

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Kmart strikers return
to work stronger

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 58/NO. 46 DECEMBER 26, 1994

At summit, U.S. pushes to open Latin markets

Debate over Cuba permeates hemispheric trade meeting

BY MAUREEN COLETTA
AND MAGGIE MCCRAW

MIAMI — With great fanfare, the Clinton administration reached agreement at a meeting here with 33 other heads of state to begin negotiations on establishing a continent-wide free trade zone by the year 2005.

The White House-organized "Summit of the Americas" demonstratively excluded the Cuban government. Nonetheless, considerable debate and political activities around Cuba surrounded the conference and even came up within the summit itself.

The Miami gathering — built on the theme "Partnership for Development and Prosperity" — was not without other controversies either, as competing capitalist interests and even California's immigrant-bashing Proposition 187 occasionally broke through the celebratory atmosphere.

In his opening remarks President Bill Clinton declared, "The United States has never been in a stronger economic position to compete and win in the world. We're also taking bold steps to open new markets and to make the global economy work."

He drew the December 9-11 meeting to a close promising free trade from Alaska to Argentina. A document was signed by the assembled delegates pledging to create a Free Trade Area of the Americas.

Washington blocked attempts to formally discuss the issue of Cuba hoping to avoid the controversy it would surely



December 8 picket line in Miami to protest U.S. embargo against Cuba and that country's exclusion from hemispheric summit.

arouse. Right-wing Cuban-American forces were pushing for a condemnation of the Cuban government.

"I think it's unfortunate that Cuba is not on the agenda," said Rep. Lincoln Díaz-Balart of Florida. "It's the most serious issue still outstanding in the hemisphere."

While few heads of state publicly spoke out against Cuba's exclusion or raised opposition to Washington's economic embargo of the island, many are uncomfortable with the U.S. policy. In his closing remarks Clinton made a brief reference to

Cuba, saying it was the only country in the Americas "where democracy is still denied."

Mild criticism of Washington's exclusion was raised by some. "We discussed it. There was a division of opinion," said Canadian prime minister Jean Chrétien, who said he would have invited Cuban president Fidel Castro to the summit. "We believe normalization of relations with Cuba will bring about faster change there."

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Russian troops invade Chechnya

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Under orders of President Boris Yeltsin 40,000 Russian troops invaded Chechnya in the northern Caucasus region December 11. The military assault, launched under the guise of "protecting" civilians, is being met by resistance in the Chechen republic and neighboring areas. The military action, unpopular among many working people in Russia, has already provoked divisions among Moscow's top military brass and the country's ruling bureaucratic caste.

"Step by step, the Afghan experience is being repeated in Chechnya," said Gen. Alexander Lebed, who commanded Soviet forces during the Afghan war. "We risk getting involved in a war with the entire Moslem world. Individual guerrillas will indefinitely shoot at our tanks and kill our soldiers with single bullets."

Sergei Yushenkov, chairman of the Defense Committee in Parliament, called for the impeachment of Yeltsin and the resignation of other government officials including defense minister Pavel Grachev. Only fascist legislator Vladimir Zhirinovskiy gave unequivocal backing to the military assault.

The London *Financial Times* pointed out December 15, "There is little argument among politicians about whether Chechnya is anything other than an integral part of Russia which must be brought back into the fold; the differences emerge over how this can be best achieved."

The Yeltsin government aims to firmly establish its domination over Chechnya, an

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Young Socialists speak to Cuban workers, youth

BY LAURA GARZA

VILLA CLARA PROVINCE, Cuba — The odor of tobacco fills the air and we are straining to hear above the rhythmic pounding of machines churning out cigarettes. "These machines were made in 1917, and others were made in 1914," says one of the workers.

It is testimony to the determination and ingenuity of Cuban workers that they have kept them running, but breakdowns of the machinery have been one of the main headaches for the 536 workers at the factory in Ranchuelos, Villa Clara. Workers here gave a tour of the factory to two workers from the United States who are members of the Young Socialists.

Since December 5 the two socialists from the United States, Naomi Craine and Brian Taylor, have been on a three-week speaking tour hosted by Cuba's Union of Young Communists (UJC). The UJC has organized speaking engagements on campuses and in factories and other workplaces in Havana and Villa Clara provinces.

Craine, 24, was a textile worker in North Carolina before joining the writing staff of the *Militant*. Taylor, 21, is a railroad

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Washington debates how to slash Social Security — page 6



Government in Turkey sentences Kurdish legislators to 15 years

A court in Turkey declared eight Kurdish legislators guilty of aiding the outlawed Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) December 8. They were given jail sentences of between 3 and 15 years. Just before the sentences were announced the government dropped charges of treason, which carry the death penalty.

The Kurds are an oppressed minority in Turkey who have suffered fierce repression at the hands of the Ankara government. The PKK, which is carrying out an armed struggle, is branded as a "terrorist" group by the Turkish regime.

Ankara has launched a large-scale military campaign against the Kurds over the past few months, involving 300,000 government troops. Some 13,000 people have died in the past decade due to the government's war on the Kurds.

Israel, Jordan open embassies

For the first time an Israeli flag flew in Jordan December 11 as the two governments opened embassies in each other's country. The Jordanian regime is the second Middle Eastern government, after Egypt, to sign a treaty with Tel Aviv. Several hundred demonstrators gathered near the new Israeli embassy in Amman denouncing the event as "a black day" that represents "a departure from the nation's principles." Meanwhile, Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, as well as Palestine Liberation Organization chairman Yasser Arafat, accepted the Nobel Peace Prize in Norway. The *New York Times* reported, "On both sides, commentators said the absence of real peace made the Nobel ceremony premature."

Vietnam textile workers strike

More than 300 workers at a textile mill in Viet Tri City, Vietnam, walked off the job December 6 after a foreman beat a worker for leaving the plant early. Government officials reported that workers would be returning to their jobs after the company agreed to pay increases of 5 percent to 10 percent. The mill is owned by South Korea's third-largest textile maker.

"The strike reflects growing assertiveness among Vietnamese workers," reported the London *Financial Times*.



Leyla Zana, one of eight Kurdish members of the Turkish Parliament accused of backing the banned Kurdish Workers Party, delivers a final speech in her defense December 8. The Kurdish representatives were stripped of legislative immunity and sentenced to prison terms of between 3 and 15 years. Zana was given 15 years.

"Especially since a labour law was passed last summer explicitly protecting the right to strike." The official government newspaper in Vietnam reports 32 strikes occurred from January through October.

At least 300 die in China fire

At least 300 children and their teachers died in a fire that swept through a theater in Karamay, 1,600 miles northwest of Beijing, December 8. Officials refused to give details but according to the government-run Xinhua News Agency, a short circuit appears to have caused the deadly blaze. It was the third major fire in two weeks. There is mounting concern in China that hurried construction is resulting in dangerous buildings throughout the country. Some 1,300 people have been killed and nearly 3,000 injured in fires during the first nine months of this year.

China makes deal with Microsoft

Chinese officials have signed an agreement with software giant Microsoft to create a new standard for Chinese personal computer operating systems. The company

will create the standard by developing, in partnership with Chinese companies, a version of Microsoft's Windows operating system. Beijing had earlier refused to accept the Chinese version of Windows because the company had developed it in Taiwan.

Billionaires boom under Salinas

The outgoing president of Mexico, Carlos Salinas de Gortari, helped the rich get richer during his six-year term. During his regime at least 24 individuals or families landed on the list of the world's billionaires published by *Forbes* magazine. In 1991 Mexico had just two. Twelve of the 22 new billionaires represent the fortunes made as a result of a single privatization, that of the state-owned bank Banamex.

Amnesty ends for Salvadorans

The Clinton administration recently ended a temporary program that allowed 200,000 Salvadoran refugees to remain in the United States. Doris Meissner, commissioner of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), said the program was being discontinued because the human rights situation in El Salvador had "improved significantly" since a civil war there ended with a truce in 1992. The INS says deportations will be implemented in a "delayed and gradual" way over the next nine months. "All Salvadorans here should spend a peaceful Christmas with their children and not dread the coming year," said the Salvadoran envoy in Washington.

FMLN formally splits

Riven by bitter differences and factionalism that have increasingly come to the surface since it was defeated in elections earlier this year, the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) formally

split December 6. The breakup was announced by Joaquín Villalobos, a long-time leader who has moved swiftly to the right since the end of the war. "The FMLN was an instrument created to make war," he said. "The Front no longer has political viability as an electoral instrument and should pass into national history."

Washington spent billions of dollars during the 1980s to prop up the Salvadoran dictatorship.

Mandela calls U.S. aid 'peanuts'

South African president Nelson Mandela criticized the U.S. government's paltry aid program in a recent press conference. Calling the three-year \$600 million package "peanuts," Mandela said South Africa had received "very limited support indeed" from Washington.

"The president expects more from the United States," Parks Mankahlama, a spokesperson for Mandela, said. "Relative to the size of the U.S. economy, the aid program here is small." Tokyo has made the biggest pledge of aid to South Africa so far, \$1.3 billion over two years.

Plutonium danger across U.S.

The Department of Energy admitted that nuclear facilities in the United States have thousands of improperly stored containers of plutonium on site that are at risk of spilling their deadly contents. "Over all, the department's inventory of plutonium presents significant hazards to workers, the public and environment, and little progress has been made to aggressively address the problem," an Energy Department report said. The release cited the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory in California as having 282 containers of plutonium, of which eight are bulging because of "unanticipated conditions."

Judge overturns 'English only'

A federal appeals court in San Francisco struck down an Arizona law that ordered state employees to speak and write only in English while conducting government business. The statute, enacted into law after a state referendum in 1988, violates the First Amendment according to the judges. The effect of the law "is not only to restrict the rights of all state and local government servants," the ruling declared, "but also to severely impair the free-speech interests of a portion of the populace they serve."

There are 19 states with "English only" type laws. In June, the U.S. Supreme Court cleared the way for private employers to enforce English-only rules for their bilingual workers.

— PAUL MAILHOT

THE MILITANT

Defend Canada miner

The bosses in Canada are using the frame-up trial of Yellowknife gold miner Roger Warren to try to weaken the labor movement. They hope to intimidate all union fighters who stand up for their rights. The *'Militant'* presents the facts on this frame-up and explains what's at stake for the working-class movement. Don't miss a single issue!



Yellowknife miners strike in 1992

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European bosses' assault on social gains breeds political polarization, resistance

BY CATHARINA TIRSEN

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — The attempts by capitalist forces throughout Europe to catch up with the cost-cutting and downsizing measures of their competitors in the United States is breeding increased political polarization and some stirrings of resistance among the working class. This was the picture presented by Carl-Erik Isacson, a leader of the Communist League in Sweden, at a Militant Labor Forum here on the crisis in Europe.

"The attacks on working conditions in the United States over the last 15 years has made U.S. capitalists the masters of cheap production and allowed them to take market share from their competitors in Europe, as well as Japan," said Isacson. "Not only is this true in many aspects of manufacturing, but in agriculture as well where U.S. agribusiness is more productive and less subsidized than in Europe."

Trying to catch up

The capitalists in Germany, Sweden, France, and Italy are being forced to achieve quick results, faster even than in the United States. But among European countries, where unemployment is already at 10 percent, attempts to cut costs, lengthen the workday, and slash social expenditures will meet with some resistance, explained the Communist League leader.

Isacson had traveled to Germany when the metalworkers there took strike action in the spring of 1992. "Rather than allow the employers to cancel contracts promising wage parity between workers in eastern and western Germany, the unions forced the capitalists to back down," he related. "Unity grew between workers in these formerly separated parts of Germany."

Isacson also pointed to recent events in Italy to indicate the problems that European capitalists will encounter as they attempt to cut deeply into social programs. Workers in Italy staged the biggest strike in the past 20 years October 14, when 13 million stopped working for four hours to protest austerity measures by the Silvio Berlusconi government. Three and a half million workers marched in Rome, Milan, Turin, and other cities across the country on that day against the government, which is dominated by right-wing forces.

The unions followed up the strike with a mass demonstration in Rome November 12 that drew 1.5 million people. Some 45,000 students in Italy also demonstrated against education cuts recently.

"And now the unions in Germany are demanding a 6 percent wage raise — while inflation is at 3 percent," Isacson noted. "Except for a few recent years during the last recession, workers in Germany have been getting wage raises above inflation. But this year employers are threatening to cancel contracts, which are supposed to establish a 35-hour workweek."

The Communist League leader also pointed to the severe economic problems that plague all of eastern Europe, which add to the political and economic crises of the capitalist powers in western Europe. Throughout eastern Europe production has dropped dramatically. "Working people no longer believe that capitalism will solve the crises," noted Isacson. "Polls now show that a majority view privatization of state enterprises as legalized theft. Many government bodies are paralyzed by fear of a social explosion if they go forward with the austerity measures demanded by the international banks."

Some capitalists show desperation

"Workers in eastern Europe sense that the root of their problems are not inside their countries, but something being imposed on them from the outside. Fascist forces, such as Russian Parliament member Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, are gaining a following as they play on the insecurity of the middle class and the workers, and blame everything on a 'foreign conspiracy.'"

Some European capitalists have shown their political desperation as they sense that they are not making much headway against their U.S. rivals. Recently Peter

Wallenberg, the head of the biggest and most influential Swedish capitalist family went on a diatribe against all politicians. Impatient with the pace of action on the part of government bodies he proclaimed the "solutions" — take away social rights,

geois politics is more evident than anywhere else. The "historic compromise" of Christian Democrat, Socialist, and Communist parties that has ruled that country for decades was torn apart in recent years by corruption scandals and their inability

tus itself."

In contrast, Isacson pointed out, "It is going to take more time for working people to forge our alternative to the capitalists march toward fascism and war. But it will be easier than in the 1930s. For one thing Stalinism is so discredited and weakened that it can no longer claim to be the sole representative of the working class anymore. Nor can the social democracy portray their program as the road to socialism. All this means more space in the working class to practice politics, for workers to find their way to true communist politics. Strike movements in the future will be explosive and not as easily diverted."

European Union

One forum participant, referring to the vote in Sweden on joining the European Union, asked whether there was an alternative to moving in this direction.

Isacson pointed out that the capitalists in Sweden have no alternative to joining the European Union. "But Europe is not uniform and the collaboration through the European Union will not deepen. Stockholm is led by Washington in its foreign policy and will lean on their collaboration with the United States to try to play a bigger role in Europe."

"There will not be a common currency, security policy, foreign policy, or government among the European powers," Isacson projected. "The collaboration on currency has already collapsed. And the different countries of Europe are clashing over the former Yugoslavia — among themselves and increasingly with Washington. These capitalists also have different interests in the Middle East."

"European powers are primarily trying to broaden out as a customs union. Bonn is looking to its backyard in eastern and central Europe; Paris and other governments in southern Europe are looking to former colonies in North Africa; and Stockholm is looking to the Baltic countries. They all want their backyards to join in."

"The Communist League and the working class in Sweden do have an alternative. It begins with fighting to defend our class against the attacks of the rulers, by fighting for jobs for all through shortening the workweek with no cut in pay. Their Europe will be torn to pieces by unceasing capitalist competition and inevitable working-class resistance."

"The Europe of the workers — east and west — can take real shape in the form of working-class solidarity. Strike actions in the United States will win sympathy among workers in Europe as we try to fight for our own interests. And the resistance in Europe will strengthen workers in the United States."



Workers in Rome protest October 5 against government austerity plan. "Political and economic instability in Europe makes politicians extremely vulnerable," Isacson said.

make the unions accept drastic cuts, and in contrast to social democratic calls for more investments he urged dropping them because there is already too much industrial capacity.

Isacson pointed to the rise of rightist forces in a number of European countries growing out of the crisis of capitalism. In Austria, the Peoples Party and the Social Democrats faltered and received just better than 50 percent of the vote in recent elections. These two parties have ruled Austria since World War II. "Most notable," said Isacson, "is the fact that the Freedom Party of Austria led by Jörg Haider, took 22 percent of the vote. Haider spoke out against immigrants and attacked the corruption of the ruling parties. He spoke favorably of the labor policy of Adolf Hitler and talked of his support of former Austrian president Kurt Waldheim, who resigned after revelations of his Nazi officer past."

In Belgium rightist parties gained substantially in recent elections. One of these rightist alliances got 25 percent of the vote in the industrial center Antwerp and are now the biggest party locally.

In Italy the rightward march of bour-

to provide solutions to the economic crisis. Gianfranco Fini, who leads the fascist Italian Social Movement (MSI), got a spot in the government when his electoral alliance garnered 12 percent of the vote. The MSI proudly proclaims it represents the historical continuity with the movement led by fascist dictator Benito Mussolini.

"The political and economic instability in Europe makes politicians extremely vulnerable," Isacson pointed out. "Right-wing currents use the situation to make demagogic appeals for 'clean government.' They play on sexual fears and insecurities to campaign against decadence as the problem in society, with the solution being 'better morals.' National Alliance leader Fini says his alliance has support because no one in his party has been charged with corruption."

"Right now bourgeois commentators want to downplay the threat of right-wing extremism. They point to the example of the Republican Party in Germany, which received only 2 percent of the vote in the past elections. But for the working class the danger is real. Right-wing currents will grow first, since they are already present in bourgeois politics and in the state appara-

Paris drops threat to pull out of Bosnia

BY SARA LOBMAN

One week after London and Paris threatened to withdraw their troops from Bosnia, the French government reversed itself. On December 12, French defense minister François Léotard said Paris would keep its forces in the region and in fact was considering expanding their mission.

Pulling out the almost 23,000 French and British troops, which are in Bosnia under the banner of the United Nations, "would undermine the credibility of international organizations, namely the United Nations and NATO," Léotard said at a Pentagon news conference following a meeting with U.S. defense secretary William Perry. He also said Paris was concerned that increased fighting in the region would result in more refugees.

The French government plan includes establishing a "protected ground corridor" between the Adriatic Sea and the Bosnian capital of Sarajevo, redeployment of troops to the area around the Sarajevo airport, and shifting troops in other parts of Bosnia to more defensible positions.

Perry, who also spoke at the conference, welcomed the French statement and pro-

posed the UN force be expanded, equipped with heavier arms, and allowed to engage in military operations more freely.

London immediately criticized Léotard's proposal, although officials did not reject it out of hand. "These ideas have to be analyzed and assessed," British defense minister Malcolm Rifkin huffed. "You don't just announce an idea."

The day after Léotard's announcement, NATO secretary-general Willy Claes rejected assertions by UN officials that the NATO alliance was afraid to carry out air strikes against the Bosnia Serbs. Claes accused his counterparts in the United Nations of holding back from air attacks because they feared attacks on their troops.

Imperialists face dilemma

The latest flip-flops are just the most recent indication of the dilemma confronting the imperialist rulers in the former Yugoslavia. The war in Bosnia, now entering its third winter, has brought into sharp relief the diverging interests of the capitalist powers in Washington, Bonn, London, and Paris, as well as those of the ruling bureaucratic caste in Moscow.

"NATO's failure to settle the war in Bosnia has put the worse strains on the alliance in decades," a recent article in the *Wall Street Journal* noted.

The Clinton administration is facing conflicting opinions among capitalist politicians at home over what policy will best defend Washington's imperial interests in the Balkans and assert its weight in Europe. Washington recently shifted away from its long-standing policy of calling on UN troops to bomb the positions of rightist Bosnian Serb forces led by Radovan Karadzic. Immediately following the British and French government statement calling for the withdrawal of troops, Washington announced it would provide up to 25,000 soldiers to help in the evacuation.

The U.S., British, French, German, and Russian governments are pushing for a partition plan that would give the Sarajevo regime 51 percent of Bosnia, while leaving Karadzic's forces with 49 percent — far less than they control.

In the past few weeks, Karadzic's forces have captured hundreds of UN troops. On December 12 they killed one Bangladeshi soldier and wounded four.

Canada youth build protest against budget cuts

This column is written and edited by the Young Socialists, an international organization of young workers, students, and other youth fighting for socialism. For more information about the YS or to join, write: Young Socialists, P.O. Box 2396, New York, NY 10009, or call (212) 475-6482.

BY SARAH GOODACRE

VANCOUVER, British Columbia — Preparations on campuses to participate in a national day of action in Canada against proposed federal government cutbacks of social programs are well under way here.

Student representatives from several colleges and universities in the Vancouver area are organizing to have as many high schools, colleges, and universities as possible walk out on January 25 and converge in a massive noontime demonstration in the center of the city. Student representatives are meeting with unions and teaching staff at the various institutions to build support.

At a meeting of student representatives, it was reported that youth from five high schools in the city of Victoria are planning to walk out January 25. A number of students at the meeting spoke on the importance of protesting all the cuts, not just the \$2 billion or so targeted for education.

"As a single mother going to the university, I'm just as concerned about the cuts in welfare and unemployment insurance as I am about education," stated Lee-Anne Clark, president of the Simon Fraser University (SFU) Students Association. She and other students stressed the importance of winning support and participation from the unions and other working people.

Some 1,000 delegates attending the British Columbia Federation of Labour 39th Convention adopted a resolution endorsing the January 25 day of protests, calling on its affiliates representing several hundred thousand workers to participate in the actions. The resolution notes that "major cuts to higher education funding

will result in denying working people and their children access to higher education."

Student associations at the University of British Columbia and Langara college have each allocated \$10,000 to publicize the campaign against the cuts. The chairperson of the Langara Students Union reported on plans to hold a referendum at Langara on the proposed January 25 national student strike, "so that students really feel it's their decision to strike and they will actually come out. A few days before the strike we are planning a 'Rock against the Cuts' concert."

A representative of Native students attending Capilano College in North Vancouver reported that they are finding it more difficult to get education funding. "Many have to resort to the government loan program like other students, so we are definitely concerned about these cuts," he pointed out.

One SFU student who had previously attended school in Quebec noted that he had participated in a 1986 Quebec student strike against proposed hikes in tuition fees. "It's because of these militant actions by large numbers of students in Quebec that tuition fees there have remained considerably less than the rest of Canada," he stated. Under the proposed federal cuts to postsecondary education, even government officials assess that tuition fees will at least double from a present average of \$2,000 a year to \$4,000.

Sarah Goodacre is a student at SFU and member of the Young Socialists.

High school students set up socialist club in Salt Lake City

BY TAMI PETERSON

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah — The first meeting of the East High School Socialist Club was held December 8. Approximately 35 students came to a lunchtime meeting for a discussion about what we can do to mobilize in defense of immigrant rights and fight against racism, sexism, and attacks on workers and youth.

The club was started so that students can discuss what is happening in politics today and to go out and participate in different struggles taking place. Many students are learning about socialism for the first time.

The first meeting was heavily publicized by posting flyers in hallways and promoting it during the daily school announcements. Tami Peterson, a student at East High School and member of the Young Socialists, kicked off the discussion. She spoke about how youth can fight back against attacks by the ruling class and used the example of student walkouts in California to protest Proposition 187.

"There is racism, sexism, homelessness, and people getting murdered by the police in the streets every day," stated Peterson. "We have to look at why this is. We have to go to the very heart and center of the problem, which is capitalism."

When asked if she thinks ageism exists, Peterson responded, "Definitely. The capitalists love to scapegoat youth. They call us criminals while they exploit thousands and millions of workers and students every day."

Peterson invited those in attendance to come to a Militant Labor Forum December 10, and discuss the student protests against the anti-working-class Proposition 187 with Roger Calero, a YS member from Los Angeles. Two East High students and five other young people attended their first forum that Saturday.

"It makes me so angry that the government thinks it has the right to treat people as less than human just for being from another country," Joellyn Manville, a student from East High School, said after seeing the YS video on the high school walkouts in Los Angeles.

Manville also participated in a demonstration with members of the Young Socialists and others against Proposition 187 in Ogden, Utah, that morning, where about 50 people rallied and marched at the Federal Building.

"Socialism might be too limiting to those trying to succeed," said Andrew Haley, president of the Human Rights Club on campus. A discussion took place on what socialism is and the role of students and young people in the building of a better future and world.

The possibility of having a class series on the *Communist Manifesto* and other revolutionary literature was also brought up as a way for students to read and see for themselves what Karl Marx and Frederick Engels said and did.

Many of those in attendance commented that they were looking forward to their second meeting and wanted to participate in any upcoming political demonstrations.



Ottawa march against cutbacks on November 16.

Young Socialists \$16,000 Travel Fund

The Young Socialists are on an international campaign to defend the Cuban revolution, and sending YS representatives around the globe.

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Alton/		
Bloomington, IL	\$100	\$140
Atlanta	\$100	\$20
Birmingham, AL	\$500	\$25
Boston	\$400	\$170
Chicago	\$550	\$120
Cincinnati		\$50
Cleveland	\$400	
Des Moines	\$150	\$100
Detroit	\$200	\$20
Evansville, IN	\$50	
Edinboro, PA	\$50	
Greensboro, NC	\$75	\$15
Los Angeles	\$1,200	\$147
Maryland	\$50	
Miami	\$200	\$110
Morgantown, WV	\$150	\$100
Newark, NJ	\$400	\$209
New York	\$1,200	\$326
Philadelphia	\$800	
Pittsburgh	\$500	\$15
Salt Lake City, UT	\$600	
San Francisco	\$1,000	\$1,168
Seattle	\$700	\$125
St. Louis	\$25	\$25
Tampa Bay, FL	\$50	
Twin Cities, MN	\$1,000	\$195
Washington, D.C.	\$500	\$25
Yellow Springs, OH	\$100	
AUSTRALIA		
Sydney	\$505	\$270
CANADA		
Montreal	\$250	
Toronto	\$300	
ICELAND		
Reykjavik	\$250	\$180
SWEDEN		
Stockholm	\$250	\$120
TOTAL	\$12,605	\$3,675
SHOULD BE	\$16,000	

Toronto youth plan for brigade to Cuba

BY SARA LOBMAN

Young people in Toronto who are planning to join a January 6-20 international youth brigade to Cuba held a meeting recently to organize fund-raising activities and to discuss opportunities to report on the trip when they returned. "Everyone who had signed up for the trip came," Nojan Emad said. "But another young person we hadn't met before also came and signed up."

Since then an additional five people have added their names to the list. Some of the youth support the Cuban revolution, some are socialists, and some just want to see Cuba for themselves. Emad said. "No matter what we find, we'll report the truth," he added.

"The big challenge we have now," Emad continued, "is raising the money to help everyone go." The Toronto youth are mapping out fund-raising dinners, raffles, and asking for contributions from others who like the idea of youth seeing Cuba for themselves.

The Toronto brigade participants are approaching different groups for support. The York Federation of Students at York University, for example, signed a letter announcing the brigade. The federation, which is building a January 25 student strike against cuts in the education budget, is donating two bags of buttons condemning the cuts to be distributed to Cuban youth as an example of the struggles of youth in Canada.

Teyana Cowan, a high school student from Peekskill, New York, went to Washington, D.C., for the November 12 march against Washington's policies toward Cuba. "Everyone's got their own theories about Cuba," she said in a phone interview. "That's why I want to go and find out on my own." Cowan and two friends from school are trying to line up speaking engagements and honoraria at colleges and churches for when they return.

Brigade participants in New York have already lined up one speaking engagement

and a \$200 honorarium at New York University, reported Jack Willey, one of the brigade organizers.

Willey said dozens of young workers and students from Britain, Iceland, Canada, and across the United States will be on the brigade. Going as reporters for

different media, they will spend a week in the countryside and five days in Havana, meeting with Cuban youth and visiting the new agricultural markets and other places. "We hope to learn how Cuban youth are helping increase food production and defend the revolution," Willey said.

Students protest Proposition 187 from Philadelphia to San Francisco

BY BOB STANTON

PHILADELPHIA — Chanting "Hey hey, ho ho, 187 has got to go," 400 students from campuses in the region rallied here December 10 in opposition to California's Proposition 187, which bars undocumented immigrants from health-care, education, and other services. The action was part of a national day of protests against the anti-immigrant measure.

The rally was called by the newly formed Coalition Against Xenophobia, made up of some 30 organizations from three suburban campuses. It attracted students from many other schools as well. Speakers read messages from student organizations across the country. The statement adopted by many of these organizations read: "Recognizing that human dignity has no borders, we hereby join the growing international movement to resist xenophobia."

Speakers included Kevin Keenan, who opened the rally, Kyong Yoo from Young Koreans United, Brian Miller of the Young Socialists, and Rebecca Bennett, president of the Swarthmore African-American Student Society.

After the program, student leaders held an organizational meeting to coordinate future actions. They will meet again January 19.

Brian Miller and Joe Kleidon contributed to this article.

BY MILTON CHEE

SAN FRANCISCO — Under the slogan "Resist 187," 1,000 people demonstrated here December 12 against the recently adopted anti-immigrant proposition.

Leaflets building the action were distributed on campuses and in Latino neighborhoods.

A number of social service workers participated in the protest, including a contingent of health-care workers from Alameda County and a group of teachers. Under the new law, teachers and doctors are required to report those they suspect of being undocumented. Service Employees International Union Local 1000, Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1555, and the United Auto Workers local representing workers at the University of California at Berkeley took part.

Immigrant rights organizations, women's groups, and gay and lesbian rights groups participated as well.

In other protests around the country, 500 turned out in Princeton, New Jersey; 100 in Madison, Wisconsin; 200 in Amherst, Massachusetts; and 50 in Ogden, Utah, including a contingent of high school student from Salt Lake City. There were also rallies in Washington, D.C.; Tucson, Arizona; and Austin, Texas.

Meanwhile, on December 14, federal judge Mariana Pfaelzer blocked enforcement of most provisions of 187, a ruling that may tie it up in courts for a year.

Cubans detained in Panama rebel

BY GREG ROSENBERG

One thousand Cubans confined by the U.S. military at a detention camp in Panama fought their way to escape December 8. Some 220 U.S. military personnel were injured, 25 of them hospitalized. Nineteen Cubans were also sent to the hospital and two died. U.S. military authorities say the two drowned, although circumstances remain unclear.

It was the biggest outbreak since Washington began to detain the thousands of people leaving Cuba in an attempt to reach the United States.

More than 8,500 Cubans are incarcerated in four camps along the Panama Canal, in addition to 22,500 detained on Washington's naval base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba.

Scuffling broke out December 7 when 500 Cubans, angry over their continued detention and the wretched conditions of their confinement, began hurling rocks at U.S. troops. Some 200 Cubans commandeered a civilian food truck and broke through the gates of the compound, which is surrounded by barbed wire fences. They also shattered the windows of three military vehicles as U.S. troops sprayed them with tear gas.

The protesters demanded to speak to U.S. embassy officials. A half-hour melee ensued with U.S. army personnel, who reportedly persuaded the Cubans to return to the camp.

By the following morning, more than 1,000 Cubans had managed to escape. Washington called in 600 army reinforcements to capture them, and Army Rangers equipped with M-16 rifles patrolled the area. Subsequently, the number of U.S. troops assigned to the camps doubled, and they were issued shotguns, tear gas, and riot gear. U.S. authorities also cut off phone lines to prevent Cubans from contacting the outside world.

Growing problem for Washington

The detention of more than 30,000 Cubans at the Guantánamo Bay naval base and in Panama has become a growing political problem for the Clinton administration. Washington began sending detainees to the Panama camps September 6 in re-

sponse to a wave of Cuban "rafters" seeking U.S. shores.

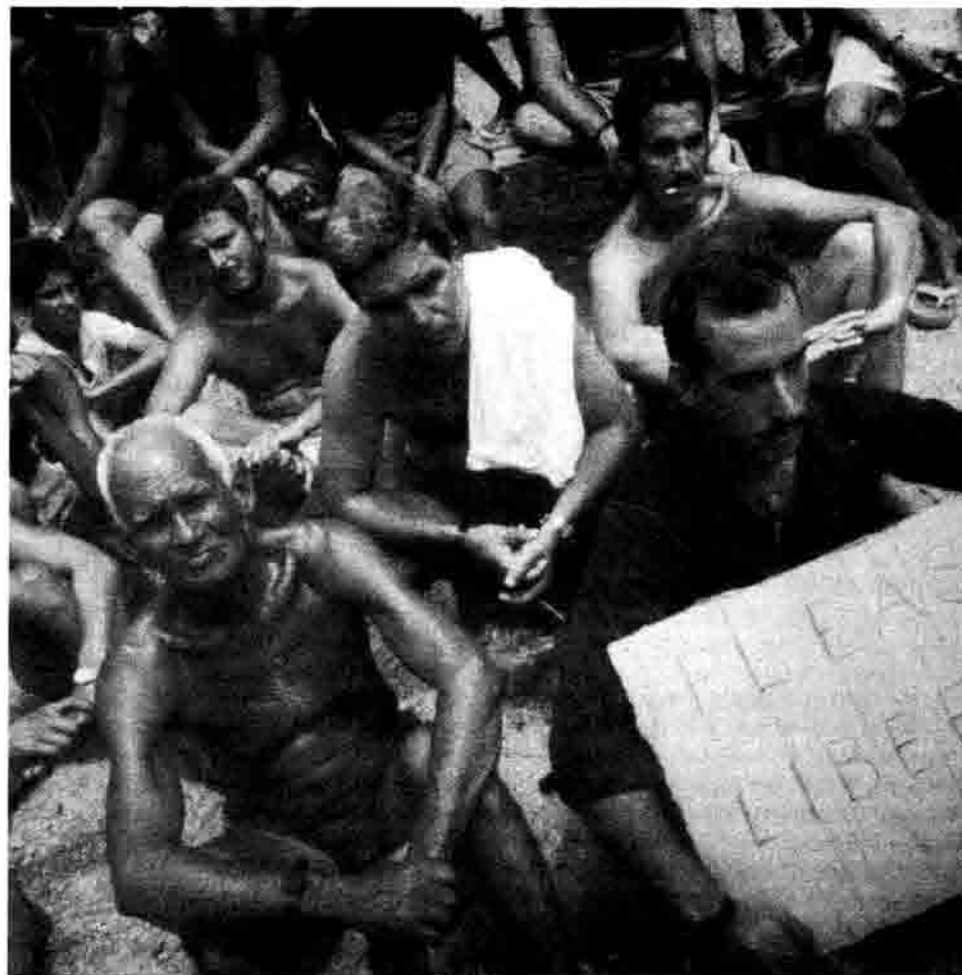
The detainees are increasingly angered over U.S. government statements that it might admit some Cubans on "humanitarian" grounds, while tens of thousands remain confined in miserable conditions. The camps in Panama were cut out of the tropical brush. Facilities are primitive and there is little recreation.

Some detainees from Guantánamo who were sent to Panama charged in late October that U.S. troops harassed and beat them, frequently resorting to lockups. One detainee told Panama City's *La Prensa*, "The Marines are worse than Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet's *carabineros*, beating us from all sides."

In the British colony of the Cayman Islands, 1,174 former rafters live in a tent city. Three hundred of them, mostly women and children, held a protest march December 1 in the capital, George Town. "How can you talk about development and human rights at the Summit of the Americas while 269 children, 9 elderly, and 13 chronically sick people are living in a camp on an island on the American continent?" demanded one protester.

Of the 1,000 Cubans at Guantánamo who have asked to be repatriated, only 203 have been allowed to go. Some 350 have managed to escape.

While admitting some Cubans to the United States, Washington is making



Cuban detainees at Guantánamo camp protest conditions and demand their release.

longer-range plans to keep many more at Guantánamo. Brig. Gen. Raymond Ayres said there are plans to install a sewage system and electricity and replace tents with plywood structures.

Meanwhile, the agreement by the Pana-

manian government to accept the Cubans for no more than six months expires in March. "We don't know what the Americans are going to do with these refugees, and I don't think the Americans know either," said one Panamanian official.

Clinton pushes to open Latin markets

Continued from front page

Argentine president Carlos Menem joined right-wing forces in Miami, making several anti-Cuba declarations to the media. He also spoke on December 8 to a right-wing rally of 2,000 sponsored by the Cuban American National Foundation in Coral Gables.

That same day, several groups organized a picket line in Miami protesting the U.S. embargo of Cuba and that government's exclusion from the conference.

A pro-embargo rally of 40,000, mostly

Cuban-Americans, was held December 10.

Speaking to reporters in Havana as the summit opened, Castro said he would have attended if invited, but that "our absence is a great honor because we are rebels, and that's not a summit for rebels." At an international solidarity conference held in Havana in late November, Castro put forward a different perspective for the Americas. "An uncompromising struggle against capitalism, against neoliberalism, against imperialism is necessary," Castro said.

By moving toward a Free Trade Area of the Americas pact, like the North American Free Trade Agreement and the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs, U.S. capitalists are trying to strengthen their hand against their rivals in Europe and Japan.

Following NAFTA and GATT

"If current trends continue, within just a decade, our hemisphere will be the biggest market in the world — more than 850 million consumers buying \$3 trillion worth of goods and services. These are remarkable, hopeful times," touted Clinton in his opening speech. He claimed that capitalist investments "are working wonders" in Latin America.

As U.S. investments in the region grew by 117 percent between 1985 and 1993, however, life for millions of working people in Latin America has worsened. Today, 46 percent of the region's 200 million people officially live in poverty compared to 27 percent in 1980.

The 1990s brought about a boon for capitalist investors in "emerging markets" as governments sold off state industries and natural resources to pay debts and bring in foreign capital.

Workers in Argentina have suffered massive layoffs with the privatization of state industries. Joblessness has increased by more than 30 percent since 1992, to 1.3 million unemployed.

Chile, which is to join Canada, Mexico, and the United States in the NAFTA agreement starting in 1995, has slashed state-owned enterprises from 500 to 50. In the past four years, U.S. profit rates on investment in Chile have been more than 40 percent.

Although silent on the floor of the summit, many heads of state voiced complaints to the media about unfair U.S. restrictions on their imports. Officials from Colombia and Ecuador objected to recent U.S. hikes in duties on roses. Venezuelan officials voiced criticism of restrictions on import of its oil into the United States. Argentine

business executives noted limited access to the leather, steel, beef, and lemon markets. And Caribbean heads of state complained they would be wiped out by bigger competitors without protective measures for some of their products.

Clinton hails invasion of Haiti

In the closing session of the summit Clinton praised the U.S. military for its invasion and ongoing occupation of Haiti. The U.S. president singled out President Jean-Bertrande Aristide of Haiti as embodying "our hemisphere's determination to uphold the sovereign rule of the people."

Aristide in turn thanked Washington for reinstalling him in office. He declared that the people of Haiti are extremely poor but thankful that U.S. troops arrived and reinstated "democracy."

Desperate for an influx of capital, Aristide implored the summit leaders to invest. "Haiti now has an important opportunity to welcome investment. We have brave people, courageous people. You can see here in Miami that Haitians are good workers," he said.

Mexican president Ernesto Zedillo had earlier threatened to ask the summit to condemn measures like Proposition 187, which would deny public education and other services to undocumented immigrants.

He was backed by the presidents of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua, countries where large numbers of people have emigrated to the United States. However, their final statements to the conference only vaguely referred to education as a right and the need for cultural diversity, with no condemnation of anti-immigrant measures.

In one of the several demonstrations held here to coincide with the summit, Amnesty International organized a human rights protest of 150 at the Torch of Friendship. March organizer Segun Shulz pointed to human rights abuses in Latin America but added that the U.S. government violates human rights too. He spoke about the detention of Haitian and Cuban refugees at the Guantánamo naval base. Hundreds of Cubans detained on U.S. bases in Panama rebelled during the summit, demanding to be freed and granted asylum in the United States.

Maureen Coletta is a member of International Association of Machinists (IAM) Local 1126, Maggie McCraw is a member of IAM Local 368.

Activists in Miami protest U.S. embargo against Cuba

BY ROLLANDE GIRARD

MIAMI — Opponents of the U.S. embargo against Cuba organized a picket line at Miami's Bicentennial Park December 8, to protest the blockade and the exclusion of Cuba from the hemispheric summit taking place here.

Called by the Alliance of Workers of the Cuban Community, Antonio Maceo Brigade, Miami Coalition to End the Embargo of Cuba, and other groups, the 75 demonstrators, mostly Cuban-Americans, chanted "Cuba yes, blockade no," "Freedom for the rafters," and "U.S. Out of Guantánamo!"

A press release issued before the picket line explained, "We have called this demonstration to make public our profound concern because Cuba has not been invited to participate in the Summit of the Americas. We view this decision taken by the Clinton administration as a continuance of an almost thirty-six-year-old U.S. policy of aggression against the people of Cuba."

A handful of right-wing Cuban-American members of the National Liberation Front held a counterprotest.

Prior to the action the picket line had received wide publicity in the English- and Spanish-language editions of the *Miami Herald*. Many local, national, and international journalists who were in Miami reporting on the summit covered the anti-embargo protest.

At the end of the demonstration Andrés Gómez, leader of the Antonio Maceo Brigade, addressed the crowd. "We demonstrated to them, the city and the international community, that here we have people who are ready to defend their prin-

ciples," he said. "I'm convinced that there are thousands of Cubans who are in favor of lifting the embargo but they don't dare to express it."

Several dozen protesters attended an open house at the Pathfinder bookstore after the picket line. Ernie Mailhot, who had recently returned from the World Meeting in Solidarity with Cuba, held in Havana, explained the significance of the conference.

"The Summit of the Americas, on the other hand, was organized against the interests of the workers and oppressed of the world, and that's why they had to keep Cuba out," he said.

Gómez thanked those at the open house for having participated in the demonstration. Actions like that one, he said, show the Cuban people they do not fight alone.

Two days after the anti-embargo protest, right-wing Cuban-American groups organized a demonstration directed at the participants in the Summit of the Americas.

"No Castro, no problem," was the main slogan on placards, bumper stickers, and banners at this mobilization of 40,000 Cuban-Americans, held at the Orange Bowl stadium. The action was called by Cuban Unity, the Cuban American National Foundation, and dozens of other local right-wing organizations. The action fell short of the 300,000 participants organizers had predicted.

Rollande Girard is a member of Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU) Local 694A. Francisco Picado, a member of ACTWU, contributed to this article.

Gov't debates how to slash Social Security

BY SARA LOBMAN

In a December 8 memorandum, the co-chairs of a bipartisan commission established by President Bill Clinton proposed drastic cuts in Social Security that would affect millions of working people.

The cuts account for nearly two-thirds of the commission's recommended "budget savings." They would introduce means-testing based on income for Social Security, Medicare, unemployment, and certain veterans' benefits. They would raise the age at which individuals become eligible for Medicare and Social Security benefits without penalties from 65 to 70. Anyone retiring earlier would be subject to sharp, permanent reductions in benefits. Currently more than half of social security recipients retire at age

62. Another provision would cut the annual cost-of-living adjustment.

According to former Social Security commissioner Robert Ball, a liberal critic of the plan, the proposal would mean a 44 percent reduction in benefits for workers who have earned average wages over the course of their lives.

The plan would also take steps toward privatizing the Social Security system by cutting the Social Security payroll tax and forcing workers to put the funds in an Individual Retirement Account.

"We cannot pay for the explosive growth in our entitlement obligations, fueled primarily by increased life expectancies, the aging of the baby boom generation, and spiraling health-care costs," Democratic Sen.

Bob Kerrey and Republican Sen. John Danforth, chairmen of the Bipartisan Commission on Entitlement and Tax Reform, said in justifying their proposal. "Entitlement spending and interest on the national debt together consume more than 60 percent of the \$1.5 trillion budget," an August article in the *Washington Post* stated.

The proposal is not expected to get the votes it needs to win the endorsement of the commission. However, while Clinton and most other capitalist politicians in both the Democratic and Republican parties have shied away from being too closely identified with concrete proposals to slash Social Security, there is near unanimity among the capitalist class and their representatives in both Congress and the White House that the

entitlements that are the heart of the social wage won by working people over the past six decades must be ended as a universal right.

In a *Wall Street Journal* interview shortly before he took office, Clinton complained that people were living too long — and therefore getting too big a share of Social Security payments. "When Social Security was instituted," he said, "the average person that actually drew retirement benefits spent about five or six of their adult years in retirement.... Now, with the fastest growing group of the population over 80, by the turn of the century, the average person could literally spend 20 years in retirement."

The government's attacks on Social Security have been foreshadowed by its offensive against welfare. Recent proposals by a Clinton administration task force, for example, include requiring teenage mothers to live with their parents and forcing young women to identify the father of their children before being eligible for welfare payments.

The *Washington Post*, in a December 12 editorial, spoke favorably of the commission's work. "Given all the other parts of the budget that as a practical matter aren't cuttable — interest on the debt, the levels below which almost no one would want to go on defense, health care, etc. — it may not even be possible" to balance the budget without drastic cuts to social security, the editors said. In fiscal 1993, interest payments to banks and other wealthy lenders accounted for nearly a third of the budget.

While expressing concern over "unnecessarily Draconian cuts" of more than 40 percent in the Kerrey-Danforth plan, the *New York Times* editors applauded the two senators for their goal of reducing Social Security and Medicare and suggested a 15 percent cut. They added that raising the retirement age "makes good sense."

In a nationally syndicated October 31 article, conservative columnist Tony Snow added his voice to those advocating the privatization of Social Security. "Today's average retiree receives the cash equivalent of his or her total contribution to the system within two years — but lives 12 years after retirement," he said. "The present arrangement gives people the impression that they have a legitimate claim on the earnings of others and that government ought to seize through force what others have earned with their toil. In the old days, that used to be called theft."

Richard Trumka, president of the United Mine Workers of America and a member of the commission, argued against the plan as being too drastic. Trumka and other top AFL-CIO officials, however, also argued that the commission should concentrate its fire on cutting health-care expenditures, rather than Social Security retirement benefits.

Whitewater affair keeps reemerging

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

In another twist of the Whitewater investigation haunting the White House, Webster Hubbell, until recently one of the top law enforcement officials in the country, pleaded guilty to two felony counts of mail fraud and tax evasion December 6. Hubbell admitted to stealing \$394,000 from partners and clients at the Rose law firm in Arkansas between 1989 and 1992.

Hubbell, who was a partner with Hillary Clinton at the firm, used phony expense vouchers and charged inflated hours to siphon funds. The former associate attorney general at the Justice Department faces a possible five-year sentence and a \$250,000 fine on each of the two counts. However, a plea bargain agreement will likely set his sentence around 21 months or less in return for cooperation with Whitewater prosecutors. President Bill Clinton once referred to Hubbell as his closest personal friend.

Hubbell resigned from the Justice Department in March. He is the highest ranking Justice Department official to face

conviction for crimes since Attorney General John Mitchell and Attorney General Richard Kleindienst fell during the Nixon Watergate scandal.

Only the latest blow

Hubbell's demise is only the latest in a series of political blows suffered by the Clinton administration. Of particular concern to the Clintons is Hubbell's intimate knowledge of their business and personal financial dealings while Clinton was governor of Arkansas.

Hubbell could provide information about how Hillary Clinton came to be retained by Madison Guaranty Savings and Loan to do work before a state securities commissioner who was appointed by then-governor Bill Clinton. Madison went belly up in 1989 at a cost of \$60 million in federal deposit insurance.

The failed savings and loan was owned by James McDougal, who shared ownership of the Whitewater Development Corporation with the Clintons. McDougal is currently being investigated for improperly diverting tens of thousands of dollars from Madison to Whitewater and Clinton's re-election campaign for Arkansas governor in 1984. The Clintons are attempting to quickly distance themselves from Hubbell now that he has agreed to provide "substantial assistance" to the Whitewater investigation. "This matter simply does not concern the president, the first lady, or the Whitewater Development Company in any way," said David Kendall, the Clintons' personal lawyer, after hearing of Hubbell's plea bargain agreement.

More conflicts of interest

Bill Wilson, the Arkansas federal judge assigned to hear the criminal case against Hubbell and impose his sentence, removed himself December 8, stating a potential conflict of interest. Wilson, also appointed by Clinton, cited his past political and professional relationships with Hubbell and the Clintons as possible problems.

In another dilemma for the Clinton administration, a December 10 article in the *New York Times* revealed that the independent prosecutor appointed to investigate former secretary of agriculture Mike Espy, was broadening his examination of Tyson Foods Inc. The poultry giant has close links with the Clinton family. Don Tyson,

chairman of the largest poultry supplier in the United States, has been a major backer of Bill Clinton's election campaigns. The company's general counsel, James Blair, helped guide Hillary Clinton through cattle future trades in the late 1970s.

The inquiry is moving beyond the initial accusations that Tyson officials provided Espy with a number of perks and gave a woman he was dating a college scholarship at a time when the Department of Agriculture was considering tightening some poultry inspection policies. The prosecutor has now subpoenaed records from the Arkansas Workers Compensation Commission, which has turned over the names of some 2,000 Tyson workers who filed injury claims with the agency.

Investigators in the Tyson case have also met with their counterparts working on the Whitewater inquiry, much to the dismay of White House officials.

Adding another administration official to a growing list of those who have been forced to resign since the president took office, Clinton fired Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders December 9. Elders had become a target of politicians from both Democratic and Republican parties because of her outspoken views on abortion rights and statements she had made concerning drug use and sexuality.

Aside from Clinton's continuing difficulties with the Whitewater investigation, he is moving ahead to turn the rightward drift of the recent election campaigns into government policy and work cooperatively with his Republican Party opposition. Clinton has recently called for increased military spending and is preparing budget proposals with severe spending cuts. He has also invited Republican legislators to a conference in January aimed at coming to agreement on a far-reaching plan to cut the welfare system.

New issue of Marxist journal is out

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Issue no. 10 of *New International*, a Marxist magazine of politics and theory, is off the presses. This new issue, distributed by Pathfinder Press, is an invaluable tool for workers and youth who want a class understanding of the world that is unfolding today and the future that is coming toward them.

The issue opens with a report by *New International* editor Mary-Alice Waters on the fight for socialism in Cuba today. Waters points out that the reason for the U.S. rulers' hatred of the Cuban revolution is not complicated. The Cuban toilers did the one thing the wealthy class fights most ruthlessly to prevent: overturned the capitalist monopoly of state power, established a workers and farmers government, and seized capitalist property in land and the basic means of production.

Waters explains that decisive layers of the working class and its communist vanguard continue to show their readiness to defend the socialist revolution in the face of harsh economic difficulties. She underlines that defense of the Cuban revolution is an integral part of the fight by working people for their interests worldwide.

"What the 1987 Stock Market Crash Foretold" and "Imperialism's March Toward Fascism and War" are two other articles featured in this issue of *New International*. The first is a resolution adopted in

1988 by the Socialist Workers Party in the wake of the steepest crash of the world's stock markets since 1929. The second is a document based on several talks given by SWP national secretary Jack Barnes in early 1994.

Both articles explain that the 1987 crash signaled a new, descending segment in the long-term curve of capitalist development, heralding the deepest worldwide depression since the 1930s, along with its political consequences, including the rise of fascist forces, sharper conflicts between imperialist powers, and growing reliance on military force to solve the capitalists' problems. The crumbling of the bureaucratic regimes in the former Soviet bloc, and the obstacles to the reimposition of capitalism there, are taken up in this context.

A useful complement is a 1923 article by Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky on "The Curve of Capitalist Development," reprinted in the same issue.

The articles make a case that the triumph of fascism and interimperialist war are not pre-ordained. With revolutionary leadership working people can stop the inexorable march toward a third world war, wrest power from the governments of the ruling families in the U.S. and other capitalist countries, and build a society of co-operative human labor, truly democratic government, and cultural advancement.

Cuban youth leaders invited to speak in U.S.

BY AUGUST NIMTZ

ST. PAUL, Minnesota — Two dozen faculty and student organizers throughout the country have written letters inviting Cuban youth leaders Kenia Serrano and Rogelio Polanco to speak on their campuses in March and April. The Faculty-Student Cuban Youth Lectures Committee, which is coordinating the nationwide speaking tour, reports also that many more have inquired about inviting them to their areas.

The committee urges those who want to invite the two youths to rapidly obtain letters of invitation from a broad range of academic figures — university officials, professors, and recognized student organizations and publications. The committee must have all letters by December 27 to expedite the visa applications. Each invitation letter must be addressed to both Serrano and Polanco at the Center for Studies of Youth, Havana, Cuba. The committee must receive the original letter and not just a fax copy. For more information call (612) 624-1512 or fax at (612) 626-2242.

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Union fighters in Canada support Curtis

BY JANET FISHER

TORONTO — "I can support Mark Curtis because I know exactly what he's going through," said Al Shearing, a victim of trumped-up charges by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). Shearing was arrested following a strike by gold miners against the Royal Oak mine in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories. "It's not because he's guilty of anything. It's just because he's a union activist and the government and the RCMP would like to crush these kinds of people."

Curtis was arrested and framed up in 1988 in Des Moines, Iowa, on charges of rape and burglary. At the time he was involved in defending 17 of his coworkers, who had been arrested in a raid by immigration police and threatened with deportation. He has served more than six years of a 25-year sentence.

Shearing was interviewed on videotape in his home in Yellowknife, where Canadian Association of Smelter and Allied Workers Local 4 — now Canadian Auto Workers Local 2304 — waged a successful 18-month strike against union-busting, which ended in December 1993.

The videotape was produced for a public meeting in defense of Curtis that took place here December 3. About 30 people attended the event, held at the University of Toronto.

Tim Bettger, another gold miner framed because of his involvement in the Yellowknife strike, was interviewed on videotape separately from Shearing, since their bail conditions forbid them to talk to each other. Bettger noted that "Mark stood up in the face of great adversity and made a public stand against abuse of working people. There are far too few of him."

The video also included an extensive re-

port on the strike and on the frame-up of Roger Warren, falsely accused of murder stemming from a mine explosion that killed nine replacement workers. Warren is currently on trial.

Fight for immigrant rights

Auto worker John Sarge, addressed the meeting on behalf of the Socialist Workers Party, of which Curtis is a member. He described the campaign against the rights of immigrant workers in the United States and Canada during this economic depression. Employers have escalated their assault on immigrant rights, scapegoating them to further divide the working class. Sarge pointed to the adoption of the anti-immigrant Proposition 187 in California as an example.

The immigrant rights battle unfolding today, Sarge noted, helps explain why the authorities in Iowa are so determined to punish Curtis for being an example to other working-class fighters.

Participants in the Toronto meeting sent messages of solidarity to Warren, as well as to Shearing and Bettger, who face frame-up charges over incidents unrelated to the Yellowknife mine blast.

"These frame-ups smear the union," the statement said. "We extend our warmest solidarity...and will take what we have learned about your cases to our coworkers and fellow students."

Messages of solidarity were sent to the meeting by David Bleakney of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, and Cherie McDonald, long-time feminist activist.

Mary Beth Levant, a Yellowknife activist and endorser of Curtis's defense, also appeared on the videotaped message. She said, "The biggest contribution people can



Militant/Argiris Malapanis
Supporter of framed U.S. unionist Mark Curtis discussing case with delegates in Havana at November 21-25 World Meeting in Solidarity with Cuba. Nineteen delegates at the conference became new endorsers of Curtis's fight for justice, including the ambassador to Cuba from Burkina Faso. Delegates from Germany, Colombia, Bangladesh, South Africa, Japan, and elsewhere became endorsers of the case.

make in whatever work or social situation they find themselves in is to stand up for themselves and fight back on their own turf in whatever way makes sense."

James Anampiu, a steelworker, chaired the meeting and explained the facts of Curtis's fight for justice, including recent moves by prison authorities to victimize him. In September, Curtis was sentenced

on fraudulent charges to one year in lockup in a maximum-security segregation unit.

Nojan Emad, speaking on behalf of the Toronto chapter of the Young Socialists, spoke of how the defense of Curtis, who was beaten by cops the day he was arrested, is part of the fight against police brutality. The audience contributed \$650 to the defense effort.

N.J. prosecutors drop charges in child sex abuse frame-up case

BY MARTHA PETTIT

NEWARK, New Jersey — Essex County prosecutors formally dropped their child sexual abuse case against Margaret Kelly Michaels December 2, ending a 10-year ordeal of trials and prison time. Michaels, who served five years of a 47-year sentence for allegedly performing sexual acts on children, had been free on \$75,000 bail since March 1993. At that time, a three-judge appeals court ruled that the day-care teacher's trial was so full of prejudicial errors that a reversal of her conviction was required.

Neither the March 1993 ruling, nor a subsequent State Supreme Court decision upholding it, mandated that the state abandon its case against Michaels. The prosecutors' dropping of charges represented final vindication for Michaels.

Although the appellate ruling did not explicitly characterize the children's testimony as "tainted" because of prolonged questioning and adult suggestion, it did urge caution. The court also appealed for a remedy to be found when "an accuser's testimony is founded upon unreliable perceptions, or memory caused by improper investigative procedures."

'Taint hearings' must be held

The State Supreme Court decision in June 1994 said that before a second trial could be held a pretrial "taint hearing" would be required to determine whether the children's testimony was sufficiently reliable to be used in a new trial.

The county prosecutor, Clifford Minor, had stated in July that he would seek a retrial. However, in announcing the decision to drop the case, Minor admitted to losing a number of witnesses and complained that the requirement for pretrial hearings to determine whether the children's statements are reliable constituted an "undue burden" on the prosecution's case. In other words, he had no evidence, and no case outside of the children's tainted testimonies.

Michaels was 26 years old when she was convicted of 115 counts of sexually abusing 19 children at Wee Care Day Nursery in Maplewood, New Jersey.

The prosecutors had accused her of raping the children — between the ages of three and five — with knives, forks, Lego blocks, and a large wooden spoon; making the children perform oral sex with her;

forcing them to drink her urine and eat her feces; and playing games in the nude, among other charges.

She supposedly committed this mass abuse on a daily basis, during school hours, in a church where the day-care center was housed.

Yet none of the other teachers, aides, administrators, or church personnel, as well as none of the parents and parishioners who regularly went through the premises saw, heard, or smelled anything. Tests were done on the wooden spoon and other objects, and no trace was found of feces, or other matter that would point to her guilt.

No complaints of sexual abuse

For the entire time Michaels worked there, not a single child said a word to their parents about sexual abuse, or complained about pain or injury from the alleged brutal acts, or even returned home with as much as a pair of mis-matched socks from supposedly taking off all their clothes along with other children.

The appellate ruling stated that none of the children's testimony was related by "free recall."

"It is clear that all of these young children were convinced... that defendant was 'bad' because she had done 'bad things' to children at Wee Care," according to the court. "Anatomical dolls were used in the interviews, and in some cases the children did not disclose anything until they were either presented with the dolls, shown various eating utensils, or encouraged to demonstrate how Kelly might have hurt a little girl or boy. The records of the interviews show that these methods caused certain children to use their imagination and stray from reality, even to the dismay of the investigator at times. In several instances, the children were tired and/or resistant to participating in the interviews, but the investigators continued to press for cooperation."

"I am greatly relieved to have this terrible nightmare finally over," Michaels told reporters. She angrily criticized the prosecutors who tried the case, saying, "The way they questioned those children was outrageous."

Martha Pettit is a member of United Auto Workers Local 664 in Tarrytown, New York.



PATHFINDER AROUND THE WORLD

By Alan Harris

Pathfinder, located in New York with distributors in Australia, Britain, and Canada, publishes books and pamphlets by revolutionary leaders in the fight against capitalism and the oppression and exploitation it breeds. Pathfinder bookstores are listed in the directory on page 12.

The international book fair in Frankfurt, Germany, turned out to be one of the busiest in recent years. The six-day event, held in early October, drew 290,000 visitors and more than 8,000 publishers, distributors, and book buyers.

Pathfinder representatives from Stockholm, Sweden, and London who took part in the fair found that opportunities are opening up to promote Pathfinder books in new areas, including Central Europe and Asia.

The weakening of the Stalinist regimes has led to an expansion in book distribution throughout Eastern Europe as the thirst for literature of all kinds increases.

One publisher and bookseller from Hungary thought that titles by Malcolm X would sell very well in her Budapest bookshop, "especially among young people and tourists."

A wholesaler from Poland thought there were no prospects for sales of books about communism in his country, but asked for a sample copy of *Nelson Mandela Speaks* with a view to ordering the title.

Two wholesalers based in the western part of Germany said they were considering adding titles by Mandela and Malcolm X to their stock. Both noted they were taking advance orders for a new biography of Mandela, scheduled for publication the following month.

The manager of a chain of bookstores in Italy that sells English-language titles proposed a "mobile Pathfinder display" for his shops. A selection of books would be displayed for a month at one location, the books sold would be replaced, and the display would then be

sent to another shop in the chain until all the stores had participated.

One Singapore distributor was certain that his company could sell a range of Pathfinder books in the region. These included titles on women's liberation, Marxism, and the struggle for Black rights in the United States.

The 1995 Seoul book fair was energetically promoted, and Pathfinder was encouraged to participate in it. The organizers of book fairs coming up in Cairo, Warsaw, and Zimbabwe also urged Pathfinder to exhibit.

The Danish magazine *Arbejderbevægelsens Historie* (Working-Class History) reviewed *To See the Dawn: Baku 1920, The First Congress of the Peoples of the East* in its October issue. Reviewer Ole Jorn calls attention to previously unpublished documents in the volume and notes that the introduction "traces a line directly from the political principles of the congress to a series of freedom struggles in the Third World... (Nicaragua, Grenada, Burkina Faso, African National Congress, and, not least, Cuba)." *To See the Dawn* is the fifth and most-recent installment in the Pathfinder series on the Communist International in Lenin's time.

"I would like to take time to thank you on behalf of all persons currently incarcerated for your effort to make beneficial reading material more accessible and affordable," writes an inmate from Calipatria State Prison in California, requesting a catalog. Pathfinder makes its books and pamphlets available at 50 percent discount to readers behind bars. Contributions to the fund that helps make this possible are deeply appreciated. Send a check, earmarked "Books for Prisoners" to Pathfinder, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014.

Lisa Hickler of Salt Lake City, Utah, contributed to this column.

Che Guevara's diary tells hidden history of U.S. intervention in Bolivia in 1960s

BY MIKE TABER

From Haiti to Somalia to the Persian Gulf, a growing number of working people and youth around the world are learning how U.S. military power defends the interests of Wall Street and Washington.

These interventions are but the most recent in a long history of U.S. operations this century. One such effort, less well-known, took place in Bolivia during the mid-1960s. *The Bolivian Diary of Ernesto Che Guevara*, published recently by Pathfinder, helps tell this important story.

Just before Che Guevara left for Bolivia in late 1966 to help lead a struggle against that country's U.S.-backed military dictatorship, he wrote, "Behind [Washington's] slogan 'We will not permit another Cuba' hides the possibility of cowardly acts of aggression they can get away with."

The U.S. rulers, Guevara stated, were "ready to intervene anywhere in Latin America where a change in the established order endangers their interests.... What has been formed," he said, "is the International of Crime and Betrayal." As Guevara anticipated, the U.S. government organized a major effort in Bolivia to crush the struggle he helped lead. Washington's targets were the working people of Bolivia and the region, as well as the workers and farmers government in Cuba.

Miners lead 1952 insurrection

U.S. government concern about Bolivia was not new. In 1952 an insurrection spearheaded by Bolivia's tin miners had ousted the military dictatorship. A land reform was instituted, and workers militias led by the unions were formed.

A capitalist regime was eventually re-consolidated, but workers, peasants, and students continued to mobilize and miners maintained their militias.

In March 1959, two months after the victory of the Cuban revolution, massive demonstrations of students and working people broke out in the major cities of Bolivia in response to the comments of a U.S. embassy official in La Paz who stated, "The only solution to Bolivia's problems is to abolish Bolivia." While these demonstrations were occurring, 24,000 miners went out on strike. Washington pressed the Bolivian regime to take stronger action against the miners and to toe the line on moves against Cuba. But by 1964 the U.S. government had become increasingly dissatisfied with the Bolivian regime of Victor Paz Estenssoro.

The minister of mines in the Paz government later wrote, "For over a year and a half, the American Embassy ... urged with almost weekly regularity that the army be sent to the mining zones, and threatened that otherwise [some U.S. financial assistance] would be suspended."

Washington was also concerned with the Bolivian government's slowness in joining its campaign against Cuba. Paz directly opposed U.S. policy by refusing to vote for Cuba's expulsion from the Organization of



Maj. Ralph Shelton at U.S. training camp in Bolivia. Shelton trained Bolivian troops after guerrillas led by Che Guevara inflicted a defeat on them in March 1967.

American States in 1962, by declining to join in OAS sanctions of Cuba two years later, and by maintaining diplomatic relations with Cuba.

It was not until 1964 that Paz finally agreed to do Washington's bidding. "A little while ago, the president of Bolivia told our representatives, with tears in his eyes, that he had to break relations with Cuba because the United States had forced him to do so," Che Guevara, then Cuba's minister of industry, told the United Nations General Assembly at the time. "We told him that such deals with the enemy would be worth nothing because he was already condemned."

This assessment was confirmed in November 1964. In the midst of a wave of protests and demonstrations spearheaded by the miners, a U.S.-backed military coup led by Gen. René Barrientos seized power. Within months the new regime, seeking to disarm the workers' militias and break their union, ordered troops to occupy the mining areas. Hundreds were killed and the government decreed huge wage cuts.

But these measures proved insufficient to crush the miners. In a February 1966 report, U.S. secretary of defense Robert McNamara said, "Violence in the mining areas and in the cities of Bolivia has continued to occur intermittently, and we are assisting this country to improve the training and equipping of its military forces."

Especially given this situation, Washington became deeply concerned when Guevara left Cuba in April 1965 to participate in revolutionary struggles — first in the Congo, then in Bolivia.

Philip Agee, an agent for the Central Intelligence Agency at the time, recounts that in addition to trying to track him down, the

CIA was engaged in a campaign "to generate unfavorable press speculation over Guevara's disappearance." This included spreading rumors that Guevara had been killed by Cuban president Fidel Castro in a power struggle.

On March 23, 1967, the first guerrilla action in Bolivia resulted in a humiliating defeat for the army. Simultaneously, Washington got its first indications that Guevara himself might be involved in the struggle in Bolivia. The U.S. rulers responded rapidly, sending millions of dollars of arms, communications equipment, helicopters, and other military aid.

At the end of March the first U.S. "advisers" arrived, under the command of Lt. Col. Redmond Weber and Maj. Ralph Shelton. These included Green Beret troops sent from the Panama Canal Zone, whose mission was to organize a counterinsurgency school for Bolivian Rangers led by Shelton. Up to 100 U.S. military personnel were sent.

'A new Vietnam'

Commenting on these moves in his diary, Guevara wrote, "The North Americans are announcing that sending advisers to Bolivia corresponds to a plan long in place and has nothing to do with the guerrillas. We are perhaps witnessing the first episode of a new Vietnam."

In addition to army advisers and military equipment, Washington sent a large number of agents from the CIA to reinforce its presence in the country. A number of these were assigned to Bolivian government ministries, in particular the Ministry of the Interior, whose head, Antonio Arguedas, was already on the CIA payroll. Increasingly resentful of Washington's arrogant treatment of him, Arguedas was the Bolivian official who, after Guevara's death, turned the revolutionary leader's diary over to the Cuban government.

A central responsibility of the CIA was interrogating prisoners. In La Paz, U.S. agents set up two "interrogation" houses, where suspects were questioned and tortured. Interrogations were also held in other parts of the country.

One participant in these sessions was former Nazi leader Klaus Barbie. While Gestapo chief in Lyon during the German occupation of France, Barbie was personally responsible for the deaths of 4,000 people. The U.S. Army's Counter Intelligence Corps recruited him at the end of World War II and helped him escape to Bolivia in 1951 under the name Klaus Altman. There Barbie maintained close ties with leading figures in the military. Following the Barrientos coup in November 1964, the former Nazi was named an adviser to the army, as a specialist in counterinsurgency.

In 1983 Klaus Barbie was extradited to France, where he was sentenced to life imprisonment for war crimes.

At the top of Washington's concerns

was the possibility that the guerrilla movement led by Guevara would forge links with the miners' struggle. On June 6, 1967, a national miners' meeting in Huanuni called for mass action against the government to defend the union. In addition, the conference voted to send food and medicine to the guerrillas.

A meeting was quickly convened in La Paz, attended by General Barrientos, U.S. ambassador Douglas Henderson, the president of the Mining Corporation of Bolivia, and U.S. embassy attaché John Corr, who oversaw "labor affairs."

According to an eyewitness, the U.S. embassy official warned "that in the mines ... an insurrectional plan to overthrow the government was being prepared; that the miners had agreed to donate one day a month to the guerrillas to purchase arms and medicine ... and that a group of 20 miners was ready to join Che's guerrillas."

The Bolivian government declared a state of siege in the mining areas. On the night of June 23-24, troops moved in and opened fire on miners' houses, killing 20.

Washington was also concerned that the Cuban revolution's efforts to deepen ties with revolutionary forces throughout the continent would be successful.

In late July 1967 the Organization of Latin American Solidarity (OLAS) met in Havana. The revolutionary and anti-imperialist forces from throughout Latin America named Guevara honorary chair of the conference. The meeting discussed coordinated action against landlord-capitalist regimes backed by Washington, and pledged to support the struggle in Bolivia.

U.S. gov't orders Guevara's execution

Less than three months later, on Oct. 8, 1967, Che Guevara was wounded and captured by Bolivian troops.

Barrientos quickly communicated the news to the U.S. Embassy in La Paz, which relayed the information to Washington. Late that night, the U.S. government sent its instructions that Guevara be executed.

The contents of the U.S. message were revealed in 1987, when the Spanish magazine *Interviú* published a classified document prepared by CIA agent Félix Rodríguez, the U.S. official on the scene where Guevara was being held. "The decision to execute the subversive leader was immediately transmitted through our embassy in La Paz," Rodríguez reported.

Born in Cuba, Rodríguez had gone to the United States after the revolution, where he was recruited by the CIA. He returned to Cuba to organize terrorist actions, but was forced to leave after the failed Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961. In early 1967 he was sent to Bolivia.

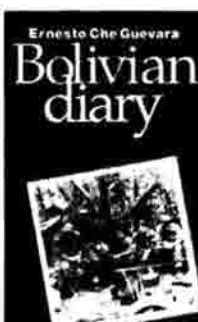
Rodríguez tried to interrogate Guevara, but the revolutionary leader refused to answer his questions, terming the CIA agent a "mercenary."

On the morning of October 9, Rodríguez received the order from La Paz for Guevara's murder. Relaying this instruction to the army commanders, Rodríguez helped select the executioners. Then, he reported in a 1989 interview with the Spanish magazine *Cambio 16*, "I left and sent [warrant officer Mario] Terán to carry out the order. I told him he had to shoot [Guevara] below the neck because it had to appear he was killed in combat."

In the 1980s Rodríguez came out of retirement to organize supply shipments for the Nicaraguan contras based out of El Salvador.

The role of the U.S. government in Bolivia in the 1960s, and its close collaboration with individuals such as Félix Rodríguez, René Barrientos, and Klaus Barbie, confirms the statement made by Fidel Castro in his "Necessary Introduction" to Guevara's Bolivian diary. Washington is "the policeman of world reaction, the systematic promoter of counterrevolution, and the protector of the most backward and inhuman social structures that remain in the world," the Cuban leader said.

Learning from and making known the lessons recounted in *The Bolivian Diary of Ernesto Che Guevara* can help prepare today's fighters to confront this "inhuman social structure" in the battles to come.



THE BOLIVIAN DIARY OF ERNESTO CHE GUEVARA

Guevara's account, newly translated, of the 1966-67 guerilla struggle in Bolivia. A day-by-day chronicle by one of the central leaders of the Cuban revolution of the campaign to forge a continent-wide revolutionary movement of workers and peasants capable of contending for power. New translation includes material published in English for the first time. \$21.95

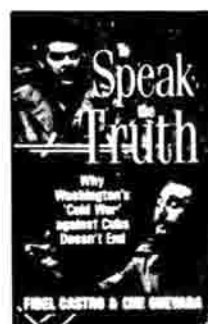
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TO SPEAK THE TRUTH

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'We defend Cuba for millions in the world'

The following are excerpts from speeches given by two Cuban leaders at the November 21-25 World Meeting in Solidarity with Cuba, held in Havana, which 3,000 delegates attended from more than 100 countries. The first excerpts are by Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina, the second by Ricardo Alarcón, president of Cuba's National Assembly.

BY ROBERTO ROBAINA

I speak on behalf of a foreign policy that for 35 years has demonstrated the principles on which it is grounded. Independence and sovereignty, self-determination and mutual respect, nonintervention in internal affairs, truth, solidarity, internationalism, and our socialism — these continue to be the sacred principles of the Cuban revolution, principles with which one cannot play around.

I am constantly asked in this new assignment [as foreign minister] whether I am blind to the world that fell. My constant answer is that I not only see the world that collapsed but have the privilege of envisioning the world that is yet to arise.

The Cuban revolution did not fall like one more wall, nor will it.

We have already won. I repeat, we have already won, because to exist right now is a victory. We will continue to win because we will continue to exist in difficult and complex times....

Wars are not called wars

We do not know who is going to be bombed next, or who is going to be subjected to a new type of war under a new label, because nowadays, wars are not called wars. They are called humanitarian interventions, peacekeeping operations, preventive diplomacy, or operations to restore democracy....

Cuba is one of the sites most coveted by the powerful of this world. The Founding Fathers of the United States said from the beginning: Whoever controls Cuba will have in their hands the key to a new world. They forgot only one thing: they never asked us Cubans if we wished to relinquish for life the key to that lock. Another thing too: They never imagined that one day in 1959, with Fidel at the helm, we were going to change the lock and leave them out in the street without a key....

Around our united people, and despite the ups and downs of the times, of the so-called crisis of the Left, and the alleged end of history, you remain united in the name of solidarity — a word many seek to erase from the dictionary.

This is why I sincerely say: it is we who have the greatest duty to be champions of solidarity. What we defend today in Cuba, we defend not only for the sake of 10 million Cubans, but for millions upon millions of men and women who support us on every continent and who, like you, would not forgive us for surrendering now.

We promote solidarity because what is happening to Cuba today could happen tomorrow to any other country in the world. We have to show solidarity, particularly with those who live in the belly of that monster and have supported Cuba for years.

We have to show solidarity with you who give us additional reason for safeguarding at all cost the sovereignty of this homeland and the major conquests of Cuba's socialist course.

BY RICARDO ALARCÓN

I would like to concentrate my remarks this morning on several aspects related to the political organization of Cuban society, to our country's institutional structure, in other words, to the subject of democracy....

Since the triumph of the revolution in 1959 Cuba has been, among other things, a profound adventure, a profound democratic creation, profoundly Cuban and Latin American. If there has been anything that has distinguished this revolutionary process from its birth, it has been the direct participation, the intervention of the people in all the chapters of this historic process known as the Cuban revolution.

True democracy

It began when this people, following its vanguard in the Sierra Maestra led by Fidel Castro, organized and mobilized to resist the Batista tyranny. Ultimately, with a will



Some 3,000 people from around the world met in Havana in late November for the World Meeting in Solidarity with Cuba. The Cuban revolution is grounded in internationalism, Cuban leaders Roberto Robaina and Ricardo Alarcón told delegates.

of steel expressed in a general strike that paralyzed the entire country, the people guaranteed that this tyranny would not be replaced by a more or less formally democratic government, but would instead be replaced by true democracy, by revolutionary democracy, by a people that intervened, for the first time and for good, to assume its leading role in history.

From that day 35 years ago to the present, if we were to review the principal episodes in the economic, social, and political transformation of our country, or to review the most noble examples of solidarity expressed through the international activity of the Cuban revolution, we could show how in every single one without exception, the emancipated masses, the entire people, have exercised the role of protagonist.

From its very triumph, the revolution proved capable of organizing the population in its entirety, town by town, neighborhood by neighborhood, block by block, house by house, to meet the hostility, aggression, and sabotage that this heroic people has had to confront since the very first days in 1959....

Land reform

What did the land reform of May 1959 mean for our peasants? It made possible the genuine incorporation into society of the rural population, which up to that time had been subjugated and marginalized. Was it not their main and most democratic demand?

The revolution abolished once and for all the odious racial discrimination and opened up schools, hospitals, houses, and beaches to all. Was that not the most heartfelt demand of millions of Cubans who had previously been marginalized because of the color of their skin?...

Let us recall the deep-going educational revolution that has taken place in our country. It began with the literacy campaign, where our youth, our workers, average citizens, became teachers and devoted them-

selves to teach reading and writing to those compatriots of ours who had been driven into illiteracy by the past and by underdevelopment.

Let's stop to think about our country's great achievements in the field of public health. Cuba is a country that can proclaim today that despite all the hardships, despite the fact that this field, like all others in our nation's life, is being affected by the blows of the criminal economic, commercial, and financial blockade that is now being stepped up.

Despite this, we Cubans can assert something that is only a dream, an unachievable aspiration for tens of millions of people who live — or rather suffer — in the country that blockades us.

No one barred from health care

Despite all the hardships, we Cubans have and defend a system of universal and free public health care that excludes no one, that encompasses all the inhabitants of this country, whether they are citizens or whether they are brothers and sisters from other lands that have come to live among us — so-called foreigners. No young children are threatened with having the doors of a hospital closed to them. Cuba does not prevent millions of people from being able to receive the most basic medical care. This achievement of the Cuban revolution too has relied on the active participation of our people.

Let us recall the great mass immunization campaigns, which enabled us long ago to leave behind as the relic of a shameful past certain diseases that today remain a scourge, that bring death to many children in many so-called democratic societies. This process of mass immunizations transformed every Cuban into a health worker and, as we helped one another, we helped to extend this service, this aspiration, and this conquest throughout the length and breadth of our country.

And let us recall the development of a

new national and popular culture, reflected in the fact that millions and millions of copies of books and publications are published in Cuba. And these are not only piled up in libraries or bookstores in the capital; they have been taken to the most isolated corners of our mountains and our valleys....

Let's think about the defense of the Cuban revolution, about how this revolution confronted from the very first day the blows launched against it in every area, including military attacks, by its great and bitter adversary. This was done not simply by strengthening or creating a professional and technically equipped army, such as many of our neighbors are familiar with, an army that lives in its barracks apart from — and above — a people whom it is generally devoted to repressing.

Here the army, the Revolutionary Armed Forces, has always been, from day one, nothing more than the vanguard detachment of an entire people organized to defend itself.

We all recall with emotion that in 1959, in the factories, in the universities, in the communities, in the peasant villages, our glorious Revolutionary National Militias were organized. Today these remain part of the permanent historical continuity that is the Cuban revolution, in the form of the Territorial Troop Militias.

Cuba's internationalism

But this same blue and green uniform is worn with dignity by millions of Cubans, and not only to march in our political activities, but to stand guard in defense of the revolution and to fight — and not only to fight but to win, as we did at Playa Girón; as the Cuban students, workers, professionals fought the bandits that the empire tried to abet in certain parts of our country to block the forward march of the revolution; in the same way that the entire people carried out with honor and dignity that brilliant, noble, and unforgettable aspect of this revolution, which is internationalism.

Internationalism has been practiced by hundreds of thousands of Cubans. Hundreds of thousands have served as combatants in the military conflicts where the Cuban revolution was able to demonstrate its solidarity. We stood side by side with the Angolan people when it was the victim of intervention, of aggression by imperialism and the racists, who tried to snatch the independence this people had conquered at such a high price, after four centuries of colonialism and long years of struggle against colonialism. Hundreds of thousands of Cuban combatants went there, and many others were later to go to Ethiopia.

But hundreds of thousands of Cubans — teachers, doctors, technicians — also turned internationalism into a democratic phenomenon, something in which the people participated directly. From Nicaragua to Algeria, from the Sahara to Vietnam, from Grenada to Yemen, many men and women around the globe learned to know and love the Cuban revolution as a result of this demonstration of solidarity that the Cuban people were giving. In internationalism, too, the Cuban people played the leading role.

Help the 'Militant' provide eyewitness coverage from Cuba and South Africa!

From now through the beginning of January, *Militant* reporting teams will bring you unmatched eyewitness coverage of political developments in Cuba and South Africa.

Our first reports began a few weeks ago with feature coverage of the **World Meeting in Solidarity with Cuba** held in Havana in opposition to Washington's economic embargo against Cuba. Continuing this week, *Militant* reporter Laura Garza is in Cuba writing about the three-week tour of the island by two Young Socialists from the United States. The Union of Young Communists is hosting Naomi Craine of New York and Brian Taylor of Chicago, who are speaking at factories and campuses in Cuba.

In next week's issue we will begin eyewitness reports from South Africa. From December 17 to 21 our correspondents

will cover the **49th national conference of the African National Congress** in Bloemfontein, South Africa. It is the ANC's first national policy-making conference since the April 1994 elections. Steve Clark, editor of *Nelson Mandela Speaks*, United Steelworkers member Greg McCartan, and *Militant* staffwriter Greg Rosenberg will provide eyewitness reports on the gathering and spend another week covering developments in the class struggle there.

The cost of these trips exceeds \$25,000.

The *Militant* depends on the generous contributions of our readers — workers, students, and others — to make these trips possible.

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Kmart strikers return to work stronger

BY M.J. RAHN

GREENSBORO, North Carolina — After a one-week unfair labor practices strike, workers at the Kmart distribution center here have returned to work.

The walkout, which involved 78 percent of the permanent workforce, forced the facility to reroute two-thirds of the work to other distribution centers. It will take another week to reorganize the center here. The strike came at the retail business's busiest time of the year.

Workers, including 39 new members of Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU) Local 2603, returned to the facility November 29, driving in convoy to the plant parking lot. Gathering in the cafeteria, workers chanted, "No justice, no peace" and "ACTWU is in the house."

Plant manager Dale Rosser emerged angrily from his office and told workers that if they were still on strike they should leave the property or he would have them arrested. No one budged, and one worker presented him with a letter from the union informing the company that



Members of Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union Local 2603 picket during one-week strike against Kmart. The workers continue to fight company's antiunion drive.

the strike would end that morning. Rosser repeated his threat and was met with chants of "No justice, no peace." He quickly returned to his office.

The majority of strikers felt they were

going back stronger than before the walkout and could continue to fight for their rights on the job.

Kmart workers voted 2-1 in September 1993 to join the union. Since then no

agreement has been reached on a contract. Instead, the company has gone on a campaign of harassment against workers.

In the first week after the strike, it became clear management was attempting to mount an offensive against the union. During the walkout, some employees had begun to circulate a union decertification petition.

In at least one instance following the strike, two workers and a supervisor petitioned against the union, trying to convince workers that striking is futile and that they don't need a union. Such activity has taken place during working hours, although there are signs all over the plant warning against "solicitation of printed material." A third-shift supervisor worked overtime three mornings in a row, spending most of this time on

a union-busting campaign. A worker in the shipping department also spent most of a day driving around the warehouse with the petitions. An anonymous letter appeared on the shop floor, mocking union members and the strike and repeating exaggerated company assertions about how much work got out during the strike.

At the same time, supervisors have tried to break up conversations among ACTWU members and spied on their productivity. A number of scabs had been promoted to supervisors or "group leaders" when strikers returned to work.

These moves have outraged many workers. In one department, employees asked to meet with the personnel manager. They angrily surrounded him and demanded to know how a worker could spend most of the workday campaigning against the union. The company responded by posting a notice later that day reiterating its prohibition on solicitation and distribution of documents in work areas and during work hours. This policy was originally enforced to curtail union activity in the plant. In the meantime, management has targeted some individual workers for harassment.

Union members continue to discuss and use the strength they gained on strike to stick together. Discussions have also continued with new workers to convince them to join the union.

M.J. Rahn is a member of ACTWU Local 2603 in Greensboro.

Delegation of Montreal flour mill strikers visits fighting unionists in Decatur, Illinois

BY ROGER ANNIS

DECATUR, Illinois — Some 200 workers, including more than two dozen from Canada, staged a union solidarity rally here December 7 in front of the corporate headquarters and factory complex of the Archer-Daniels-Midland Corp. (ADM).

The rally kicked off a three-day visit to Decatur by a delegation of striking workers from the ADM-owned Ogilvie flour mill in Montreal. One hundred sixteen workers were forced out on strike there in June.

Cheers went up as the delegation of 26 strikers, three union officials, and one member of the Canadian Parliament arrived at the rally. "This visit will give a big boost to morale here in Decatur," commented Dave Frazier, a striking rubber worker at the Bridgestone/Firestone factory in Decatur.

Close to 4,000 workers walked out at the Firestone and Caterpillar plants or are locked out at the A.E. Staley company. The plants are running with scab labor, as is the Ogilvie mill. Strikers at all three Decatur companies attended the rally and every other event during the delegation's visit.

"This is what it's going to take to win our fight and the others — workers in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico standing together," said Caterpillar striker Jim Barton.

ADM collusion with Staley

ADM is a huge food-processing corporation and the largest employer in Decatur. It operates a large corn-processing and soybean complex next to Staley, another corn processor, and owns a 7 percent interest there. Just before the Staley lockout, the two companies built a pipeline to allow ADM to supply Staley with raw production material free of interference from picket lines.

"What's happening here in the war zone in Decatur is going on in Montreal as well," delegation member Marc Laviolette told the rally. He is a vice president of the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CNTU), the 250,000-member union federation to which Ogilvie strikers are affiliated.

"That's what brought us here," he continued. "Even if we're not in the same unions, we're all part of the same class and we should stand together for that reason," he said to cheers.

For the next two days, the Montreal workers visited picket lines and union halls. A supper was held in their honor at the Firestone strikers' union hall. Many were housed in strikers' homes. The visit was big news in the city and a topic of discussion in many workplaces.

Most of the Montreal strikers were French-speaking Quebecois, but language was no obstacle to communication. Strik-

ers from the two cities shared their experiences and learned the slogans and songs of their struggles. Many Decatur strikers learned for the first time that the majority of the population of the province of Quebec are French-speaking. They asked many questions about the history of the self-determination movement of the Quebecois.

French-language issue

Just prior to the delegation's arrival, local news reported the Ogilvie workers' dispute with ADM over the language of contract negotiations. ADM negotiators refuse to provide a French-language negotiator or translation services, thus obliging the unionists to speak English if they want to be understood.

"We were surprised to hear about the strike in Montreal," commented Firestone striker Frazier, "but we weren't surprised when we heard about the language issue. We said, 'Yup, that's ADM arrogance, all

right.'"

The Ogilvie strikers urged unionists in Decatur to visit Montreal and extended a formal invitation to attend the CNTU convention in Montreal in February.

Commenting on the impact in Decatur of the Ogilvie workers' visit, Caterpillar striker Brian McDuffie said, "This visit will influence people in Decatur who are sitting on the fence at this time. They will see that our strike is not just a local problem, it's part of a wider, international problem."

Ogilvie worker André Berthiaume commented, "Coming here, visiting the picket lines — it's been an incredible boost for our morale. ADM must understand that it is up against a very determined group of workers who are not going to quit."

Roger Annis is a member of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union Local 841 in Montreal.

Court fines Pennsylvania Caterpillar pickets

BY HELEN MEYERS
AND DEBORAH LIATOS

YORK, Pennsylvania — Ten members of United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 786 on strike against Caterpillar Inc. and two strike supporters had preliminary court hearings December 8. The supporters are members of Teamster Local 776 in nearby Harrisburg.

Eleven of the cases were a result of an August 1 picket line of 500 strikers and supporters at the Caterpillar plant that prevented most scabs from entering the facility. One case stemmed from an August 30 picket line incident. All the unionists were charged with harassment, stalking, or malicious mischief.

The workers had received their charges via mail more than a month after the events. Most had received letters of termination for "activity on or about the picket line."

Supporters attend hearing

Bud Haithcoath was one of two UAW Local 980 members at the Ford plant in Edison, New Jersey, who came to the hearing to back the Caterpillar workers. When asked why he had come, he replied, "I think it's important because it's working people, and secondly, it's the same union I'm in. Thirdly, if they get this over on Cat workers, it will escalate to other unions."

In the hearings, the prosecution used videos and photos as well as direct testimony by private security guards. Caterpillar Labor Relations representative Richard Wolfe said he identified the workers in the

pictures. Caterpillar management and hourly workers who had crossed the line testified to the damage to their vehicles.

After being identified by Wolfe in a video, striker Daryl Goodling took the stand to testify he was not that individual. He explained that he was wearing a hat and cut-off jeans, while the person in the video had no hat and gray shorts. The judge still found him guilty.

The prosecution later told the court that Wolfe had made a mistake. The judge then called Goodling back into the room and asked him to accept the court's apology. The unionist replied, "I will accept your apology, but I don't like the way justice is being dispensed in this courtroom today."

The two Teamsters, Derek Clark and Joseph Mitchell, work at Roadway Freight and had been on strike themselves last April. They went to the August 1 picket line to bring solidarity to UAW members. As Mitchell left the courthouse he told the Caterpillar workers, "I'm damn proud to have been there, I'll be back again, we support you."

Striker Brian Sinclair, who was found guilty of harassment and stalking, said in an interview that at the August 1 picket line a car had driven into the area of the line he was standing in and hit him three times before running directly into him. He and another striker went to the Springettsbury Police Department to file charges.

They got the driver's name, address, and license plate number, but the police refused to charge the driver and said they would not get involved. "About 32 days

later they got involved," Sinclair said of the cops. "That's when I got my charges."

Five defendants were found not guilty. Seven were convicted, given a \$300 fine, and required to pay court costs. Those accused of malicious mischief were assessed damages. All the unionists found guilty will appeal.

Caterpillar stonewalls

In other strike developments, the UAW sent a letter December 6 to the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service asking the agency to set up a meeting with Caterpillar. "Any positive results from this meeting could lead to discussing and hopefully resolving other issues that separate the parties," UAW secretary-treasurer Bill Casstevens wrote.

Caterpillar vice president Wayne Zimmerman wrote the mediation service, "It is obvious that the UAW is looking for a way to end their ill-advised strike...It is equally obvious that the way for them to do that is to return to the bargaining table with a substantive, comprehensive bargaining proposal."

Terry Orndorff, bargaining chair for Local 786, said Caterpillar's response "doesn't surprise us at all. They're only out to break the union, not to resolve the issues."

Helen Meyers is a member of UAW Local 1695 in Landsdale, Pennsylvania. Deborah Liatos is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 1776 in Philadelphia.

Unionists rally for rubber workers

BY NORTON SANDLER

DES MOINES, Iowa — Hundreds of rubber workers and their supporters in the labor movement packed United Rubber Workers (URW) Local 310 union hall here December 8 to support striking Bridgestone/Firestone workers.

A big majority of the 700 participants were Local 310 members and their families. Substantial delegations of URW members from Goodyear plants in Lincoln, Nebraska, and Topeka, Kansas, also attended. Many United Auto Workers (UAW) union members from John Deere plants in Waterloo, Iowa, and Ankeny, a suburb of Des Moines, were on hand. Several unionists came from UAW Local 270 at Fawn Engineering.

Other workers wore caps and jackets or carried signs indicating that they were from graphic arts, machinists, communications, rail, Teamsters and other unions. Des Moines mayor John Dorrian was present in the crowd.

URW members have been on strike at Bridgestone/Firestone plants in Oklahoma City; Noblesville, Indiana; Akron, Ohio; and Nashville, Tennessee, since July after the company demanded steep concessions and refused to negotiate any further. The Des Moines plant, with 1,300 union workers, is the company's agricultural tire center. It has been a focal point for management's attacks on the union. The company has been advertising heavily for scabs in newspapers hundreds of miles from here.

Deere workers offer solidarity

The rally kicked off with officials from the two Deere locals presenting financial contributions to Local 310 president Bernie Sinclair. The crowd applauded enthusiastically when it was reported that more than \$17,000 has been donated to the URW recently from UAW locals at Deere across Iowa.

URW national president Ken Coss told the workers, "Bridgestone is just beginning to realize that you are human beings, that you have self-pride. You have earned their respect, and you are not something they can use and throw away."

Adding an anti-Japanese thrust to his talk Coss described a meeting that several Democratic Party politicians recently held in Washington, D.C., with the Japanese ambassador to the United States. Noting that Bridgestone is a Japanese-owned company, Coss said, "This is not a normal labor conflict, this is a U.S. versus Japan incident."

There are now several hundred strikebreakers working in the Des Moines plant. The December 8 march and rally took place a couple of days after a scab threw a tire iron at a union picket, piercing his stomach and rupturing his bladder.

Company provocation

At the end of the enthusiastic rally, union officials organized for the march to pass three picket lines at gates along the front of the sprawling plant. A series of

court injunctions have restricted both the number of pickets and the areas in which they must stand.

Thick white lines are painted at the gates designating areas that strikers cannot pass without being arrested.

As the march passed by the plant strikebreakers were coming off their 12-hour shift. The company provocatively lined up dozens of scabs on a sidewalk 40 yards behind the fence near the main gate. Shouts were exchanged back and forth and a snowball fight erupted. Union members cheered when snowballs bounced off the large Plexiglas shields being carried by the company-hired Vance Security thugs. This rent-a-cop outfit has been photographing and otherwise harassing URW members throughout the strike.

After a few minutes the scabs were dispatched to their cars. Many union members then massed at the gate where the scabs' cars would have to exit. Strikers stood in the way of the first scab who tried to leave the plant. This strikebreaker was hustled away by cops from the Polk County Sheriff's department. For more than an hour union members milled around while the scabs remained in their cars on the Firestone lot.

Another provocation was staged as a scab walked out of the parking lot and into the crowd of union members. She was allowed to pass without being obstructed. A few workers shouted at her.

Strikers vented some of their frustration at the Polk County cops, who have stepped up their harassment and arrests against



Militant/Barbara Bowman

Striking rubber workers and supporters rally December 8 in Des Moines, Iowa.

strikers. A number of times during the protest, workers directed their attention at the cops, chanting, "Scab! Scab!"

Over a Sheriff Department cruiser's loudspeaker, URW Local 310 president Sinclair urged union members to end their confrontation with the strikebreakers and march back to the union hall. "This was not part of our agreement," he told union members.

Many, but not all of the protesters, moved away from the gate. As the cops began to allow the scab cars out of the parking lot a number of union members returned to the entrance and pelted the cars with more snowballs. The Sheriff's department has subpoenaed television footage of the event and is threatening arrests.

In an effort to detract from the impact of

the rally, media coverage of the event branded the union as violent. "Rally by Firestone union turns into a rumble," was the headline of the following day's Des Moines Register.

At the union hall after the rally and march, striker Ron Myers, who has worked 32 years in the plant, said, "The rally was a great boost for the doubters. It shows our strength. It's going to take everybody to win. The company says they are getting 50 percent production, but John Deere workers I talked to here today say they are down to having 3,000 agriculture tires on hand."

Another union member added, "It was good today, but we should have been doing this all along. This is a long strike and with Christmas coming people are getting frustrated."

Socialist rail workers discuss bosses' attacks

BY STEVE O'REILLY

MINNEAPOLIS — Members of the United Transportation Union (UTU) from around the country who belong to the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialists, met here December 3. They discussed the problems confronting rail workers today — from unsafe working conditions to concession contracts — as well as the importance of the defense of the Cuban revolution.

"The one-sided war against unions and the working class has had a big reflection in the rail industry," noted John Cox, a railroad worker in Pittsburgh. Cox gave the main presentation at the meeting of more than 50 socialist rail workers.

"The rail industry is experiencing its first growth in peacetime since the 1920s," Cox noted. "There has been a dramatic shift from trucking to rail. Rail now accounts for 15 percent of cargo shipped, up from 11 percent in the recent past."

At the same time, the unionist pointed out, there is a growing tendency toward consolidation by the railroad owners. For example, Burlington Northern and Union Pacific have made bids to acquire Santa Fe Corp. There is the possibility of Conrail merging with Norfolk Southern.

"This production breakthrough," Cox reported, "is a result in part of the success the rail bosses have had in pushing through concessions. There has been a dramatic reduction in the size of work crews."

Crew reduction

In the last few years, most freight train crews included an engineer, a conductor, and a switchperson. This in itself was the result of the railroad bosses pushing through a smaller crew. But now many crews are "conductor only." That is, one engineer and one conductor who must do all the ground work that a larger crew used to do.

New hires with no previous experience are being rapidly forced to become engineers, often with deficient and inadequate training.

For Norfolk Southern this has meant a 47 percent jump in cars handled. For rail workers, it means more work and less safety on the job.

Jane Roland, who works at Norfolk Southern, said one coworker suffered severe injuries from hitting a bridge while riding the last car of a train. Due to lack of radio communications the engineer did not realize and continued on for another 30

miles. "The company was so callous," Roland said. "They printed a notice saying the worker had violated Rule M, that all workers must be aware of close clearances."

But this "one-sided war" as Cox put it, has also sparked resistance. One example was the Soo Line strike, which ended August 29. UTU members there walked out to block company attempts to continue to reduce crew sizes, skimp on safety, and hold down wages. Track workers honored the UTU picket lines, as did engineers, in spite of a call by the union officials of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers to break the strike. Soo Line workers recently voted to accept a new contract.

The walkout was also weakened by the UTU officials who tried to whip up national chauvinism, ostensibly to win support for the strike. Some officials called the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) against scabs from Canada and raised slogans like "Canucks go home." Soo Line is owned by the Canadian Pacific railroad.

Some rail workers took an entirely different approach. They traveled to Manitoba and Winnipeg, Ontario, and spoke to rail workers and union officials there about the importance of the strike.

There have been other signs of resistance to the attempts by the railroads to weaken the unions and force through concessions. At rail yards in St. Louis the UTU passed out red T-shirts that read "Implement the contract, not interpret it."

Candace Wagner, who works at Norfolk Southern there, reported that at some yards 90 percent of the workers from all three of the main rail unions wore the shirts on the same day in late October as a show of unity to prepare for national contract negotiations.

In Salt Lake City, Utah, another worker reported, the Union Pacific railroad attempted to force through the conductor-only jobs. For four days workers carried out a work-to-rules job action. One job took all night to do instead of the usual couple of hours.

The company backed down and put back the helper jobs while reserving the "right" to cut the crews in the future.

Jon Hillson, who was active in the Soo Line strike in Minneapolis, said that these types of actions show that "the membership will fight if given a chance."

The socialist rail workers discussed the importance of continuing to build support

for the Caterpillar strike, as well as locked-out Staley workers, and United Rubber Workers union members on strike against Firestone. While the strike wave is over, Cox noted, resistance continues. "The Caterpillar strike remains the most important strike in the United States today," he said.

Those present at the meeting discussed the possibilities of helping to initiate tours of Caterpillar and Staley workers to their cities through their union locals.

Opportunities for socialist workers

Socialists in the rail unions have worked hard to get communist literature into the hands of their coworkers. Some 116 subscriptions to the *Militant* out of a goal of 85 were sold during the last international circulation drive, although the targets for *New International* and *Perspectiva Mundial* were not met.

The meeting adopted goals of convincing 35 rail workers who currently subscribe to the *Militant* to renew and selling 50 single copies of the *Militant* each week from now until February 15. The participants will also try to sell a total of 30 copies of *To Speak the Truth*, a collection of speeches by Fidel Castro and Che Guevara, and Guevara's *Bolivian Diary*.

Many of the participants spoke to the importance of discussions on Cuba in exchanges with their coworkers.

Javier Aravena, a Santa Fe worker in San Francisco, commented on the tour last year of Pável Díaz, a Cuban youth leader. Aravena liked Díaz's statement to Staley workers that revolutionary Cuba has been on strike against the U.S. government for 35 years.

That is the point, noted Cox. The workers and farmers of Cuba have used governmental power not just to raise the standard of living and the cultural level in Cuba, but to aid working people around the world.

"It's not a question of solidarity," he said, "but it really affects the class struggle within the United States, the last imperialist empire."

The socialist rail workers also discussed which parts of the industry socialists should work in to best advance the interests of the working class. Freight transport is much more central to the U.S. economy than passenger service, noted Sue Skinner, a rail worker from Greensboro, North Carolina. Socialist workers want to concentrate their efforts on the freight lines, she explained.

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Troops invade Chechnya

Continued from front page

oil-rich region strategically located in the heart of the Caucasus and lying between the Caspian and Black Seas. "My government considers political stability in the area to be essential to economic development," a Russian diplomat at the United Nations said. Important oil pipelines go through Chechnya, which makes it possible for Moscow to market petroleum from other parts of southern Russia. Several oil companies have invested or signed contracts to invest \$800 million for exploration and development in the Caucasus.

Chechnya president Dzhokar Dudayev, who is a former Soviet air force general, and other leaders of the republic declared their independence from Moscow in 1991. Dudayev has survived several attempts by the Russian government to oust him.

There are 1.2 million people living in Chechnya, a majority of them Muslims.

The Caucasus republics along Russia's southern borders were formerly republics in the Soviet Union. Since the dissolution of the Stalinist ruling apparatus in 1991, fierce wars and smaller scale guerrilla conflicts have occurred in nearby Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia.

Tanks, armored troop carriers, and infantry columns swept into the northern Caucasus region in the early morning hours of December 11 from the east, west, and northwest. In the first three days of fighting some 70 Russian soldiers and 50 Chechen civilians are reported to have been killed, nearly 60 Russian troops were taken prisoner.

In the neighboring states of Ingushetia and Dagestan, residents leveled some attacks at Russian soldiers as they passed through. Thirty armored vehicles were torched in Ingushetia. Dagestan officials said 59 Russian officers and soldiers were captured by local residents.

In both Ingushetia and Dagestan crowds stood on the road to stop armored columns from advancing. "We'll throw ourselves under their tanks if we have to," Salian Aushiev told reporters as he hastily put up barricades.

Imperialist powers support Yeltsin

Washington and other imperialist powers registered their support for Yeltsin's war moves, declaring the assault an "internal affair." One Clinton administration official, described as an "expert" on the former Soviet Union, claimed that "Chechnya is part of Russia and always has been."

Joining this chorus, the French foreign minister said Chechnya was an "integral part of the Russian federation."

The lead editorial in the December 13 *New York Times* stated, "The three year insurrection cannot be allowed to stand. Though a negotiated political settlement would be the best outcome, Mr. Yeltsin is justified in using military force to suppress the rebellion."

Yeltsin set a December 15 deadline for the Chechens to surrender their weapons. Moscow also offered a proposal for future economic assistance contingent upon the Chechnyan regime abandoning its claims to independence. In response to the invasion Gen. Dudayev called on the "population to wage war with Russia until it leaves the territory of Chechnya. We have no other option."

Chechnya has not "always" been a part of Russia. Not until the latter half of the 19th century was it totally conquered by the czarist Russian army. Following the Russian revolution in 1917, it became a part of the autonomous mountain republics. Under the leadership of V.I. Lenin, a leader of the new Soviet republic, the revolutionary government moved to restore to the people of the northern Caucasus the lands that were stolen from them.

Later, as the socialist revolution degenerated under the rise of Joseph Stalin and the bureaucratic caste around him, communist leadership was destroyed and the peoples oppressed under czarist rule — the "prison house of nations" — were again denied their sovereign rights.

Stalinist repression of the Chechens reached its zenith in 1943-1944, when more than 1 million were deported to Siberia and many killed for alleged collaboration with the Nazi invasion of the Caucasus region.

Young Socialists speak in Cuba

Continued from front page

worker in Chicago. In a meeting with some of the cigarette workers, Craine was asked about conditions facing working people in the United States. Pointing to the decline of the world capitalist order, she replied that the employers are trying to impose "less pay, fewer rights, and more interventions and wars."

Craine cited the anti-immigrant Proposition 187 in California, which would bar undocumented workers from public education and health care, as an example of the kinds of attacks the bosses are waging against workers' rights.

"Do you think 187 will be extended to other states?" asked Sergio Menéndez. Cubans have followed the news about Proposition 187 closely and this was a question everywhere the two young socialists went.

Craine said not only are capitalist politicians in other states pushing for similar measures, "but this attempt to blame immigrants for unemployment and other results of the economic crisis is happening from Italy to France, and Britain to Germany." She also described the protests in October and November by thousands of workers and youth in Los Angeles against the measure.

"How do you do your work in the United States with the hostile attitude" of the government? asked another worker.

Taylor described how socialists explain their views openly at their workplaces, and sell literature at tables set up on universities and in front of factory gates.

"We discuss politics of all kinds with workers," he reported, "and explain that unlike all other countries where the bosses' austerity plans are putting workers on the street, Cuba is an example of a different road, a road we need to take. Cubans are fighting to keep workers in control of the decisions over how resources will be used, and to guarantee basic needs of all who live here."

Young Socialists defend Cuba

Taylor cited the November 12 march of 3,000 in Washington, D.C., against the U.S. government's attacks on Cuba. "We've had the opportunity to have Cubans visit the United States and speak to students and workers to answer the most common questions people have. The Union of Young Communists invited us here to continue this exchange."

Explaining how the YS is helping build an international youth brigade to Cuba in January, Taylor stated, "Students and workers who may not be convinced about the revolution will travel to see Cuba for themselves."

Before coming to Villa Clara province the two young socialists spent six days in

Havana speaking with youth and workers. They visited an education center for delinquent youth; a hospital; several schools; Cerro Pelado sports center, the main training center for Cuban athletes; and a computer study center, part of a network of such facilities open to all young people.

In an interview on Havana's local television station, CHTV, Taylor was asked about the activities of the Young Socialists in the United States. He showed several copies of the Marxist magazine *Nueva Internacional* and the newly published edition of *The Bolivian Diary of Ernesto Che Guevara* to illustrate the books the young communists use in their political work. The next day, during the tour of the hospital, a doctor who had seen Taylor on CHTV asked, "How can you publish books like that in the United States?"

This was also one of the first questions of a student at the Enrique José Varona teaching institute that evening. Taylor explained that these books are financed and distributed by working people interested in seeing them printed.

"Working people in the United States defend free speech and the right to different points of view from attacks by the employers," Taylor added. "In addition, a number of youth are curious about Che Guevara and want to read what he said, because he has a reputation as a fighter and that attracts them."

In one dorm room, before the meeting with several dozen students, some turned away from a popular Brazilian soap opera to ask, "What do people in the United States think of Cuba?" Another question asked at many meetings was whether it is hard to be a socialist and defend the Cuban revolution in Miami.

'Are you Marxists?'

After the soap opera many students joined the meeting asking, "How does your group work?" and, "Are you Marxists or social democrats?"

Craine responded, "We are Marxists, communists. Today it's easier to explain what that really is since the disintegration of the Soviet Union. The rulers there claimed to be communists, but really weren't, and they misled people about socialism and communism. Now, these bureaucrats and government officials are telling the truth — that they want to be capitalists."

"But capitalism can't resolve the problems in those countries any more than it



Militant/Argiris Malapanis

Workers in Havana cigar factory

can anywhere else. Conditions are getting worse for most working people from Russia to Latin America. We think workers who begin to resist this and fight to defend their rights and standard of living will be more interested in real communist ideas."

At the V.I. Lenin School, which specializes in pre-university science studies, two dozen students gathered to speak with the young socialists. The president of the Federation of University Students had met Young Socialist members at a conference in France and commented he was glad to see the books they displayed at an event there, including speeches by Fidel Castro and Che Guevara.

Some students addressed Cuba's role in Angola after Taylor noted some Cubans express doubt that their country had gained much by this. Hundreds of thousands of Cuban volunteer troops aided Angola for 13 years and helped defeat an invasion by the apartheid regime.

"We went to Angola because the Angolan government and its people requested assistance," said one student. "We gave aid without strings attached, and we gained pride knowing we stood for principles."

"We aren't mercenaries and we don't regret the role we played in Ethiopia or Angola," he said. "The [U.S. government's] intervention in Haiti is a different thing," he added. "That is not without strings."

Afterward, a young woman told Craine, "We get a lot of people who visit to see our education system, but this was really great, because you think like us."

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Vancouver: 3967 Main St. Postal code: V5V 3P3. Tel: (604) 872-8343.

FRANCE

Paris: MBE 201, 208 rue de la Convention. Postal code: 750175. Tel: (1) 47-26-58-21

ICELAND

Reykjavik: Klappartíg 26. Mailing address: P. Box 233, 121 Reykjavik. Tel: (91) 17513.

NEW ZEALAND

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

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

SWEDEN

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

Pigeons will prefer it on your lawn — The Richard Nixon Library gift catalog offers the "birthplace birdhouse," a mini-model of his boyhood home. \$45.



Harry Ring

Can't fool him — A recent declaration by Catholic bishops conceded there is sexism in the church. The statement also backed the ban on women as priests. New York's

Cardinal John O'Connor was troubled. He said the declaration "has a lot of good language about sexism. But what about the role of radical feminism in the problem?"

They do keep campaign promises — To advance family values, House Speaker Newt Gingrich and cohorts are creating a Family Friendly Advisory Commission to develop a schedule that will give lawmakers more time with their families. One idea being weighed is a Tuesday through Thursday schedule.

Next, lock the toilets and give out diapers? — A worker in a Collins, Mississippi, poultry processing plant told a *Wall Street*

Journal reporter she had suffered a kidney infection that forced her to make frequent trips to the bathroom outside of designated breaks. Barked her supervisor: "The rule is you can't go to the bathroom more than three times a week, unless you got a doctor's permit."

Close to the poverty line — Paul Tellier, top dog at Canada's National Railway, is a big advocate of austerity and has fired 11,000 workers to prove it. Meanwhile, he arranged a \$300,000 interest-free company loan to buy a \$430,000 home. This was reasonable, he said, because he's been working for \$345,000 a year, which is "on the low side" for big-time rail execs.

Besides, people with bad tickers shouldn't shop — French researchers found that 25 of 35 pacemakers exposed to electromagnetic antitheft devices developed "serious dysfunctions." A U.S. study concluded the sensory devices "can be dangerous to pacemaker patients." A spokesman for the Food and Drug Administration said they're planning to take a look, but "it doesn't appear to be a major problem."

What heart? — The reader who sent us the above item commented, "We can't argue they don't have their heart in the right place (and section of the paper)." The report was on the "Money" page of the *New York Times*.

Making the grade — Since its installation in 1992, the government of Estonia has reportedly won high marks from international financial circles for its hard-driving free-market "reforms." Also, at home it faces charges of swindling the equivalent of \$3.7 million when it withdrew Russian rubles from circulation and introduced its own currency.

Taking care of business — "Despite widespread evidence that construction techniques for steel-frame buildings proved inadequate during the Northridge earthquake, building owners will be allowed to use the same methods to repair the damage, Los Angeles city officials said." — News item.

A-bomb stamp proposal stirs controversy

BY BOB MILLER

NEWARK, New Jersey — Responding to international criticism, the Clinton administration pressured the U.S. Postal Service to dump plans for a stamp picturing an atomic bomb mushroom cloud against a red sky. The caption of the stamp read "Atomic bombs hasten war's end, August 1945."

The stamp was to be issued next September as part of the last group of commemoratives marking "milestones" of World War II. The first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, Japan, on Aug. 6, 1945, killing an estimated 140,000 people. On August 9 another was dropped on Nagasaki, killing 70,000. Some 100,000 people later died due to radiation poisoning and other effects of the bombings.

"We agree that the atomic bomb helped speed the end of the war," said White House press secretary Dee Dee Myers. However, she added, "It is our view that there could be more appropriate artwork to commemorate this event."

According to press reports the post office's governing board discussed the controversy at a closed-door meeting as criticism mounted. It directed Postmaster General Marvin Runyon not to change the stamp unless President Bill Clinton called for the move. After speaking to White House chief of staff Leon Panetta twice, Runyon told the press December 8, "We are changing the design of the stamp because of the importance of U.S.-Japan relations at this critical time in foreign policy, and because the president conveyed his views that it was appropriate to do so." The State Department also pointedly urged that the stamp be dropped.

The first response of postal officials to the criticism was to stand fast. "We would be remiss in omitting such a watershed and historically critical event as the use of the atomic bomb," a postal service statement issued December 1 read. The stamp will now be replaced by a design showing President Harry Truman preparing to announce

the end of the war.

Japanese people and government officials expressed outrage over the design of the mushroom cloud stamp. The Japanese embassy released a statement noting that tens of thousands of Japanese civilians were killed in the bombings. Ambassador Takakazu Kuriyama issued a formal protest against the stamp December 2.

"As the only country to have suffered the atomic bombings," Foreign Minister Yohei Kono said, "I don't think the Japanese will have positive feelings toward the design of the stamp at all."

Hitoshi Motoshima, the mayor of Nagasaki, called the stamp "heartless." "Under the mushroom cloud," he said, "hundreds of thousands of non-military people, including children and women, died or were hurt in just one moment." Motoshima told reporters, "The atom bomb wiped out everything: people in church, children in kindergarten, even their dogs and cats." Among those killed in Hiroshima were 30,000 Koreans forced to work in the large munitions factories and other jobs.

Abihiro Takahashi, who was badly burned in the Hiroshima bombing as a 14 year old and is now an official of the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation, said, "The stamp's issuance would lead toward sentiment opposite from the way we had been hoping to go, which is to abolish the atomic bomb."

Enola Gay controversy

Justifying the atomic bombing against Japan is also the focus of an ongoing dispute over an exhibit scheduled to open in May at the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C., entitled "The Last Act: the Atomic Bomb and the End of World War II." The exhibit includes the front fuselage of the Enola Gay, from which the Hiroshima bomb was dropped. It took 10 years and a million dollars to renovate the plane.

Following months of criticism from members of Congress, the American Legion, and other veterans' groups, the Smithsonian will omit parts of the exhibit that relate the horrible effects of the bombings. A section on the postwar nuclear race is also being dropped.

A group of historians and scholars sent a letter to the Smithsonian calling the revisions "intellectual corruption" and a "historical cleansing."

"The present version has no clear statement that there is controversy surrounding the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki," said Barton Bernstein, a history professor at Stanford University and a member of the group. Professor Martin Sherwin from Dartmouth College, who along with Bernstein worked on the exhibit with the museum last year, said the revised text "has nothing to do with the history as it is known by serious historians.... The job of the Air and Space Museum is to protect history, not to cave into political pressure."

Weapon to protect U.S. empire

When the U.S. capitalist rulers held a monopoly on atomic weapons, they used the bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, sacrificing the lives of more than 200,000 civilians. The Truman administration did so even as the Japanese government was suing for peace. Their political aim was to demonstrate to the toilers of the world that



Atomic bombs hasten war's end, August 1945
U.S. Postal Service had planned to release this stamp to mark World War II. In dropping nuclear bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki while Tokyo was already suing for peace, the U.S. rulers announced their preparations for new wars in the world.

Washington would not hesitate to unleash this weapon of mass destruction to protect their empire.

James P. Cannon, the national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party at the time, who had served 13 months in jail for opposing the U.S. government's war policy, explained in an Aug. 22, 1945, speech: "In two calculated blows, with two atomic

bombs, American imperialism killed or injured half a million human beings. The young and the old, the child in the cradle and the aged and infirm... they all had to die in two blows because of a quarrel between the imperialists of Wall Street and a similar gang in Japan. This is how American imperialism is bringing civilization to the Orient."

- 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO -

THE MILITANT

Published in the Interest of the Working People
December 26, 1969 Price 10¢

CHAPEL HILL, North Carolina — The month-old cafeteria workers' strike at the University of North Carolina, which forced the closing of the campus' six dining halls, ended Dec. 8 hours before a scheduled show of force by black students here and from surrounding colleges.

Branded "Black Monday," the planned activity turned into a victory celebration after the settlement was announced. The food workers, who approved the contract provisions unanimously, returned to their jobs Tuesday.

Terms of the contract include 10 paid holidays, 10 days sick leave, a provision for job classification and seniority, unemployment compensation, a union bulletin board, and an end to split shifts. Strike leaders noted that these gains, while important, were only a beginning.

Speaking to over 1,000 students and workers at the victory rally, Jesse Epps, a special assistant to American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Union President Jerry Wurf, issued a challenge to university officials, stating that "we have just begun to fight. We will not be leaving Chapel Hill or North Carolina as long as there are black and poor white workers struggling."

Other union leaders indicated that a major drive to organize porters and maids, and then hospital workers, would begin immediately.

THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE
NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

December 23, 1944

The Allied slaughter of Greek workers and peasants — like the allied counter-revolutionary activities in Italy and Belgium — gives us a preview of the "peace" worked out in the secret conferences of Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin at Teheran, Casablanca, Cairo and Quebec.

The rivalries among the Allied powers, coupled with the great popular indignation over the "unexpected" turn towards civil war in the ostensible war for "democracy," have begun to bring into the light some of the secret deals. Churchill revealed on December 5 that Roosevelt and Stalin had handed over Greece, Italy and Belgium as "spheres of influence" to British imperialism as its share of the spoils of war. Churchill again took the floor in the House of Commons December 12 to reveal in part how the "Big Three" at Teheran had decided to carve up Germany and Poland.

According to Churchill, the Soviet Union is to get "one-third of Poland," including the "Pripiet Marshes, a most desolate region which, though it swells acreage, does not add to the wealth of those who own it." The plot to carve up Germany and Poland includes "the disentanglement of peoples in the west and north and transference of several millions of people... the total expulsion of Germans from the areas to be acquired by Poland." Churchill declared "these matters were first discussed at Teheran." He added that since then President Roosevelt has been "aware of everything that has passed and of what is in the minds of the Russians and British."

NEW INTERNATIONAL no. 7

Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's Assault on Iraq

By Jack Barnes

The U.S. government's murderous blockade, bombardment, and invasion of Iraq heralded increasingly sharp conflicts among imperialist powers, more wars, and growing instability of international capitalism. \$12



ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:
1945: When U.S. Troops Said 'No!' by Mary-Alice Waters

Tells the hidden history of the mass protests by GIs overseas demanding to be brought home in late 1945, a development that hastened the end of World War II.

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or from Pathfinder 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Fax: (212) 727-0150. Please add \$3.00 for shipping and handling.

Cuba haunts Miami Summit

U.S. president Bill Clinton called the meeting of 34 heads of state from throughout the Americas a "Partnership for Development and Prosperity." But workers and farmers will not be the ones to prosper as U.S. capitalists and their counterparts throughout the continent hash out another trade deal.

Ernesto Che Guevara, one of the outstanding leaders of the Cuban revolution, once called such capitalist summits a "clear demonstration of the fraudulent methods used by the United States to maintain false hopes among nations while exploitation grows worse."

The proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas is a misnomer. It is not about free trade. If it comes about, it will be another pact among employers to codify the direction they have already embarked on.

The U.S. rulers expect that by breaking down protective tariffs throughout the American continent, they can strengthen their hand in the fierce trade competition with their rivals in Europe and Japan. Capitalists in Latin America, too weak to compete on the same level as the northern giant, are rushing to join the free trade bandwagon.

In a privatization frenzy, governments from Mexico to Argentina and Chile have sold off state-owned industries, laid off hundreds of thousands of workers, and slashed subsidies for basic necessities, dealing big blows to working people. U.S. capital is pouring into Latin America at an unprecedented pace. This has meant a huge bonanza, above all for U.S. capitalists, as well as for the rulers in the strongest capitalist countries in Latin America.

Throughout the continent, where the mass of toilers are still predominantly peasants, the trade and other economic measures pushed by Washington will strengthen the hold of agribusiness and drive millions of toilers off

their land and into the urban centers, as is occurring today in Mexico. This is a violent transformation, as agricultural producers are forced to become factory workers in order to rapidly develop export-oriented manufacturing.

This process will inevitably deepen social divisions and heighten class conflict. The expansion of capitalism is enlarging the middle class, and even producing a few billionaires in Latin America. At the same time, it is also creating class polarization and conflicts out of which the industrial working class will be forced to struggle to defend itself. Most importantly, it will increase the size and weight of the working class, putting it in a stronger position in the giant class battles that are shaping up.

It was to be expected that the only government not invited to the Miami summit was that of revolutionary Cuba. But the specter of Cuba haunted the meeting.

This is because Cuba's socialist course is the alternative to the perspective discussed at the capitalist summit. Just one week before the conference, Cuban president Fidel Castro put forward the only realistic answer for the workers and farmers of the world. "An uncompromising struggle against capitalism, against neoliberalism, against imperialism is necessary," he explained.

In a recent editorial, the *New York Times* castigated Cuba, saying it can't "remain a virtuous holdout against the capitalist tide." This is the basic argument of all bosses: it's hopeless to fight. But Cuba's working people have demonstrated it can be done. Workers and farmers swept out the powerful exploiters, took power, and began a socialist revolution, which, despite all dire predictions, they are tenaciously defending today. Between the two class poles in world politics today — Washington and Havana — it's the Cuban road that shows the way for working people everywhere.

Social security: a universal right

The drastic cuts to Social Security proposed by Sens. Bob Kerrey and John Danforth, who head a bipartisan commission established by President Bill Clinton, are a harbinger of things to come. Clinton and Democrats and Republicans in Congress may squabble over how to do it. But in their drive to restore falling profit rates in the midst of a worldwide depression, U.S. employers have no choice but to try to destroy as a universal right the social entitlements that working people won over the last 60 years.

Workers fought for Social Security as one way to lessen the constant fear of becoming destitute and the dog-eat-dog competition that is imposed on them by capitalism. It was an initial step by working people toward conquering the social organization of the basic conditions for life, such as education and welfare, for a lifetime. Social Security is a conquest for the entire working class. It is not a handout but a right, based solely on membership in the human race.

This, of course, is the opposite of the capitalists' view. For them, a worker's life is expendable. As far as they are concerned, workers' lives begin when they are old enough to sell their labor power and end the day they become too old, sick, or injured — barely more than 40 years at best. Clinton is expressing the opinion of the class he represents when he complains that workers are living longer than anyone intended. By continuing to demand medical care, food, and housing, they're cheating the bosses out of their hard-earned profits!

Contrast this contempt for working people to the *Washington Post* editors' assertion that the hundreds of billions of dollars Washington hands out in interest payments to rich bondholders "as a practicable matter aren't cuttable."

The capitalist rulers' attacks on the social wage are an

integral part of their overall assault on the working class. The employers in the United States have made more progress than their rivals in Europe and Japan in driving down wages and living conditions — although capitalists in those countries are trying hard to catch up. But downsizing, layoffs, and wage cuts are not enough. If they are going to stop the long-term decline in their profit rates, the employers must take on the social component of workers' wages.

This is at the heart of the proposal to replace entitlements with means-testing for social programs and schemes like privatizing pension plans. Kerrey, Danforth, and company are taking up the proposal raised earlier by Ross "I don't need it, I'm rich" Perot of starting cutbacks in Social Security with the wealthy. They hope this will win public acceptance and pave the way for putting workers on the chopping block next.

As for privatizing pension plans, capitalists have already launched such a drive in Latin American countries like Argentina — with devastating results for working people. Any break in the universal and social character of Social Security is just the first step on the road to transforming it from a right to charity.

Big-business columnists like Tony Snow call entitlements "theft." But this is a lie. Education, health care, and a living wage from birth to death are basic human rights. The resources to provide them are just a small part of the wealth produced by workers and farmers, who have a right to reclaim it.

Rather than agreeing to "do our share" to resolve the employers' profit crisis, the entire labor movement should throw itself into the fight to defend and extend Social Security to include full medical care for all, lifetime education, and unemployment insurance at union wages for anyone without a job.

Working-class stance on Quebec

Working people should reject the reactionary campaign of lies, blackmail, and nationalist demagoguery launched by Canada's federal government against the right of people in Quebec to freely decide their relationship to the rest of the country.

If we are to defend our unions, our social services, and our rights against the capitalists' current offensive, working people must unite in defending Quebec's democratic right, as an oppressed nation, to self-determination.

That being said, however, there is nothing that working people can support in the Parti Québécois government's draft legislation declaring Quebec a sovereign country.

Workers and exploited farmers have nothing in common with the capitalist rulers who exploit our labor and wage war against our brothers and sisters — from the Natives, immigrants, and others within the borders of Canada to working people around the world. We have nothing to gain by defending either the federalist status quo against Quebec, as Ottawa is asking us to do, or the "territorial integrity" of Quebec against the demands of Native people for their rights, as the Quebec government proposes.

While leaving their definition of a "sovereign Quebec"

conveniently vague, the PQ proposals maintain the capitalist system of exploitation that is at the root of the national oppression of Québécois and Natives. It supports an imperialist foreign policy, pledging Quebec's membership in imperialist alliances like the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the British Commonwealth. It maintains the segregated and unequal school system imposed in Quebec by the Canadian constitution.

Instead of lining up behind one or another wing of the ruling class, working people need to unite together to defend our common interests against the capitalists and their governments in both Ottawa and Quebec.

The November 16 demonstration of 10,000 students from Quebec and Ontario against the federal government's proposal to impose massive cutbacks in education shows the way forward. The trip made to Decatur, Illinois, by 26 Ogilvie flour mill strikers in Montreal to link their fight to that of striking workers there is also a fine example of the kind of international solidarity that helps point the way forward. This is the kind of proletarian stance that working-class fighters must bring into the current debate. We must not leave the terrain to the capitalist forces that dominate the debate.

Taking step toward a labor party?

A "Labor Educational Conference" took place in Toledo, Ohio, December 10-11. The gathering was sponsored by Labor Party Advocates; several Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union locals; and a few area unions. Some 200 people attended the meeting. Reprinted below are excerpts from a 1991 *Militant* article entitled, "Is OCAW's 'Labor Party Advocates' a step toward independent political action?"

BY JOEL BRITTON

In response to the unremitting employers' offensive against the unions in the United States, officials of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union (OCAW) have voted to support Labor Party Advocates....

Organizers say the Labor Party Advocates will be an organizing committee for a labor party, not a party itself. They seek to sign up 100,000 dues-paying members. The organization will be run by a steering committee, members of which must be union officials.

Many working people, having been the target of a 15-year assault on their wages, working conditions, and rights, are interested in hearing about any discussion on the formation of a labor party.

In numerous strikes and struggles, fighting workers have come up against the fact that both the Democratic and Republican parties serve the interests of the billionaire families that run the United States. Many see the broader attacks on working people as a sign that the two parties now have a common domestic, as well as foreign, policy.

Breaking out of the union officialdom's decades-long collaboration with and reliance on the twin parties of big business means charting an independent political course for labor. Such a giant step for the labor movement would mark a fundamental shift, one that would necessarily come out of deepening struggles of working people and at least the beginning of the transformation of the unions into fighting instruments in the hands of the ranks.

A review of the political content and structure of the Labor Party Advocates reveals that it does not mark a step forward toward independent working-class political action. This is true even though the union officials sponsoring it wrap their promotion of it in militant-style clothing....

The officials are concerned not because of the beating working people are taking, but because their own social status, generous salaries, and perks flow from a healthy dues base and other forms of income that come with their positions. Falling union rolls threaten these privileges.

Moreover, the ruling class is driven to assault organized labor because of the growing economic crisis of the capitalist system, bringing with it intensified competition with its imperialist rivals, wars and threats of wars, deepening class polarization, union busting, and cutbacks at home.

Once accustomed to at least a semblance of wage and benefit gains during periods of economic expansion, the union officials now find their influence in the Democratic Party on the wane and their ability to give the appearance of helping to advance the interests of working people wearing thin....

Their outlook assumes the permanence of capitalism and opts for continuing collaboration — both at home and abroad — with the rulers and their political parties. Each begins with the framework of "America."

Whether it is a reference to "jobs [that] have fled abroad" or focusing on "the future of America," the assumption is that workers in the United States have an interest in protecting "our" industry, and supporting "our" government in "our" wars and during times of economic downturn.

This perspective seeks to keep unionists from recognizing the fact that working people around the world have common interests and face a common enemy — the billionaire ruling families in imperialist countries and the local capitalist class in the semicolonial world....

The OCAW officialdom is lending itself to the formation of a "labor party" organizing committee that seeks to enlist 100,000 dues-paying members while continuing to adhere to Democratic Party politics. No break with the capitalist political framework has been made or contemplated.

Instead, this effort amounts to a threat to the employers and their government by the union officials, a threat they hope will regain them a little space in bourgeois politics and ease the pressures on the unions today.

It is these pressures from the ruling class, and not a rising rank-and-file movement or broader labor battles, that the union officialdom is responding to.

CORRECTION

In the November 7 issue in the "In Brief" column, the item headlined "Australia troops occupy island" incorrectly referred to Sydney as the Australian capital instead of Canberra. In the December 5 "In Brief" column, an item was incorrectly headlined "Sydney deports immigrants." It should have read "Australian government deports refugees."

In an article on Bosnia in the December 12 issue, the percentages of territory proposed in a partition plan for the two sides in the war were mistakenly reversed. The article should state that Radovan Karadzic's forces would be allowed to keep 49 percent, leaving the Bosnian regime with 51 percent. These figures are accurately reported in the December 19 issue.

Georgia garment strikers reach out for support

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

Unionists also sought support from the Central Labor Council in Augusta, Georgia. ACTWU members from other locals have visited a number of WalMart and other stores in the Southeast to ask customers to boycott Samson's and Delila's products.

At the end of November, ACTWU Local 169 in New York contributed 3,500 tons of food and \$4,000 in donations to the strikers. Garment workers from ACTWU

rights to take disciplinary action because "the message on the shirt is defaming the company."

The CWA filed charges November 7 with the National Labor Relations Board, asserting that threats of disciplinary action against workers who wear the T-shirt violate workers' freedom of expression.

Grain workers fight lockout in Puerto Rico

Locked-out grain workers at Con Agra's Molinos de Puerto Rico in Guaynabo, Puerto Rico, continue to picket after more than 14 months on the street. The 147 members of the Congress of Industrial Unions converted a concrete bus shelter in front of the plant into a picket shack, which they staff 24 hours a day.

When the union contract expired last year, the company decided to replace the workforce with a younger, lower-paid group of workers. On Oct. 26, 1993, Molinos de Puerto Rico used a phony bomb threat to clear out the plant and lock the unionists out. The company replaced them with nonunion workers making \$4.50 to \$6.00 an hour. "They did not want to negotiate," explained one worker on the picket line. "They wanted to reduce expenses: salaries, sick leave, Christmas bonus, medical plan, everything."

N.J. Denny's restaurant workers demand contract

Members of the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union at Denny's in Absecon, New Jersey, are organizing informational pickets at the restaurant to demand a contract.



Militant/Susan Lamont
Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union members picket October 27 at Samson's in Waynesboro, Georgia. The garment workers have been on the road to win solidarity for their strike.

ON THE PICKET LINE

other workplaces in your area, including interesting political discussions.

Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU) members on strike against Samson's and Delila's drapery and curtain manufacturers in eastern Georgia are reaching out for support.

The walkout, which began October 24, involves 500 workers at Delila's in Louisville and Samson's in Waynesboro. Workers struck to protest harassment of union activists and other unfair labor practices, which management stepped up as the expiration of the union's first contract neared. Many workers are convinced the owners don't want a second contract and are trying to get rid of the union altogether.

Several weeks ago, a team of strikers visited the headquarters of Family Dollar department stores in Charlotte, North Carolina, and succeeded in convincing them to stop carrying Samson's and Delila's products until the strike is over.

Local 365 at Arrow Shirt in Austell, Georgia, donated \$138.

At a December 3 meeting, the strikers rejected a company offer to buy out union members' jobs for \$700 to \$2,000 and guarantee jobs for strikebreakers.

The company has hired a significant number of replacement workers. The unionists voted to continue boycott activities.

Phone workers protest discipline over T-shirts

District 13 of the Communications Workers of America (CWA) organized a demonstration outside Bell Atlantic Corp. headquarters in Philadelphia at the end of November to protest the company's suspension of more than 1,000 unionists. The workers were sent home without pay November 23 for wearing T-shirts depicting themselves as "road kill" on the information superhighway to protest Bell Atlantic's plan to eliminate 5,600 jobs, almost 8 percent of its workforce.

Company spokesperson Sharon Shaffer said Bell was within its

Denny's is "terrible to their workers," said Pauli Mortillite, a 30-year-old waiter, at a December 2 rally of 40 people. Workers voted for the union in April.

The company's latest offer proposed a 1 percent annual raise, amounting to about 2 cents an hour. Servers dependent on tips start at \$2.13 an hour.

The Denny's in Absecon is the only union-organized restaurant of the chain's more than 1,500. Only 3 percent to 5 percent of waiters and waitresses in the United States are union members, according to

industry statistics. The National Labor Relations Board is reportedly looking into the case of Denny's workers at restaurants in Mount Laurel and Marlton, New Jersey, who were laid off after signing union cards.

The following people contributed to this week's column: Susan Lamont, member of ACTWU Local 365 in Austell, Georgia, and Ron Richards, member of the American Federation of Government Employees in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

LETTERS

GATT and garment bosses

The article in the December 12 *Militant* on Congressional approval of the GATT [General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade] included the following: "A minority of manufacturers who would face more international competition under the new rules, such as the owners of highly protected textile plants, opposed the accord."

This may be true, as far as it goes. There may indeed be some textile plant owners who oppose the accord, but I was myself surprised to read in the business section of the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* this week that the major association of textile manufacturers in fact came out in support of the GATT.

Does this simply reflect how far garment and textile workers' real wages in the United States have fallen, or does the GATT actually contain protectionist provisions for U.S. textiles? Or both?

Floyd Fowler
Atlanta, Georgia

Prisoner hunger strike

We are 21 political prisoners who have been on a hunger strike for 10 days now to demand justice.

We were unjustly sentenced six years ago, in a trial in which our most basic rights to defend ourselves were denied to us. We have exhausted all avenues of appeal.

It has been over a year since the Inter-American Human Rights Commission of the OAS [Organization of American States] — in light of the injustices that were committed against us — agreed to consider our case.

In Argentina, we have launched a campaign to obtain our amnesty with the support of prominent figures, human rights organizations,

and political parties. We have presented thousands of signatures to Congress. However, after six years of unsuccessful attempts to have our demands met, tired of waiting for justice that does not arrive, we have decided to begin a hunger strike to try to achieve the passage of an amnesty law.

That is why we appeal to you to support our demand for justice by writing to the Argentine Congress and government, asking them to pass an Amnesty Law for political prisoners.

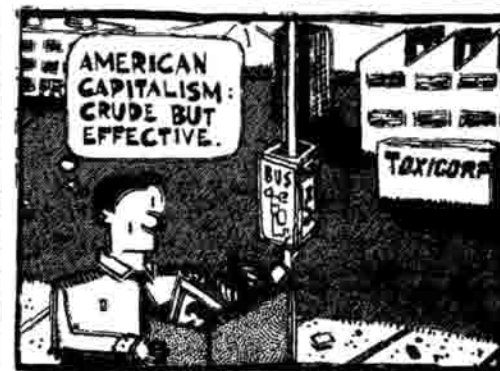
This government that conducts itself so arrogantly when it comes to foreign policy, is more likely to respond to international pressures, and all the aid you can provide to us in this regard will be very important to us.

Maybe you can spread the word on our case throughout the United States, among human rights organizations and prominent figures that could solidarize with this struggle we have begun.

La Tablada Political Prisoners
Caseros Prison
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Pseudoscience

If there were a quantifiable entity called "general intelligence," "G factor," or "intelligence" — a real thing that was measured by IQ testing — then [Charles] Murray and [Richard] Herrnstein would still lack any evidence that "intelligence" is heritable. (Many



psychologists argue convincingly that "general intelligence is a statistical artifact rather than a real measurable thing). Since the start of mental testing at the beginning of this century those who assert that "intelligence" is genetically inherited have had a problem, in that all their data has been at least as explainable by environmental or cultural factors as by their genetic theories.

The U.S. Army IQ testing program of World War I is a classic example of testing bias and manipulation of data. For example, this test series supposedly proved (surprise!) that Blacks had lower intelligence than whites and that Poles were less intelligent than anyone.

Critics pointed out that the poor scores of Blacks might have something to do with the poor education available to Blacks in the United

States and maybe Poles who didn't understand English would do better if tested in their own language. Though an obvious fiasco, the "data" developed from this program was used as a "scientific" justification for racism and anti-immigrant hysteria.

As a response to the Black liberation struggle, a new school of hereditary pseudoscience developed. Cyril Burt was a pioneer of IQ testing in England and a firm believer in the genetic basis of "intelligence." His twin study supposedly gave a series of IQ tests to 53 sets of identical twins raised apart from birth. The results showed a very high degree of correlation between the scores of twins.

Burt developed the theory that the English ruling class is a meritocracy, that the Queen Mum and her rather dysfunctional brood

were a precious gene pool of raw talent. For telling the ruling class just what it wanted to hear, Mr. Burt was loaded with academic honors and eventually knighted by a grateful Monarch.

There was one problem; in 1974, when Herrnstein and company were running wild, a Princeton professor remarked that Burt's data was too good to be true.

A reporting team from the *London Times* found that the data was invented, the twins had never existed, the co-authors of the study had never met Burt. The whole thing was a gigantic scientific fraud.

There is a real lesson in this. As long as class society exists, the ruling class will provide rich rewards to anyone who invents ideology and pseudoscientific defense of their wealth and privileges.

Here we are 20 years after the exposure of Burt's fraud, and Murray's and Herrnstein's book recycles the same old same old, slightly changed for American consumption. I suggest reading *The Mismeasure of Man* by Stephen Jay Gould, Norton, 1981. Roy Inglee
Wilmington, Delaware

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

Ottawa opposes Quebec sovereignty

Debate erupts in Canada over draft legislation introduced by Parti Québécois

BY STEVE PENNER

MONTREAL — Within hours of the Parti Québécois government's introduction of draft legislation declaring Quebec a sovereign country, the Canadian federal government and its big-business backers launched a massive campaign against Quebec's right to freely decide its relationship to the rest of Canada. Quebec is a predominantly French-speaking province made up of 7 million of Canada's 30 million people.

Quebecois have fought for decades against the discrimination they experience as a French-speaking minority in Canada. This has resulted in lower incomes, inferior education, worse health care and social services, and the systematic denial of their democratic right, as an oppressed nationality, to self-determination.

A substantial layer of Canada's ruling rich argue that granting even limited concessions to Quebec's demands would undermine the need for a strong, centralized federal government able to defend their interests in the midst of a worldwide economic crisis.

The Parti Québécois has centered its successful campaign in last September's provincial election on a proposal to hold a referendum in 1995 and declare Quebec a "sovereign" country.

The draft legislation does not explain what sovereignty means. It proposes that Quebec sovereignty be defined following a series of public hearings to be held over the next several months.

The federalist forces headed up by the Liberal government of Prime Minister Jean Chrétien have denounced the PQ government's proposal as illegitimate and undemocratic. Ottawa, along with the Liberal opposition party in Quebec and the various big-business councils have refused to recognize the authority of the public hearings or to participate in them. Headlines in newspapers across Canada have denounced the PQ's proposal as a "scam" or a "farce."

Sheila Copps, Canada's deputy prime minister, insisted that the PQ government "has no right to put a bill [of this kind] be-



Mass demonstration in Quebec, 1991 defending language rights of French-speaking population. Governments in Ottawa and Quebec are stepping up attacks on workers.

fore the people when the people have not chosen the route of separation." Reform Party leader Preston Manning is pressing the government to declare the PQ's referendum proposal illegal.

Chrétien suggested that Ottawa might decide to call a cross-country referendum to counter the PQ's proposal. In the past he has argued that Quebecois cannot legally form an independent country without the agreement of either the federal government or a cross-country referendum.

A number of newspapers, including the *Toronto Star* blamed the drop in the value of the Canadian currency by half a cent in relation to the U.S. dollar on the Quebec government's proposal.

In addition to the premiers of all the other nine provinces several Native officials also denounced the PQ sovereignty

proposal. A Quebec Inuit spokesman, Zebedee Nungak, argued that the Native's "special relationship with the federal government has been our salvation many a time and it cannot be cut" by the establishment of an independent Quebec.

The minister of Indian Affairs, Ron Irwin, has warned that Ottawa might refuse to recognize Quebec's jurisdiction over huge chunks of its territory using, as the pretext, the federal government's supposed support for the right of Canada's Native people to self-determination.

In 1990 the Ottawa and Quebec governments sent a joint force of 4,000 Canadian soldiers and Quebec provincial police to crush a protest by Mohawk Indians near Montreal fighting to prevent the expropriation of their lands. Since then, Ottawa has allowed the PQ and its ally the Bloc

Québécois to take the lead in the rulers' campaign against the rights of Native people.

The PQ's draft legislation states that a sovereign Quebec will "recognize the right of Aboriginal nations to self government on lands over which they have full ownership." This carefully worded formulation gives the government the legal authority to reject Native demands to self-government on all those lands where their "full ownership of the land" has not been recognized — that is most of the time. Moreover the draft bill also states that "the territorial integrity of Quebec" will take precedent over the recognition of Native rights.

The bill also declares that Quebec "shall guarantee the English-speaking community that its identity and institutions shall be preserved." The separate English schools, hospitals, and social services have been one of the main tools used by the rulers to divide working people and maintain the oppression of Quebecois.

Preserves rights of Canadian banks

The PQ's draft bill authorizes the Quebec government to negotiate an agreement with Ottawa "to maintain an economic association between Quebec and Canada" in which the legal currency of Quebec would continue to be the Canadian dollar.

This would mean that the Canadian government and the Bank of Canada would continue to have a major say in the regulation of Quebec's capitalist economy. Quebec would also "assume the obligations enjoy the rights arising out of the treaties to which Canada is a party." It would, it is proposed, continue to remain part of the North Atlantic Treaty organization, the British Commonwealth, the North American Free Trade Agreement, and other imperialist military and economic alliances.

The draft legislation proposes that the citizens of a sovereign Quebec could continue to also hold Canadian citizenship and that Ottawa should continue to provide the pensions that are due to residents of Quebec.

Ontario New Democratic Party premier Bob Rae, warned that the PQ might not be able to deliver on any of the proposals in the bill to maintain an economic and political association between Quebec and Canada.

One of the federalists' main arguments is that the Quebec referendum is undemocratic. They point out that the public hearings are formally organized to discuss the meaning of Quebec sovereignty, not to discuss the different options under debate and that they will be completely dominated by the Quebec government and other forces that support Quebec sovereignty. They also condemn the Quebec government for financing the hearings with \$2 million of government funds.

Ottawa and its backers, however, have spent tens of millions of dollars campaigning against Quebec and holding federal government hearings that were set up as part of the massive propaganda campaign aimed at convincing working people of the supposed benefits of maintaining a united Canada.

As the capitalist government's in Ottawa and Quebec seek to line working people up behind their counterposed proposals they both are stepping up their attacks on the social programs won by working people in the name of cutting the government's deficits. For example, both parties seek to block any united response by working people and youth to these attacks such as the proposed January 25 one-day strike of university and college students against Ottawa's massive education cutbacks.

Steve Penner is a member of Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union Local 581 in Montreal.

Gold miner on trial in Yellowknife, Canada, refutes prosecution's frame-up charges

BY SUSAN BERMAN AND JANET POST

YELLOWKNIFE, Northwest Territories — "I'm suggesting Sept. 18, 1992, you went into the mine and set up a device in order to force the company back to the bargaining table," Crown prosecutor Peter Martin told Roger Warren. "I deny that,"



Yellowknife miner Roger Warren

Warren, who is on trial on frame-up charges of murder, firmly answered. He is falsely accused of setting an explosion that killed nine replacement workers in an underground blast during an 18-month strike at Royal Oak's Giant Gold Mine in 1992-93.

"That's your problem, you see," Warren said during his six days on the stand. "A guy lives for 49 years and never even slaps somebody and all of a sudden you have to convince everyone he killed people. That's a toughie."

Martin's two-day cross examination of Warren was reminiscent of the police interrogations he and other miners were subjected to during the government's 13-month investigation of the explosion.

At Martin's request, Warren described a strike in Alabama where replacement workers were removed after two people were killed outside the factory. Martin mistakenly thought the two people killed were replacement workers. "They were strikers," Warren explained. "This is a theme that goes on throughout labor history. People get killed and usually it's strikers."

Warren also explained again, how, under intense pressure he had falsely confessed to setting the blast. Warren, his family, and fellow strikers were harassed by the police. The company also threatened not to resume talks with the union until arrests were made. The strike was settled just

weeks after Warren was arrested.

In his rebuttal to cross-examination, Defense Attorney Glen Orris recounted previous testimony by Warren on why he falsely confessed. "I figured I might go down. I might end up with 25 years in jail. But in the end I would win, because I did it for a principle. The system is not for a certain group of people. It is for everybody."

Jack MacPhee, a member of the United Steelworkers of America, works at the Con mine in Yellowknife. He gets off work everyday at 4:00 a.m., catches some sleep, then comes to the trial. "I thought it went really well," MacPhee said. "I was telling people if I was one of the jurors I couldn't send the guy to jail because of what's coming out in Roger's words."

But, MacPhee complained, "what's coming out in the newspapers is coming out differently. People aren't hearing [Warren's side] outside the courtroom."

The trial will recess until January 3. Messages of support and funds to defray the \$250,000 in legal expenses can be sent to the Warren Fund, c/o CAW Local 2304, P.O. Box 1628, Yellowknife, NWT, X1A 2P2.

Susan Berman is a member of Canadian Auto Workers Local 1285 in Toronto. Janet Post is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 368 in Miami.