coal industry, we should fight for a 6-hour day, not go to 10-hour shifts."

The pact provides that companies establish a "preferred provider list" that will function like a health maintenance organization. Each working miner receives a \$1,000 annual lump sum payment to cover his or her first \$1,000 in medical payments. Miners can keep the portion of this sum they don't use for health coverage, a provision that tends to encourage workers to think twice before seeing the doctor. If a miner chooses to go outside the preferred list, except in emergency situations, the copayments increase substantially.

"It is the best contract we could have gotten, based on the strength of the union at this time," said Joe Stanley, president of UMWA Local 93 at the newly organized Marrowbone mine in southern West Virginia. "To get stronger, the union must now take on an aggressive organizing effort. . . . For our people, they are much better off than they were before they had the union. Now we have the confidence to say 'This is ours and you can't take this away.'"

Results of Russia elections concern Washington

Continued from front page

In Tartarstan, the main autonomous republic in the heart of Russia, less than 10 percent of the population voted.

"No matter who wins, we won't live better," commented Lubov Demyanova, a 36-year-old chemical worker as she cast her ballot outside St. Petersburg. "We'll only live worse."

Many of those voting for Zhirinovskiy cast their ballots as a protest against the austerity policies of Yeltsin's regime, which has led to the plummeting of the living standards of the vast majority of working people in Russia. According to the *Washington Post*, as many as 45 percent of the population now lives below the official poverty line. Inflation continues to rise at a 20 percent rate each month.

Zhirinovskiy backs capitalist market reforms and a strong presidency as embodied in the new constitution. However, his party's economic platform calls for limiting privatization to small or medium-sized businesses, maintaining state ownership of land and state control of industry, and for an end to all forms of "speculative trading."

A major theme of his campaign was an ultranationalist appeal to reestablish the Russian empire. Zhirinovskiy called for reannexing the Baltic republics and expanding Russia's borders to the Mediterranean Sea and the Indian Ocean. He's even demanded the return of Alaska, Finland, Poland, and other territories once under the rule of Russian czars.

His campaign program promised to raise living standards by 100 percent within six months by halting all aid to former Soviet republics, ending conversion of military plants to other uses, and establishing martial-law-style courts to liquidate "all 5,000 crime gangs on Russian territory." He scapegoated oppressed national minorities, calling for the purging of non-Russians inside Russia's borders.

As a former Soviet army officer, Zhirinovskiy attracted a considerable following in the military. He opposed the breakup

of the former Soviet Union and sided with organizers of the 1991 coup against former Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev. While helping to lead demonstrations against the Yeltsin government, he backed the Russian president's use of force to disband parliament last October.

According to the Associated Press, Zhirinovskiy has called himself a national socialist and blamed Jews for starting the two world wars. He backs a reorientation of Russia's foreign policy based on developing stronger ties with Germany, India, Iraq, and Syria. Zhirinovskiy ran for president in 1991 against Yeltsin winning 6.2 million votes — 7.8 percent of those cast.

Commenting on Zhirinovskiy's strong showing, Vyacheslav Kostikov, Yeltsin's spokesman, said that many parts of the Liberal Democratic Party's program "corresponds to the social aspect of the President's policies — that is the social policy of the state, patriotism, making Russia great."

After the vote Zhirinovskiy made clear that he was willing to form a government to serve under Yeltsin or to take up two or three ministerial posts within a coalition.

The new constitution document empowers the president to name the prime minister and cabinet, issue decrees, and dissolve parliament if it fails to approve three of his choices for prime minister. To win passage, at least 50 percent of Russia's registered voters had to cast a ballot. Then a majority had to approve the document. The constitution ended up passing with the vote of about 32 percent of the electorate.

"Mr. Yeltsin's Constitution received solid support, though low voter turnout makes the result less than a ringing endorsement," stated an editorial in the December 14 *New York Times*. "Russia's parliamentary elections . . . need not be a calamity," continued the *Times* editors. "It is important not to exaggerate the strength of the opposition. A new Constitution is in place. Mr. Yeltsin is in place."

"Maybe a strong presidency in Russia

isn't such a bad thing after all," said the *Wall Street Journal*, in a December 14 editorial. The *Journal* claimed that the election was an example of how "Russia is building a democracy" for the first time since "before the revolution in 1917." The *Journal's* editors described Zhirinovskiy as representing "the politics of vehemence and clarity" who may turn out "not to be a bad foil for the Yeltsinites."

Commenting on the Russian election, U.S. president Bill Clinton pointed to the huge problems the imperialist powers continue to face in their attempts to reinstate capitalism in Russia. "This vote sends a signal about how difficult it is to convert . . . to a market economy at a time of global recession," he said, "when the ability of any other nation or group of nations to give a big infusion of capital to provide temporary security is not there."

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GATT brawl

Continued from front page

that of France, the world's second largest agricultural exporter — will have to reduce the volume of subsidized exports by 21 percent over six years, instead of in a shorter time period. Paris rapidly moved to pass the costs to its EC partners.

Exposing the myth that GATT is about free trade, one negotiator remarked, "Trying to reach this agreement is rather like reading goats' entrails."

Many U.S. exporters, such as heavy equipment operator Caterpillar, will benefit from a lowering of tariffs in Europe. Meanwhile, the U.S. government will retain its trade weapons, such as antidumping laws. The French government is pressing the EC to adopt its own such laws, which it calls achieving "nuclear balance."

Washington's inability to successfully force its demands in other fields is a result of intensified competition between the rival powers as the world economic depression shows no signs of abating.

U.S. officials opposed EC government subsidies of the Airbus consortium. Wolfgang Piller, president of the Federation of German Aviation, bellowed that "the European aircraft industry must not be sacrificed as a pawn while the Americans are allowed to continue to provide unlimited support for their aerospace industry through indirect subsidies."

The most contentious dispute involved U.S. objections to restrictions on the television and film industries imposed in Europe. Hollywood capitalists rake in \$4 billion from Europe annually.

Paris said it was defending "French culture." Belgian foreign minister Willy Claes got into the act, saying that "the defense of our civilization is at stake." The chauvinist tide rose on both sides of the Atlantic. Jack Valenti, head of the Motion Picture Association of America, said, "If you equate Europe's game shows and talks shows with Molière and Racine, then that's about culture. But the culture issue is a transparent cloak, and I want to disrobe Europe on this."

Both the French Communist Party and the ultraright National Front, headed by Jean-Marie Le Pen, actively opposed the GATT deal. Le Pen's group said it "means more unemployment for the French." At a rally in front of a McDonald's, National Front demonstrators attacked a restaurant window and denounced "American imperialism."

Washington landed blows to its rivals by using the higher productivity and lower wages, relative to its competitors, that the U.S. bosses have achieved through assaulting the working class in the United States. By one estimate, the biggest companies have eliminated 4 million jobs since 1980. This restructuring continues. In the third quarter, U.S. productivity jumped 4.3 percent, the biggest increase in six years. The report was issued shortly after Xerox Corp. announced it will slash more than 10,000 jobs — 10 percent of its workforce.

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Naval base worker wins victory

Continued from front page

OSC investigation. "Upset with the content of his political views, Mr. Chee's employer [the Federal Government] referred his case to the U.S. Office of Special Counsel."

Workers react with enthusiasm

Workers at the Alameda Naval Aviation Depot reacted enthusiastically to the news that the government backed down.

Charles Turner, an aircraft electrical worker, said, "It feels good to see someone stand up and fight. Not enough people do that." A Chinese worker who learned about Chee's case in the Chinese-language *Sing Tao Daily* observed, "The government had to drop the case; it would have cost them more had they kept on. They knew you would stand up and fight them."

One contract worker commented, "The government doesn't represent us anymore. Its good to see you back them off."

The OSC investigation was the most recent part of a year-and-a-half campaign of harassment by the base management and Naval command to prevent Chee from expressing his political views on the job.

The aircraft machinist came under base authorities' scrutiny when he spoke out against the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq. Navy brass ordered the Military Police to detain Chee for carrying a flyer advertising a public meeting opposing the U.S. war in the Middle East.

The base management then cited him for violating a contraband list that banned the "circulation of political literature." The list lumped political literature among such items as drugs, weapons, photographic equipment, and drug paraphernalia as items not allowed on base.

Until then, Chee's union local was unaware of the existence of such a contraband list. Local union leaders filed an unfair labor practices grievance to block the use of the list against Chee and other workers.

When the unionist announced his decision to run for political office he publicly exposed these attempts to silence him. The Navy then called in the OSC to cite him for violations of the Hatch Act.

What made Chee's victory possible was his decision not to be intimidated by government threats. He fought back and won broad support from his coworkers, his union, and San Francisco Bay Area political rights activists. Chee's case received wide publicity, particularly in the Chinese media.

Pleased with the news of Chee's victory, IAM Local 1584 officials invited him to attend an Executive Board meeting to explain the victory. He will also report the government's decision in his case to the local's next membership meeting. The union is planning to continue the fight against the use of the contraband list.

At a recent party celebrating Chee's victory, the unionist made a toast thanking those who aided his fight.

"We stalled an attempt by the government to fire me and to take away my retirement and other benefits," he said. "They tried to intimidate me and, in turn, intimidate other federal workers for thinking and acting politically. We were able to discuss the important issues facing working people today. It's not only that we stood up and fought, but we stood up and fought with through the union."

20,000 Quebec construction workers march

Continued from Page 16

fordable for working people.

"That's baloney!" said a worker from Trois Rivières on the march. "If our wages are lowered, then the contractors will pocket the same profit by raising the price of land. They don't give a damn about the house buyer or the illegal contracting!"

The government used similar arguments in 1988 when it deregulated the home renovation sector of the construction industry. Thirty thousand jobs were stripped of union protection at that time. Since then, wages have been cut in half or more. An estimated 80 percent of work in this sector is now done on the black market.

Bill 142 will also modify the rules governing who can work and bid on contracts in the construction industry in Quebec. Current regulations prohibit companies from bidding on contracts unless they are registered in the province and maintain offices here.

Regulations also exclude out-of-province workers unless they follow a months-long procedure of acquiring a permit card.

These rules are part of sharpening conflicts between the government of Quebec and those in the neighboring Canadian provinces of Ontario and New Brunswick. They have also been a source of conflict and division between workers in the provinces affected.

Union officials support government restrictions on the right of workers in one province to work in another. This stance fosters divisions among working people across Canada and hampers the ability of construction and other workers to defend themselves from company and government attacks. The new law proposes allowing companies from outside the province to bid on residential contracts in the eight-units-or-less sector. Since the bill proposes to eliminate the requirement of work permit cards in the same sector, workers from outside the province will have the same access to job sites.

In reality, few companies from outside the province will bid on such jobs because of the high cost of bringing in management or supervisory personnel.

The Ontario government imposed retalia-

Despite recent reforms in the Hatch Act made by Congress that allow workers to participate in some election activity off the job, the Hatch Act remains a weapon in the hands of the government to selectively victimize outspoken workers among the millions of government employees.

The Hatch Act

The act was passed in 1939 as part of a series of antidemocratic measures designed to curtail workers' rights as Washington prepared to enter World War II. Among these were the Foreign Agents Registration Act and the notorious Smith Act, which allowed the government to prosecute workers for their ideas.

It is no irony that the Hatch Act was used against Chee, an outspoken opponent of U.S. imperialist interventions abroad. The socialist explained to his supporters that today, as in the 1930s, "a war drive is on, stemming from the growing economic crisis and attacks on our rights and our livelihoods."

The November 23 OSC letter to Chee attempted to diminish the fact that the government decided not to prosecute him, by asserting he was guilty of violating the Hatch Act. The letter threatened that if Chee were to run for public office again, the OSC would prosecute him.

The aircraft mechanic told his supporters that he and Handsher are drafting a formal reply to the OSC letter rejecting the assertion that Chee was in violation of the Hatch Act in any way. He plans to widely publicize the victory in his case. A news conference is scheduled and supporters are organizing a victory rally.

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quarter profits 3.4 percent by reducing coin giveaways and trimming such comps as free meals and rooms for higher rollers.

The just society — James Singletary, a Los Angeles resident who is Black, was jailed by cops who

decided he was a wanted child molester. Singletary, an epileptic, was held in a solitary cell so cold that he had to wrap toilet paper around his arms to cope with the chill. After four days, the cops conceded they had the wrong person and released him. Now he's trying to scrape up \$140 to get back his car, which the cops impounded at the time of his arrest.

Isn't it risk that justifies profit? — An association of privatized Russian banks called a one-day general strike demanding that the government provide police protection to banking officials. In the past year, more than 30 have been shot. A

somewhat murky news report said most of the assassinations "stemmed from financial conflicts."

Block that Pennsylvania free trade pact! — In Indiana County, an hour from Pittsburgh, the *Indiana Gazette* ran a full page ad emblazoned: "Let's Cut Foreign Imports." It urged readers to cope with steep unemployment by not doing their holiday shopping in Pittsburgh and other outside areas and, instead, to think "INDIANA COUNTY FIRST."

Isn't purple close to red? — "Barney is teaching kids we must accept everyone as they are —

whether they're homosexuals or lesbians. He teaches alternative families. And the program makes a purple dinosaur the hero." — Radio minister Joseph Chambers. For a donation, he'll send a booklet exposing the children's show character. Ask for, "Barney, the Purple Messiah."

The title seems timely — From the book, *Briefcase Poetry*: "I'm an entrepreneur/Why do I feel like a gunslinger/or a buffalo hunter/or a dinosaur/Here, on what was the unfettered frontier, of free enterprise." It's titled, "That Sinking Feeling."

Sports, Inc. — With hopes

dashed for a National Football League team locating there, St. Louis is stuck with a partially completed stadium and the need to refund advance ticket money. Companies and well-heeled fans who paid for luxury boxes and club seats will have their money back in 10 days. Ordinary fans who paid \$25 deposits on season tickets? They'll get it back "as soon as possible."

'Tis the season — Merry Marxmas, a revolutionary new year, and our quarterly reminder. When feasible, please send Great Society clippings to: Pathfinder Bookstore, 2546 W. Pico Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90006. Fax: (213) 380-1268.

Rightist Lyndon LaRouche will be freed on parole

BY GREG ROSENBERG

American fascist Lyndon LaRouche will be paroled on January 26 after serving 5 years of a 15-year sentence in federal prison. LaRouche is already planning a 1996 presidential campaign.

LaRouche and half a dozen supporters were convicted of fraud and income tax evasion in 1988. The United States Parole Commission did not explain the reasons for its decision, which was announced November 30.

Since his conviction, LaRouche has maintained his innocence, charging a federal government conspiracy to silence him and his supporters, grouped around the *New Federalist* newspaper.

The announcement followed a September parole hearing. LaRouche has served the shortest possible time for the conviction, most of it at a federal prison in Rochester, Minnesota. He ran as a candidate for U.S. Congress and president while in prison.

LaRouche covers up the key antagonism under capitalism — between workers and bosses — and instead utilizes radical demagoguery, to push an "alliance" of industrial capitalists, farmers, and workers to take on the big banks. In particular, his appeal is directed to demoralized farmers and small businesspeople.

His outfits, under various names, have a long history of violent physical assaults on unions, Black rights fighters, socialists, and others in the working-class movement.

In 1973, LaRouche's incarnation, then called the National Caucus of Labor Committees, which did not renounce its Marxist pretensions until the late 1970s, launched "Operation Mop-Up." This was a series of violent thug attacks against meetings and individual members of the Socialist Workers Party, Communist Party, and Congress

of African People, a Newark, New Jersey-based Black rights organization. In the course of these assaults with pipes, clubs, and other weapons, a number of people were seriously injured and hospitalized. Anticomunist rhetoric accompanied this hooliganism.

In 1986, a later LaRouche outfit, the National Democratic Policy Committee (NDPC), waged a reactionary campaign against NBC-TV. As part of this, a LaRouche goon physically assaulted NBC talk show host Phil Donahue in New York's LaGuardia Airport.

At a headquarters in Leesburg, Virginia, the NDPC operates a 172-acre complex with a publishing company, printing plant, and what it describes as an intelligence-gathering operation. It has a heavy armed guard. LaRouche boasts that if anyone tries to break into the place "there will be many people dead or mutilated within as short an interval as sixty seconds of fire."

Biographical information on LaRouche published in the 1970s by his own organization at that time indicated that he had been a member of the Communist Party for a short



Lyndon LaRouche has served 5 years of a 15-year sentence in federal prison for fraud and income tax evasion.

while, which he denied later. LaRouche joined the Socialist Workers Party and was a member from the 1950s until the mid-1960s. LaRouche claimed in a *New York Times* interview later that he remained a member of the SWP only because an FBI agent "wanted me to work for them [the FBI] under cover" and "inform for them."

LaRouche propaganda operates on a con-

spiracy axis. An oft-repeated claim is that drug dealers, terrorists, Communists, and big bankers have ganged up to create today's economic crisis.

Jew-hatred also figures prominently in his schemes. The *New Federalist* blames the current coal strike by members of the United Mine Workers of America on the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), an organization which claims to speak in the interests of Jewish civil rights. "The union-busting, cheap labor policy which prompted the strike can be traced to the influence of ADL gangster Edgar Bronfman," the paper writes. "Bronfman, whose family made its money by smuggling rot gut liquor into the U.S. during Prohibition, and by massive drug-money laundering of the type which has helped ruin the U.S. economy," is responsible.

LaRouche candidates participate in elections around the country, often running as Democrats. In recent years, the organization has made new forays into Latin America, attending meetings of political organizations in a number of countries.

On November 29, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a lower court ruling giving LaRouche federal matching funds for his 1992 election campaign. LaRouche's lawyer claimed the campaign might be eligible to receive up to \$500,000.

25 AND 50 YEARS AGO



Friday, Dec. 13, began like many recent days at [San Francisco] State. The Tactical Squad attacked student picket lines scattering and arresting students.

It was a tense day on campus. The trustees had rejected meeting with the American Federation of Teachers, AFT local 1352, and the teachers had set 2:00 p.m. as a strike deadline. Although the teachers had been slow in organizing their strike, once they joined us they would bring the tremendous force of a union strike in a union town.

The AFT scheduled a rally for noon, the first legal rally since President Hayakawa had declared a state of emergency on campus two weeks previously. Just as students gathered for the rally a voice came over the administration's loudspeaker, saying, "This is your acting president." The more than 3,000 students scattered through the quad began booing.

Hayakawa announced that he had revised the calendar for the year and the "Christmas vacation" would begin a week early. His reason was that the San Francisco public schools, including the junior college, closed on the 13th and he was afraid that these students might come out to State the following week. His decision represented a victory for the student strikers and their faculty supporters who were demanding the school be shut down.

For the fourth time in six weeks the power of the students and faculty forced the official closure of the campus. The rally, which became a victory rally, reaffirmed the decision to strike.



December 25, 1943

President Roosevelt has been compelled to intervene personally in the railroad wage negotiations in a last minute effort to head off the general railroad strike scheduled to begin Dec. 30. All his elaborate boards and arbitration machinery, set up to stymie the wage demands of the railroad workers, have completely broken down and are discredited. Roosevelt is now forced to assume direct responsibility for the raw deal he is trying to put over.

A successful strike or even a strike threat resulting in substantial wage gains will deal another powerful blow to Roosevelt's fast-waning prestige with labor and to his increasingly discredited war labor relations machinery.

So far as the railroad workers are concerned, their sentiments are clearly revealed in the announcement of the strike vote of the 350,000 operating employees of the Brotherhoods — 97.7% for strike. Although the actual vote of the 15 non-operating unions, representing 1,100,000, which include the lowest paid workers, has not been disclosed, it is announced that they also have voted overwhelmingly for a strike. The non-operating union officials have now set Dec. 30 as the strike date.

There is a great deal of government pressure on the railroad workers. They are hamstrung by a leadership that never knew the meaning of the word, fight. And they must face the strike-breaking barrage of all those elements in the labor movement, like the Stalinists, who have already launched a campaign of vituperation and slander against the railroad workers similar to their strike-breaking efforts during the coal strikes.

L.A. judge gives maximum sentence to youth convicted in Denny trial

BY HARRY RING

LOS ANGELES — As expected, Judge John Ouderkirk imposed a maximum sentence, totaling 10 years, on Damian Wil-

liams, the Black youth who was convicted of throwing a brick at truck driver Reginald Denny.

Under California law, Williams should be eligible for release in less than four years, including credit for the 19 months he has already been held under \$580,000 bail.

Williams had been charged with premeditated attempted murder and aggravated mayhem, charges that carry life sentences. But the jury refused to convict him on these counts.

Instead, it found him guilty of simple mayhem, which permits a maximum term of eight years. He was also convicted on four assault counts, each of which carries a maximum six-month sentence.

Denny was badly beaten during attacks on passing motorists, which occurred in one area of the Black community during the antipolice riot touched off in April 1992 by the clearing of the four cops charged in the beating of Rodney King.

Certainly, the beating of Denny and the others was unjustified. Neither of the two defendants denied they were at the scene during the beating of the truck driver. But, equally certain, Williams and codefendant Henry Watson, who was released on probation in a plea bargain, were victims of a racist double standard of justice. This is summed up in the fact that the two cops finally convicted in the brutalization of King received minimum 30-month sentences.

FROM PATHFINDER

TO SEE THE DAWN Baku, 1920
First Congress of the Peoples of the East

To See the Dawn

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

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Victory against the Hatch Act

The victory does not belong to Milton Chee alone. Everyone who values democratic rights should celebrate the government's failure to prosecute the San Francisco Bay Area aircraft mechanic for violation of the Hatch Act. This victory gives every working person or youth fighting for a decent contract, or to defend abortion rights, or against the U.S. trade embargo of Cuba a little more space to struggle.

The Hatch Act denies basic democratic rights to a layer of working people — those employed by the federal government. Among a host of restrictions, it forbids government workers from running for office in partisan elections — that is, elections where candidates are identified by political party. Workers are also told they cannot engage in political activity while on duty or in any government office.

The law is used by the government to victimize workers whose ideas and activities it disagrees with. Chee is a member of the Socialist Workers Party who used his campaign for San Francisco Board of Supervisors to advance the struggles of working people around the world. To the bosses this is more dangerous than the drugs, weapons, and other material on their "contraband" list.

The U.S. Office of Special Counsel did not hand Chee this victory. They were forced to back down by the united stand that Chee, his coworkers, their union, and many others in San Francisco and across the country took against the government's and Navy's attempt to victimize him, regardless of whether they agreed or not with Chee's socialist perspective. Every one of these fighters has helped earn this victory.

The OSC decision comes at a time when the govern-

ment, for its own reasons, has felt pressured to relax some of the most onerous of the Hatch Act restrictions. Workers, for example, can now campaign for candidates in partisan elections during their off-duty hours.

But the government has not backed off completely. The OSC claims that Chee did violate the Hatch Act and it stands by its repressive regulations. They say that if Chee "should again" break the law, they would consider his actions "knowing and willful."

Then OSC officials make some truly outrageous claims. The Hatch Act allows government workers to run for office in nonpartisan elections. But, according to the OSC, the election for Board of Supervisors — under California election law a nonpartisan election — was really partisan. Why? Because the Socialist Workers Campaign Committee endorsed Chee's campaign.

These attacks cannot be allowed to go unanswered. The labor movement and all defenders of democratic rights should join with Chee in widely publicizing the victory against the government and demanding the Hatch Act be repealed. The fact that Chee won broad support and was able to back down the government demonstrates that there is space within the working class to discuss and debate politics. Working people need to continue to make use of that space — the way Chee did with his election campaign. At the same time, defenders of democratic rights should demand the OSC end its harassment against Chee and all other workers who want to take part in political discussion and action.

The chill of censorship

Trucks carrying newspapers are stopped at the Canadian border. Every bundle is searched. And issues containing an article on a murder trial, which a Canadian judge banned from publication, are seized. Border cops arrest Canadian residents carrying copies of the *Buffalo News* from U.S. towns. U.S. and Canadian news agencies collaborate in blacking out the broadcast of television shows on the case.

The events surrounding the Homolka-Teale case in Ontario and the court order banning press reports on trial testimony and evidence are an abrupt reminder of the reactionary nature of censorship.

In this case, the judge claims he wanted to ensure the defendant a fair trial with impartial jurors. But even Teale's lawyer opposed the ban and joined protests calling for its removal.

The widespread flouting of the court ban by thousands of Canadian residents shows that Ottawa won't have an easy time making this outrageous restriction on press freedom stick.

Censorship laws come wrapped in various packages. They are presented as anti-hate literature laws, anti-pornography laws, laws against slandering the state, or anti-blasphemy laws.

Censorship is also the issue in the Salman Rushdie affair. The author was sentenced to death by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini for the crime of writing a book deemed "blasphemous" by the late Iranian religious leader. The British rulers used the Rushdie case to strengthen their own anti-

blasphemy laws and measures against immigrants.

Clinton's intervention into the Rushdie case shows him to be no defender of democratic rights. He leaped to explain he did not necessarily "agree with the attacks on Islam in the book Mr. Rushdie wrote" and said he hoped he wouldn't be "misunderstood."

Anti-blasphemy laws were not designed to, nor do they, protect people who are religious or guarantee the right to espouse any beliefs one might choose.

Working people should be dead opposed to any form of censorship.

As the only revolutionary class in the modern epoch, the working class is the one that needs the truth exposed to the light of day. This includes the truth about the imperialist wars waged by Washington and its allies.

The truth is that censorship in any form is never even-handed. The main victims of censorship and other anti-democratic measures are always those fighting against oppression and exploitation. A censorship law used once against a fascist or to ban pornographic material will be used a hundredfold against trade unionists, fighters for Black and women's rights, and opponents of Washington's foreign policy.

The labor movement in the United States, Canada, and around the world should demand an end to the threats against Rushdie and demand the Canadian government drop its reactionary press bans, book and newspaper confiscations, and censorship laws.

Capitalism in Russia? Not soon.

The Russian elections illustrate the huge problems the imperialist powers have in reestablishing capitalism in Russia. They face the extremely difficult task of creating capitalism where no capitalist class exists. To succeed in this endeavor, they must take on and defeat the Russian working class in battle.

Washington has staked its policy on backing Yeltsin to the hilt. When the Russian president sent tanks to crush the parliamentary opposition last October, the U.S. rulers hailed Yeltsin's move as a courageous act in defense of democracy. The Clinton administration hoped that this election would provide Yeltsin with a working majority in parliament to continue advancing a program of austerity measures and capitalist market "shock therapy." But results of the vote turned out otherwise.

None of the 13 parties running in the elections offered a road forward for working people. All of them represented the interests of various wings of the privileged bureaucratic caste that has ruled over Russian working people for decades.

Vladimir Zhironovsky, who won the largest share of the vote, simply reflects some of the crassest and most reactionary forces to arise out of this bureaucratic ruling layer, which has always based itself on promoting Great Russian chauvinism and carrying out anti-working-class policies.

Immediately following the election, Zhironovsky made it clear that he was willing to join a coalition government with Yeltsin. The Russian president, for his part, embraced Zhironovsky's reactionary pronouncements. Many of them fit in quite well with his own social policies of "making

Russia great," stated Yeltsin's chief spokesman.

The imperialist powers find themselves suffering through the effects of a world economic depression. This means, as Clinton reiterated, that there will be no big infusions of capital coming into Russia, unlike the mushrooming capitalist investment in parts of China.

The *Wall Street Journal* hails passage of the constitution, which sets up a strong presidency, as a triumph for democracy. They lie when they argue that this is "the first real election" since before the 1917 revolution.

Russian working people carried out one of the most democratic and liberating acts of this century when, in alliance with the peasant masses, they overturned the power of the czar, the local capitalists, and their imperialist backers earlier this century. They succeeded in forming a workers and peasants government and opening the road to the building of socialism.

It was the rise of a counterrevolutionary bureaucratic layer led by Joseph Stalin in the 1920s that usurped political power from the Russian toilers and in time succeeded in driving working people out of politics altogether.

As this bureaucratic caste, under the impact of the worldwide crisis of capitalism, weakens and splits apart, working people in Russia will increasingly find themselves thrust into struggles in defense of their rights. Through these experiences they will find their way back into politics, ending their decades-long isolation from working-class struggles around the world. And they will forge a new leadership capable of charting a revolutionary road forward.

Did U.S. embargo cause economic crisis in Cuba?

In his letter on the facing page, reader Stansfield Smith questions the statement, in an article I wrote in the December 6 *Militant*, that the current economic crisis in Cuba is primarily the result of policies followed there for many years and that the 33-year-long U.S. embargo and the collapse of trade with the Soviet bloc are not the cause of the crisis but rather intensify it.

Workers World newspaper, he points out, argues that all of Cuba's difficulties are due to "external factors beyond its control." That contention is false. If it was true, there would be nothing Cuban workers and farmers could do about it.

DISCUSSION WITH OUR READERS

As several *Militant* articles and issue no. 8 of *New Internationalist* magazine titled *Che Guevara, Cuba, and the Road to Socialism* have explained, Cuba's revolutionary leadership itself has stated that serious political and economic errors during the 1970s and early 1980s weakened the revolution. Reliance on capitalist economic methods modeled on those of the Stalinist regime in the Soviet Union had strengthened middle-class layers of administrators and technocrats and had demobilized and demoralized working people.

In 1986 the leadership of the Cuban Communist Party launched the rectification process. This was a political reorientation that sought to reverse the corrosive consequences of the previous policies. The heart of rectification was the revival of voluntary social labor, which helped advance communist consciousness among Cuba's working people. Hundreds of thousands voluntarily joined a movement of work brigades that built child-care centers, clinics, housing, and addressed other basic social needs that bureaucrats had ignored.

Measures were taken against corrupt officials in the state and party apparatuses. The government moved to raise the minimum wages and living standards of the lowest-paid workers. Early on, steps were taken to bring more workers, more Blacks, more women, and more youth into the Communist Party's leadership. This accompanied the internationalist experiences of tens of thousands of Cubans who, even before rectification, volunteered to aid fellow working people abroad from Angola to Grenada.

Working people running society

It was Ernesto Che Guevara who in the early years of the revolution most consistently explained the need to lead growing layers of working people in voluntary labor and other efforts to take more control of the running of society. This, he stressed, is the only way workers can transform their political consciousness and build socialism. As Mary-Alice Waters points out in her pamphlet *Che Guevara and the Fight for Socialism Today*, Che's ideas are not only valid for "the best of times;" they are just as important today.

Guevara argued for launching a fight for food self-sufficiency to help overcome the imperialist legacy of dependency. He advocated an affirmative action policy in economic relations between industrialized workers' states like the Soviet Union and less developed ones like Cuba. Instead, food self-sufficiency was shelved in the 1970s as Cuba adopted economic planning priorities borrowed from the Soviet Union. The "international socialist division of labor" dictated by the Soviet and Eastern European regimes relegated Cuba to the role of exporting sugar, citrus fruit, and nickel while importing most food and industrial products.

In the face of 35 years of unrelenting imperialist efforts to strangle the revolution, Cuba won some important breathing space thanks to the strength of the revolution itself as well as trade and aid from the Soviet Union and revolutionary victories abroad. But the Cuban leadership needed to redeem this time and space by charting a political course that increasingly strengthened the working class. It needed to organize agriculture and industry to decrease dependence on the Soviet bloc, diversify agriculture, and move toward food self-sufficiency. These were the stakes in the early political battles that Guevara helped lead and in the rectification process, which Cuban president Fidel Castro explained in many speeches in the late 1980s.

When the inevitable crisis shattered the Stalinist regimes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union — the result of decades of anti-working-class policies — Cuba's economy was immediately affected. The resulting shortages of fuel and food in Cuba grew more rapidly than the initial steps toward self-sufficiency. This is what the Cuban people are now fighting to overcome.

For those here seeking to broaden public opposition to Washington's aggressive policies against Cuba — including the inhuman embargo — and to win fresh forces to defend the Cuban revolution, it is important to accurately understand the challenges as well as the opportunities facing the people of that country. Just as the main causes of the crisis are not to be found elsewhere, the decisive answer to these challenges is to be found in Cuba — in the revolutionary capacities working people there have demonstrated for more than three decades.

— MARTÍN KOPPEL

St. Louis garment workers beat concession drive

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 as a way 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.

Garment workers at Biltwell Clothing Co. in St. Louis defeated concession demands and ratified a new contract December 7. The

shoved a worker to keep her off the elevator.

When police arrived in response to a call from the injured worker, union members shut down their machines and gathered in the cafeteria outside the manager's office. Chants of "What do we want? — Respect! When do we want it? — Now!" filled the shop floor as the cops interviewed the manager. As a result of this protest, the manager was arrested, booked, and held in jail all day. He was released by a judge at an arraignment hearing the same day.

The day after the rallies, Biltwell officials contacted the union negotiating committee to set a time for serious talks. Two weeks later the contract was ratified. It included



Militant/Becky Ellis

Workers from Biltwell Manufacturing picket in St. Louis in November. ACTWU local also held two rallies in plant November 23 that forced company back from concession demands.

ON THE PICKET LINE

victory came after a two-month struggle during which members of Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU) Local 1104 began to organize and participate in activities that pressured the company by showing that the workforce could be unified and would take steps to affect production.

The company demanded a three-year wage freeze and the introduction of forced overtime.

Some 250 workers crowded into the downstairs lobby of the building that houses the Biltwell manufacturing plant in the early morning of November 23. For 40 minutes, the lobby rang and echoed with songs, chants, and laughter. "Contract Now!" and "No contract, no peace!" were the most popular slogans.

ACTWU members from the United States, Mexico, and Vietnam raised hands and applauded in turn to identify themselves as part of the action. By the time the rally ended and everybody got up to the sixth-floor production area in small groups on the elevator, the shift starting times had been delayed by at least a half hour and in some cases more than an hour.

Soon after going back to their jobs, unionists shut down the plant a second time in response to an assault by the plant manager, who

wage, pension, and health-care benefit increases. □

Flight attendants fight American Air firings

In the wake of a five-day strike by 21,000 flight attendants that successfully halted the operation of American Airlines, workers are facing what they describe as a campaign of harassment and intimidation by the company. Dozens of union members were suspended while the company investigated charges made for strike-related activity and 15 have been fired.

Nine of the dismissed workers are from San Juan, Puerto Rico. They include the vice-chair of the San Juan council of the Association of Professional Flight Attendants.

Pedro Rivera, chairman of the San Juan council, noted the effectiveness of the strike and said now "the company wants to get back at us." The fired attendants are all accused of the same incident — allegedly harassing someone trying to cross the picket line — but one of the accused was not even present at the time.

Rivera noted that while cops were present during the entire strike, there is no police report of the incident, which supposedly included a car be-

ing lifted off the ground. The company is using the word of one person to go after union members who were active in the strike.

Since flight attendants returned to work the company has stepped up the use of security guards. "They are coming out of our nose," said Rivera. They are stationed inside operations, in the halls, at the doors of the elevators, and watching union members as they walk through the terminals conducting union business. "One gets on the bus with you, and then there are more in the parking lot when you get off," he added. □

London airport skycaps demand wage increase

Skycap porters at London's Heathrow Airport, one of the world's largest international airports, have not received the wage levels and working conditions won by airline workers in past decades.

The Skycap porters at Heathrow Airport were sacked after a 24-hour strike for union recognition in early September. They began to organize as soon as they received their spe-

cially delivered notices at home. The skycaps mounted pickets at carparks used by airport workers and handed out leaflets to protest this injustice and to ask for support. The determination of these workers, some of the worst paid at the airport, was not expected by their employers. Valet Services Ltd. Within days management backed down and all the strikers were re-instated.

Although management agreed to hold discussions with the Transport and General Workers Union, recognition has not been won yet. Valet Services Ltd. continues to pay the Skycap porters from £3.56 to £3.86 (US\$5.34 to US\$5.79) an hour, and expects them to work until 2:00 a.m. without overtime rates, without shift payments, and with only one statutory holiday per year — Christmas Day. □

USX, Steelworkers union reach tentative contract

USX Corp. and top officials of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) approved a tentative five-and-a-half-year contract November 23. The agreement would cover 15,000 workers at facilities in Ala-

bama, Indiana, Pennsylvania, and Minnesota.

Members of the USWA who work at USX will vote on the agreement by mail ballot before the Feb. 1, 1994 expiration of the current contract.

The pact follows the pattern of agreements ratified at other big steel companies earlier this year.

Steelworkers at other companies approved six-year contracts with only one guaranteed wage increase of \$.50 in 1996. Yearly bonuses of about \$1,000 are supposed to take the place of wage increases and make up for rises in the cost of living.

The proposal includes a wage re-opener after three years in exchange for a no-strike clause, a union seat on the board of directors, and makes a claim of job security. □

The following people contributed to this week's column: David Sandor in St. Louis; Laura Garza, member USWA in Miami; Doreen Wepler, member Transport and General Workers Union in London; and Betsy Farley and Kay Sedam, members USWA Local 2122 in Birmingham, Alabama.

LETTERS

Fear of unions

Buried in the business section of the Nov. 12, 1993, *New York Times* was an article entitled "G.M. Gives Its Salaried Staff Raises." A sub-heading proclaimed, "Package Tries To Match Union Workers Deal."

Rather than being buried in the business section, such a story merits headlines. It is unique for top management to admit, as has been done in this instance, that wages to engineers and management were given to neutralize any attempt by the union to organize salaried workers.

With the large employers I have been associated with, a major objective was to constantly monitor wages and benefits of their organized employees and implement similar benefits for nonorganized personnel.

There are many young employees at all levels in organizations today who have strong antiunion bias and are not aware of the fact that it has been the threat of unions which has been the bottom line reason for most so-called enlightened personnel policies. Team Concept, Action Committee, etc., have their foundation based on the desire to keep a union-free work environment.

The best job insurance present elaborate "Human Relations Departments" have is the ever present threat of unions. Remove that threat and all manner of so-called enlight-

ened policies will evaporate. There is a great deal more that could be written about this but suffice it to say that for every benefit organized labor achieves by great struggle untold numbers of nonunion employees at all levels benefit. Witness the statement above by General Motors.

Walter G. Hooke
Shushan, New York

Cuba's economic crisis

Martin Koppel wrote in the December 6 *Militant* "... the fight against the [U.S.] embargo was all the more important because of the serious economic difficulties Cuba faces today. This crisis, precipitated by the collapse of Cuba's trade with former Soviet-bloc countries from 1989 on, is the result of policies followed for many years in Cuba. In the mid-1980s the Cuban leadership began to take steps toward reversing the course that many recognized was modeled on the policies of the Soviet leadership" (emphasis added).

Deirdre Griswold wrote in the December 2 issue of *Workers World*, "All the grave difficulties it [Cuba] is experiencing were generated not by faults within its socialist system, but by external factors beyond its control — first the U.S. blockade, made more dif-

icult by the decline of prices on the world market for Cuba's main exports, especially sugar; then the collapse of the Soviet bloc, which accounted for 85 percent of Cuba's trade; and finally extraordinarily harmful weather conditions in the last two years."

These two views are opposed to each other. Deirdre Griswold of the Workers World Party takes her analysis from Carlos Lage, Politburo member of the Cuban Communist Party in the November 10 *Granma*.

Both statements are true on different levels. You place the onus of responsibility on the Cuban leadership, while *Workers World* blames the enormous power of American big business. Of course any popular revolution of working people needs to be able to defend itself against the powerful forces still dominating the world, who are enemies of freedom for the workers and peasants. It needs to prepare itself for world depression and social turmoil, including the collapse of Stalinist governments, even the overthrow of other revolutionary governments. And naturally no government deserves to govern if it cannot cope with weather disasters.

Yet the *Militant* implies, in contrast to the views of Carlos Lage, that Cuba was heading towards a crisis, regardless of the U.S. em-



bargo, the collapse of its trading partners, regardless of weather disasters on its crops. Can you explain what you mean by this? By discounting Carlos Lage's view, the *Militant* also implies that the leadership of the Cuban revolution still does not grasp the cause of the crisis they are in.

Stansfield Smith
Chicago, Illinois

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on sub-

jects 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* 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.

Court imposes censorship in Canada

BY ROBERT SIMMS

TORONTO — Dozens of working people from Canada were arrested at the Niagara Falls and Buffalo-Fort Erie border crossing points November 28 and detained, in some cases for hours, for the crime of trying to bring copies of the *Buffalo News* into Canada.

The U.S. newspaper was deemed contraband material because it contained an article with details on the trial of Karla Homolka, convicted in St. Catharines, Ontario, last July of manslaughter in the slaying of two teenage women. Ontario judge Francis Kovacs had issued an order July 5 banning the press from publishing news with evidence or testimony presented at the trial.

Police arrested 61 people at the U.S.-Canadian border and confiscated 187 copies of the *News*. Police did not file charges against those

NEWS ANALYSIS

detained, however. The *Buffalo News* reported that more than 3,000 copies of its issue were snapped up at outlets close to the border.

Niagara regional police from Ontario were posted in the customs booths at the border to enforce the censorship ruling.

Homolka and her lawyers made a plea bargain deal over the kidnapping and murder of the two Ontario teenagers. Homolka was charged along with her husband Paul Teale for the crimes.

Details of the indictment and testimony were published in the *Washington Post* and republished in the *Detroit Free Press* and *Buffalo News*.

The U.S. television program *A Current Affair* ran two stories on the case earlier in November that were blanked out by Canadian cable companies running U.S. programs. The CNN program *Larry King Live* did a show on the case and audio portions of it were muted by the cable companies in Ontario. The U.S. television networks and local Buffalo, New York, stations have given their Canadian counterparts advance warning so they can be ready to blank out the programs. Other U.S. newspapers and *Newsweek* magazine have eliminated articles on the case in copies destined for Canada.

A retired police officer, Gordon Domm, in Guelph, Ontario, was arrested and charged with contempt of court for mailing out dozens of copies of the U.S. news articles.

Defiance of the ban

A debate on democratic rights erupted in Canada after the border arrests and the flood of banned U.S. television programs and U.S. newspaper articles in recent weeks. Working people in factories and offices have been discussing the issues of free speech, press freedom, and the right to open trials.

On the assembly line at the Chrysler plant in Brampton, Ontario, for example, individual workers in several parts of the plant, indignant at being told by a judge what they can and cannot read, went up and down the line distributing copies of the *Buffalo News* article.

Widespread opposition to the ban forced major dailies to acknowledge there was a problem with the government action. The *Toronto Globe and Mail* supported the ban. "Still," its editors wrote December 1, "when a law is so widely flouted, and forces the authorities to such lengths to enforce it, it is sometimes a signal that it was misconceived to begin with."

The censorship in this case is far reaching and is part of a trend of restrictions on democratic rights by the capitalist regime in Ottawa in a period of a worldwide economic depression.

Kovacs instituted the media ban on the evidence presented at the Homolka trial with the stated aim of ensuring Teale a fair trial with impartial jurors. The details of alleged sexual torture and murder are so grisly, said a *Globe and Mail* editorial, "that no one reading of the trial could ever again keep an open mind about the guilt or innocence of Paul Teale." The judge allowed



Supporters of court censorship in Ontario. Many workers have reacted angrily to the court order by distributing banned newspapers on assembly lines.

Canadian, but not U.S., journalists in the courtroom but forbade reporting anything other than the verdict and sentence.

Teale's lawyer actually opposed the ban when it was imposed. He has joined the protests calling for its removal.

In fact, the Ontario government and its judicial institutions — like their counterparts elsewhere — have little interest in the rights of people charged with crimes. The issue here is not guaranteeing a fair trial for Teale but a government assault on basic civil

liberties after the defendant's rights have already been trampled on by government authorities.

Teale was arrested last February on charges of sexual assault in connection with a series of Toronto-area rapes. But police immediately announced he was the chief suspect in the deaths of teenagers Kristen French and Leslie Mahaffy.

The police and big-business press together vamped on Teale's right to be presumed innocent. The Niagara Regional Police chief announced Teale would be charged with the murders many weeks before he was actually charged. The media ran a torrent of stories with anything that could back up the police allegations.

A CITY-television reporter, who was present at the trial, told the audience during a special program on the media ban that the government attorneys want the ban to defend an expected guilty verdict.

The restriction is meant not to protect Teale's rights but to defend the government from judicial appeals that charge he didn't get a fair trial.

The ban itself, and the reasons given for it, have only worked to bias potential jurors.

Right to an open trial

The right to an open trial was established only after centuries of struggle in order to limit the arbitrary actions by the governments of wealthy ruling classes. It remains an essential democratic right for the working class to uphold and defend using the power of collective action.

More unionists and other working-class fighters are being charged, tried, and framed

up as the class struggle sharpens. Closed trials successfully imposed on cases like that of the Yellowknife strikers, falsely charged by the police in the Northwest Territories of murder and sabotage charges, would prevent unions from effectively exposing government and cop frame-ups.

Even more serious is the widespread censorship of newspapers, television shows, and individuals. The sight of police and courts successfully muzzling the press and arresting scores of individuals for possession of daily newspapers is a dangerous precedent.

It is part of wider use by capitalist governments of repressive measures to stifle information and the free exchange of opinions and expression. These moves come at a time when social polarization is on the rise. They are linked to the massive censorship imposed on media covering the military actions of the United States and other imperialist powers, including Canada, during the Persian Gulf War.

In Canada, a fictional television program on sexual abuse of young boys by teachers at religious schools was banned from presentation for more than a year until after the trial of four men charged with similar offenses had ended. Customs officials routinely stop and destroy books alleged to be pornographic coming into Canada from the United States on the grounds that they are "obscene" according to Canadian law. When U.S. publisher Blue Moon Books, for example, tried to ship 30 copies of *The Man Sitting in the Corridor*, a novel by Marguerite Duras, to Trent University in Ontario this fall, the books were seized at the border. Never mind that Duras's love stories have been on sale in Canada for years.

Some women's groups have argued for widening the powers of capitalist governments to decide what can be publicly viewed or read in the mistaken belief that this somehow advances women's rights.

But the labor movement has every interest in opposing censorship and all restrictions of democratic rights. Any chiseling away at press freedom or free speech strengthens the hand of the capitalist rulers.

20,000 construction workers in Quebec march against gov't law attacking union

BY ROGER ANNIS

QUEBEC CITY, Quebec — More than 20,000 workers marched here December 6 to protest bill 142, a draconian law that proposes to remove 25,000 construction workers in Quebec from their industry-wide collective agreement. Wages and working conditions will rapidly deteriorate if they are stripped of union recognition.

"We're marching today for our future," said Francois Bédard at the march. "We can't let this law pass because we'll lose everything we have." Bédard is a heavy equipment operator in Trois Rivières.

Illegal strike actions protesting the bill began in late November and have halted work across the province. Virtually all construction sites were shut down the day of the march.

"The newspapers and radio talk about how well-paid we are, how we're privileged," Bédard explained. "Yes, we get a high wage, and we have to — look how few hours we work in a year!"

"And look at our conditions. We're outside, in rain, heat, or cold. We eat our lunches on the ground. Most house contractors don't even provide toilets on the job sites! You call that being privileged?"

This year Bédard worked 450 hours, the equivalent of 11 weeks, because of the depression conditions in the economy. Unemployment in the construction industry will reach 50 percent this winter.

In 1992, the average construction worker in Quebec worked only 750 hours, or 19 weeks. Economic conditions are even worse this year.

Under bill 142, jobs that involve building projects of eight residential units or less will be removed from the industry-wide negotiated agreement. Eighty-two percent of jobs in the construction industry are currently covered by a master contract.

The current agreement is due to expire December 14. The government has decreed its extension twice since last May.

Government officials claim the bill is needed to stop the spread of an illegal black market in house construction and renovation. More and more contractors are paying workers under the table to avoid paying taxes and benefits. These workers receive lower wages and no coverage for unemployment insurance, pension, vacations, and workers compensation.

Officials also say that by bringing down wage rates, the law will reduce the price of new houses by \$3,000 and make them more af-



Sebastien Lehouillier

Continued on Page 12 Unionists in December 6 protest in Quebec City