

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Youth brigade to Cuba gets under way

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## Momentum builds for January 22 abortion rights action

BY KAREN RAY

BOSTON — "On January 22 we will be having the largest demonstration for women's rights and reproductive freedom in the history of the city," said Toni Troop at a speak-out in defense of abortion rights hosted by the Militant Labor Forum here

### March in Boston

Sunday, January 22

Assemble:

1:30 p.m. — Boylston T Stop at Boylston and Tremont

January 7. Troop is the president of the Greater Boston chapter of the National Organization for Women.

The January 22 demonstration, to be held on the anniversary of the *Roe v. Wade* Continued on Page 4

## Mexico exposes myth of emerging markets

"The Rolls Royce of emerging markets." "Primary source of above average returns." "Delirious optimism." These are among the phrases financial experts used unabashedly to describe investment prospects in Mexico, as they poured enormous amounts of capital into the country's stock and bond markets.

Last year's capital influx marked the peak of the boom that began in 1990, as

### EDITORIAL

annual foreign capital flows into so-called emerging markets more than doubled. Mexico topped the list.

The refrain bourgeois businessmen and politicians sang about the alleged Mexican marvel, or Argentine miracle, went something like this: Unfettered capitalism offers a way for the underdeveloped nations of the Americas, Asia, and Africa to join the family of more prosperous metropolises in North America, Europe, and the Pacific.

The turn-of-the-year crash of the Mexican peso has turned that tune sour. The emerging markets "were now submerging," quipped *Barron's*, the leading Wall Street weekly.

President Ernesto Zedillo's "stabilization plan" — negotiated by the Mexican bourgeoisie and middle-class technocrats with representatives of imperialist finance capital — brought nothing even resembling stability.

On January 9 and 10, now termed Black

Continued on Page 14

## Clinton, Congress take aim at labor's gains

BY PAUL MAILHOT

"We can do a lot of business together." With those words President Bill Clinton proclaimed his readiness to join congressional Republicans in a bipartisan assault on the social entitlements the labor movement has fought for and won over the past six decades. At the top of their list as the 104th session of Congress begins is an all-

out campaign to gut public assistance programs for the worst-off sections of the working class.

With declining living standards affecting broad sections of working people — in spite of a three-year economic upturn — both Democrats and Republicans are attempting to disguise their attacks with proposals to cut taxes. President Clinton,

Republican speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, and House Democratic Party leader Richard Gephardt have all raised proposals to supposedly cut taxes on the "middle class."

The ploy is so transparent that the *Economist* noted in a recent survey of U.S. politics, "None of the 'middle class' tax cuts now on offer have anything to do with economics. They are all about politics; about trying to assuage the economic anxieties of voters. Unfortunately, those anxieties are fostered mainly by stagnant real incomes."

### Focus on welfare

Republican leaders in Congress, who now control the majority, are pushing for new eligibility rules and time limits for those on welfare. Clinton, who pledged during his campaign for the White House to "end welfare as we know it," is trying to keep pace.

The Republicans are pushing for a cutoff of benefits to families on welfare after two years. They propose denying outright any assistance to unwed mothers under 18. The bipartisan gang-up on the 14 million welfare recipients in the United States, 9 million of whom are children, calls for shifting programs for the poor to state agencies and limiting funds to meet food, health, and housing needs.

Since "welfare as we know it" accounts for only 1 percent of the federal budget, the "reform" of the system is aimed primarily at creating a pariah group in society that can be conveniently blamed for capitalism's crisis.

President Clinton has called for a bipartisan "work session on welfare reform"

Continued on Page 7



President Bill Clinton (right) with Republican speaker of the House Newt Gingrich as Congress and White House prepare assault on workers' entitlements.

## Firestone strikers reject company ultimatum, keep picket lines up

BY SHIRLEY PEÑA AND JOHN STUDER

DES MOINES, Iowa—Thousands of rubber workers on strike against Bridge-stone/Firestone here and in Decatur, Illinois; Noblesville, Indiana; and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; voted overwhelmingly January 8 to continue their strike against the tire giant. Firestone is the number-three tire maker in North America.

Several days earlier the company had announced it would fire hundreds of striking workers and begin "permanently replacing" them. In a move to divide the union and coax strikers to cross the picket line, the company fired only some workers, giving no reason for who was and who was not dismissed. Firestone sent out registered letters to roughly 50 percent of the strikers informing them they had been fired.

"Did you get one?" workers asked each other at the local meetings.

The company also posted a sheet inside the gate for workers to sign up to cross the picket line and keep their jobs.

Strike demands center on Firestone's insistence on pay cuts; a 7-day, 12-hour continuous shift; removal of cost-of-living protection; and elimination of the union safety committee. The company's "final Continued on Page 10



Militant/Ruth Nebbia

Members of the United Rubber Workers in Des Moines, Iowa, after voting overwhelmingly January 8 to continue strike despite company threat to fire workers.

Socialist workers begin 'New International' campaign — page 7





## Immigrants attacked in Italy

Assaults on immigrant workers are on the increase in Italy, according to the Violence Observatory, a volunteer group in Rome that tracks such attacks. In 1993 at least one immigrant worker was attacked every day in Italy, the group reports.

About 70 percent of the violence occurred in Rome, where a great bulk of the immigrants live. Instead of taking decisive action to halt such assaults, the Italian government, which includes the fascist National Alliance, has proposed limiting immigration as the solution. Immigrants make up 1.5 percent of Italy's population of 55 million.

## Italy: extra day, no extra pay

Fiat workers in Termoli, Italy, are to begin working a sixth day, Saturday, without being paid. Fiat told the 3,000 auto workers it would relocate if they refused the ultimatum.

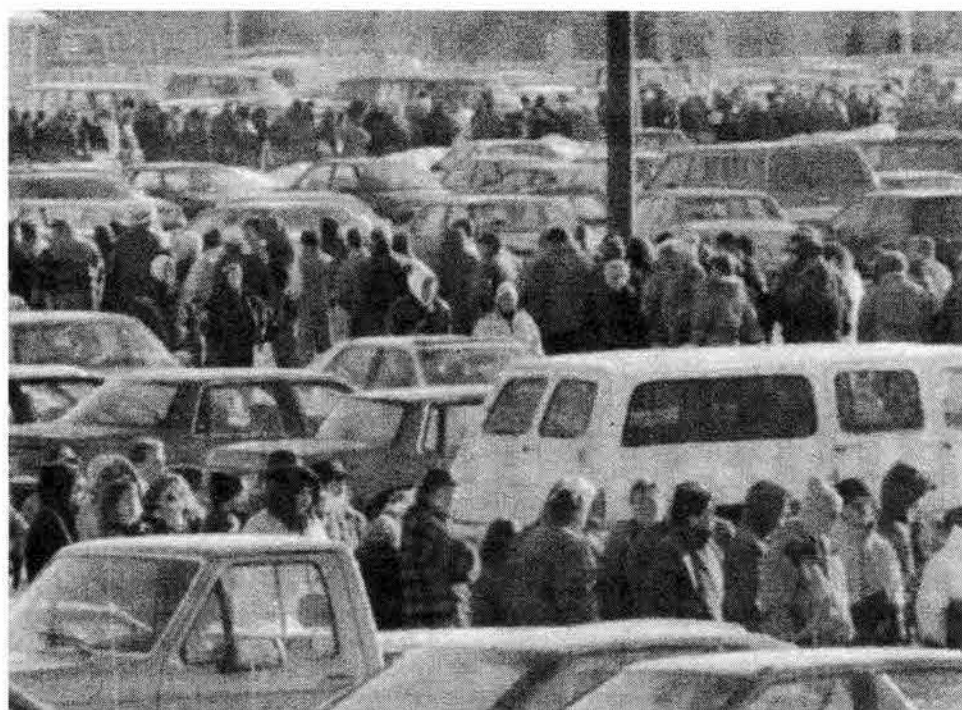
Workers who had already been working Saturdays at overtime rates effectively received a 25 percent pay cut. Faced with the shutdown blackmail from Fiat and pressure by the government, workers voted December 16 to accept the deal they previously rejected. Union officials had urged workers to accept the no-pay proposal from the outset.

## Workers in Poland end strike

Health-care workers in Poland called off their hunger strike January 4 after reaching an agreement with the government on wage demands. The government agreed to grant a pay hike of 6 percent above this year's rate of inflation. According to the government finance ministry, preliminary estimates for the increase in the cost of living for 1994 was almost 30 percent. Workers are threatening more protests if settlements are not reached on health and insurance benefits.

## Paris holds talks with Baghdad

After a breakfast meeting with Iraqi deputy prime minister Tariq Aziz January 6, French foreign minister Alain Juppé, announced that Paris will open a diplomatic interests section in Baghdad. The French government has reasons for pushing to normalize economic ties with the Iraqi regime.



Some 15,000 people amassed in the parking lot of a General Motors plant in Ontario in subzero weather January 9, after the company announced a third shift might be added at its Lumina plant near Toronto. Despite an upturn in the Canadian economy over the past year, the official jobless rate remains just below 10 percent.

Paris is still owed about \$5 billion by Baghdad for various military and civilian contracts rendered before the gulf war, and it hopes French business can capitalize on rebuilding Iraq's oil industry.

The U.S. and British governments expressed anger at the move. "We do not believe that now is the appropriate time to make gestures toward Iraq," said a spokesperson for the U.S. State Department.

## Beijing, Washington in trade rift

The Chinese government shut three factories January 3 for allegedly violating the copyrights of U.S. capitalist manufacturers of compact discs and computer software. Trying to push its way deeper into the Chinese market, Washington is threatening to impose trade sanctions of more than \$1 billion if Beijing does not remove pirated discs from the market. Chinese authorities said police seized more than 2 million laser discs in 1994.

In a related development, Chrysler is us-

ing the U.S. trade dispute with Beijing as leverage in negotiations on a \$500 million joint venture with the Chinese government. The company's chairman said the deal is tenuous, in part because of the trade flap. Chrysler officials expect the Chinese market for cars to grow at an annual rate of 7 percent to 9 percent — about 10 times the rate for the U.S. market. The proposed venture would assemble 60,000 vehicles a year initially.

## Japan keeps auto market share

Although U.S. automakers enjoyed a year of soaring profits in 1994, their rivals in Japan gained two-tenths of a percentage point on them, finishing with 23.3 percent of the U.S. car and light-truck market. Detroit's Big Three said they lost seven-tenths of a point, ending with 73.2 percent. In 1994 every tenth of a point represented 15,000 auto sales.

Toyota, which actually lost market share in 1994, plans to increase its North American production from 500,000 to 900,000 in 1998 — almost doubling its capacity.

## Old Rwanda army gears for war

The former Rwandan army is rebuilding its forces in Tanzania and Zaire, according to a report from Africa Watch. In Zaire it has amassed an estimated 30,000 soldiers and 10,000 militiamen, as well as large amounts of arms, including 6 helicopters, 50 anti-tank weapons, several missiles, and 56 armored vehicles. Attacks have been launched inside Rwandan territory.

Officials from the old regime have formed a government in exile, imposing a tax on refugees employed by farmers in neighboring countries.

## Brazil facing financial crisis

"Mexico is a warning to Brazilians," a former finance minister in the Brazilian government told the *New York Times*. A shrinking trade surplus and the recent plunge of the Mexican peso are haunting the regime of Brazil's new president, Fernando Henrique Cardoso. The government's combined trade and debt payments deficit is expected to climb to \$10 billion this year — up from \$1 billion in 1994.

Brazilian capitalists in textiles and other industries are facing rougher times in face of stiffening international competition. A flood of imports such as cotton from the United States, Chinese table fans, and South Korean textiles have prompted investigations by Brazilian authorities to determine if these goods are being "dumped" at extremely low prices.

## Peasants seize town in Mexico

About 400 peasants took over government buildings during the first week of January in the town of Amatenango del Valle and kicked out officials they called corrupt. This is the fifth town in Chiapas where new leaders have been chosen independent of the official government elections last year. A new mayor was installed with the backing of Amado Avendano Figueroa, who has declared himself head of a parallel state government. Avendano has refused to concede defeat in the August 21 gubernatorial elections, charging ballot fraud.

Mexican state police had not moved against the peasants as of January 6. Thousands of Mexican army troops and rebels in the Zapatista National Liberation Army have been in a standoff since December when the rebels occupied and then left several towns in Chiapas.

## U.S. employment rose in '94

The U.S. government reported that employment expanded by about 3.5 million jobs in 1994, the largest annual increase since 1984. Manufacturing accounted for 300,000 of the new jobs, or nearly 10 percent.

The official unemployment rate, which began 1994 at above 6.7 percent, dropped to 5.4 percent in December. At the same time, the number of hours worked per week in manufacturing rose to 42.2 — an historic high since the end of World War II.

## Gulf war illness claims mount

Washington should organize better research into complaints by thousands of veterans who say they contracted illnesses during the Arab-Persian Gulf war, according to a January 4 report by a panel from the Institute of Medicine, an arm of the National Academy of Sciences. Thus far the Veterans Administration has a roster of 30,000 people who say they contracted the "gulf war syndrome," and the Department of Defense has 9,000 claims.

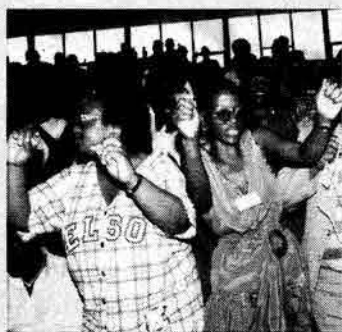
— MAURICE WILLIAMS

## THE MILITANT

## Eyewitness report from S. Africa

A 'Militant' reporting team covered the 49th national conference of the ANC held in the Orange Free State December 17-21. The team interviewed youth and working people from cities, townships, and rural communities across the country. The reporters talked to rural workers determined to organize unions and build the ANC. Read about it in the 'Militant.'

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Delegates at December 1994 ANC conference in South Africa.

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# Washington backs Yeltsin on Chechnya

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Unnerved by the uncontrollable consequences of a collapse of the Russian government, Washington is standing behind President Boris Yeltsin's regime and its more than month-long bloody war against Chechnya.

"This is a time for the United States to be steady and cautious," U.S. secretary of state Warren Christopher told the *New York Times* January 6. "We need not rush to judgment or rush to conclusions. He [Yeltsin] has been the exponent of reform, and we are in favor of reform."

"We are not...going to challenge Russian territorial integrity," said U.S. vice president Al Gore on the U.S. television program "Face the Nation" January 8 — as Russian bombs and artillery shells pounded away against Grozny, the Chechnyan capital.

"The prevailing view in the U.S. government is to not, repeat not, write Yeltsin off," declared Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott. "People who write off Yeltsin are being simplistic, and in many cases do not have a clear idea about the implications. We do not know how this crisis is going to end."

## Washington faces dilemma

As they seek to open up Russia and the former republics of the Soviet Union to greater penetration by capital, the U.S. rulers feel they have no better alternative than Yeltsin right now to keep a lid on working people there. At the same time, the U.S. government faces a dilemma as a result of the war-fueled political crisis facing Yeltsin in Russia and the continuing exposures of Moscow's atrocities in Chechnya.

Some prominent voices of bourgeois public opinion in the United States and other imperialist countries are also urging Washington not to shut any doors. "While not writing off Mr. Yeltsin," the editors of the *New York Times* counseled January 9,



Resident of Grozny in front of her home, which was destroyed by Russian rocket attack. Despite carnage in Chechnya Washington continues backing Moscow. Secretary of State Christopher, above, said U.S. should remain "steady and cautious."

"President [Bill] Clinton must avoid the sort of bear hug that left President George Bush locked in [former Soviet president Mikhail] Gorbachev's embrace.... That means reaching out to other democratic leaders like Yegor Gaidar, the former Prime Minister," the *Times* advised. "And expanding exchanges between senior military officials" of the United States and Russia.

The *Economist*, the top weekly magazine of British finance capital, went one step farther, stating in its lead editorial January 7 that "Yeltsin is now the wrong man

to lead a reforming Russia." It "would be better" if Yeltsin did not run for president in 1996, the magazine wrote.

As the clamor against Yeltsin grew louder in Russia, the *Times* asked Clinton's secretary of state if the White House would consider reassessing its policy toward the government in Moscow. "We would be foolish if we didn't have such plans," Christopher replied.

Four weeks after the Russian assault on Chechnya began, the world's second largest army has not been able to subdue the lightly armed Chechen fighters.

Moscow is trying to block independence of the republic of some 1.2 million people located in the northern Caucasus mountains.

Most estimates suggest that as many as 2,000 troops have been killed on each side. As the death toll mounts, pressure is building for Moscow to end the war. A 48-hour cease-fire was announced by the Russian government that began on January 10 at 8:00 a.m. but had been broken by 10:00 a.m.

Anti-war rallies were organized in Moscow January 9, and protesters picketed the embassies of the major imperialist countries.

A special issue of *Moscow News* carried articles quoting public officials condemning the war. The paper ran a front-page banner calling for protests against the war. The leading daily *Izvestia* featured the front-page headline: "In such a war even the victors should be on trial."

## War is becoming financial disaster

The war is becoming a financial disaster. According to a member of the regime's advisory council, the first three weeks cost about \$3.5 billion, or 1 percent of the country's annual gross domestic product. Inflation rose from 5 percent last August to 16 percent in December and is expected to jump further.

Protest among Russian soldiers is deepening, with some refusing to fire on those they see as brothers.

"The war here was being waged against ordinary people," Maj. Igor Morozov told the *Washington Post*. "Most of the rank-and-file soldiers don't want to fight. Some of them have watched all these Rambo films and want to test themselves, but they don't understand what real war is like.... There are very few officers who want to take part."

Morozov and the 40-man squad he commanded surrendered to Chechen forces January 7. "In order not to shed any more blood, we decided to lay down our arms."

# U.S. government begins sedition trial of Egyptian cleric for 'inflammatory' views

BY LAURA GARZA

The U.S. Justice Department has turned to a rarely-used, Civil War-era sedition law to mount a conspiracy case against 12 people, charging them with plotting to wage a religious "war of urban terrorism against the U.S." The most well known defendant is Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman, an Egyptian cleric who the business media describes as a proponent of Islamic fundamentalism. He has already spent 19 months behind bars.

The trial began with jury selection in Federal Court in New York City January 9.

Sedition is a charge of inciting resistance or insurrection against a lawful authority. The government's case against Abdel Rahman rests largely on the claim that statements deemed inflammatory can be used to label someone the "intellectual" organizer of a particular act, in spite of the fact that no concrete link to any illegal deed may exist.

The government accuses the defendants with conspiring to commit a series of crimes, including plotting to blow up the United Nations Building, Federal Plaza, the Lincoln and Holland tunnels, and the George Washington Bridge — all in New York City. The "war of urban terrorism" is also deemed by the government to have included plotting to kidnap Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger and assassinate Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak. In addition, the Justice Department claims the group is responsible for the killing of Rabbi Meier Kahane, the ultraright founder of the terrorist Jewish Defense League.

Among the main defendants is El Sayyid Nosair, who was acquitted in 1991 of the Kahane murder though convicted on gun possession charges and sentenced to seven and a half to 22 years in prison. The government contends that even after he went to prison, Nosair masterminded much of the conspiracy from his cell.

Washington will also attempt to link Abdel Rahman to the World Trade Center bombing.

"Sheik Omar, for his part, basically is being charged with guilt by association,"

said an article in the January 6 *Wall Street Journal*. "The government hasn't alleged that the sheik helped plan or execute any crime in detail.... The evidence so far is spotty, particularly for the crucial claim that the sheik sanctioned crimes. In trying to link him to the World Trade Center bombing, for example, the only direct tie the government has offered is a book he wrote that was found in the briefcase of Mohammed Salameh, one of the four men convicted for the Manhattan blast."

## Cleric tried for his views

The government is basically trying Abdel Rahman for his views, claiming his advocacy of "jihad" or holy war is sufficient to link him with acts supposedly committed by his followers. Prosecutors cite speeches he made in Detroit and other cities — where he urges his followers to "conquer the land of the infidels to purify it" — as evidence that can link him to plans to bomb New York City landmarks.

"This is a political prosecution," said Lynne Stewart the cleric's lead attorney. "This is one of the first cases where sedition has not only been pitted against freedom of speech but also against freedom of religion," she stated.

The main body of evidence prosecutors will rely upon in pressing their case against all 12 defendants is the testimony of Emad Salem, an FBI informant. Salem taped conversations that the prosecution plans to use. Defense attorneys say Salem, a former soldier in the Egyptian army, can be heard on one tape negotiating a million-dollar fee for his services.

Abdel Rahman's political history includes leading one of the groups financed and supported by the Central Intelligence Agency that fought against the Soviet-backed government of Afghanistan in the 1980s.

In Egypt, he was viewed early on as an ally of the government and later as a problem. An article in the January 8 *New York Times* notes former Egyptian president Anwar Sadat used figures like Rahman

against opponents of the government, including the Egyptian left. "The Government called us enemies of Islam, agents of the Soviet Union and infidels. The Government wrote communiques, and Omar Abdel Rahman signed them," stated Lofti Suleyman, who the *New York Times* says "was a socialist and a Nasserite activist."

Abdel Rahman was also tried and acquitted three times in Egypt, twice in connection with the assassination of Sadat. In one trial he faced charges of conspiring to overthrow the Egyptian government following Sadat's killing. Egyptian prosecutors relied on arguments that the views he put forward were not consistent with Islam.



Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman in 1993. Government officials have not shown any concrete evidence of illegal deeds.

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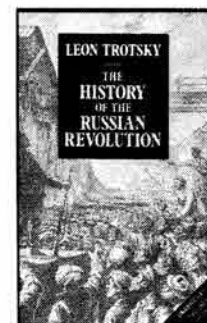
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# Students in Canada protest budget cuts

## Actions set for January 25 in many cities against major education cutbacks

BY ROGER ANNIS  
AND KATY LEROUGETEL

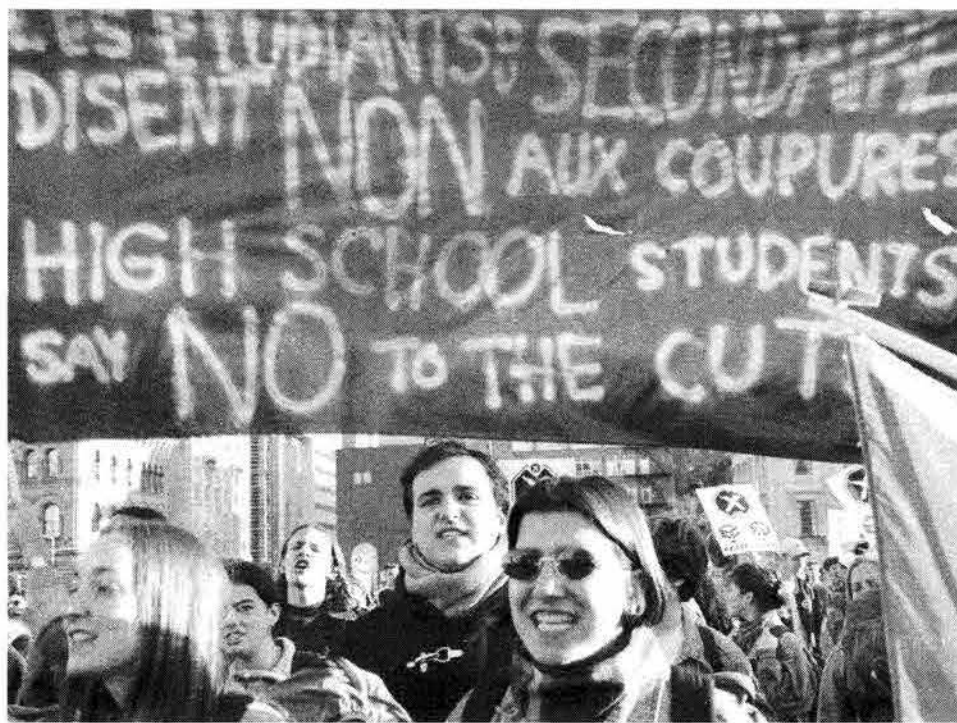
MONTREAL — Student activists across Canada have set their sights on broad demonstrations January 25 against the Canadian government's plan to cut CAN\$2 billion from post-secondary education spending.

"There will be demonstrations in most major cities in Canada that day," Simone St. Pierre of the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) office in Ottawa told the *Militant*. "We expect tens of thousands of students to protest. And it won't be just post-secondary students — we have many high school students who are joining up."

"In most provinces we also have the support of the unions and provincial federations of labor," said St. Pierre. The CFS is one of the groups that launched the call for the January protests following the demonstration of more than 10,000 students in Ottawa last November 16.

More than half the participants at the November action came from Quebec campuses, and support for the January 25 mobilization is broad here. At least 20 Montreal-area university and college groups are endorsing and building a city-wide march and rally, including those from English-language campuses not present in November.

The federal government plan would replace as much as half the current funding of post-secondary education with an expanded system of student loans. The education cutbacks are part of a proposal to



More than 10,000 students marched in Ottawa against budget cuts Nov. 16, 1994. Unions and labor federations in most provinces support upcoming January actions.

slash billions of dollars from unemployment insurance, welfare, old age pensions, and other social programs.

Student groups are divided over what stance to take towards the cuts. Some are not participating in the January 25 protests and argue for accepting Human Resources

Minister Lloyd Axworthy's invitation to sit down and discuss how to choose where to cut spending.

The Federation of University Students of Quebec (FEUQ), which includes student associations at many post-secondary institutions across Quebec, is one of those not

participating in the upcoming action. At a recent meeting of the January 25 coalition in Montreal, a FEUQ representative called for a "national consensus" in Quebec to be formulated by the Bloc Québécois, Parti Québécois, trade union officials, and student associations. The Bloc Québécois is the pro-Quebec-sovereignty party that forms the official opposition in Canada's federal Parliament. The pro-sovereignty Parti Québécois heads the Quebec provincial government. These parties favor cuts in social programs but object to the federal government proposal. They advocate the Quebec government's exclusive right to decide and implement cutbacks.

The FEUQ counterposes the January 25 protests to a possible action in Ottawa, organized jointly with the Bloc Québécois, at the opening of Parliament in February.

Marie-Claude Ricard, a coordinator of the action in Montreal, said, "I happen to favor a sovereign Quebec. But regardless of what we think about this issue, all students should join in the demonstrations on January 25."

"The cuts to education spending are being carried out at this time by the federal government in Ottawa," Ricard said. "The demonstrations on [January] 25 are important because they are Canada-wide. They will mobilize the forces that will be needed if we are to defeat these cuts."

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

## Momentum builds for January 22 protest

Continued from front page

Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion in 1973, was called in response to the December 30 murder of two workers at abortion clinics in Brookline, Massachusetts. Shannon Lowney and Leanne Nichols were killed and five others wounded in attacks at the Planned Parenthood and Preterm clinics. The assaults, followed by another shooting at a Norfolk, Virginia, facility the next day, are the worst incidents of clinic violence to date. Anti-abortion rights activist John Salvi, arrested in Norfolk, was arraigned January 9 on murder charges for the Brookline killings.

Since the murders, thousands of people have joined memorials, rallies, and other protests in this area to defend abortion rights. Among the events were a January 3 memorial for Lowney of more than 1,000 at the Arlington Street Church; memorials in Gloucester and Worcester, Massachusetts; and a January 9 meeting of 125 people sponsored by the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice. In addition, more than 200 came out to defend four Boston-area clinics January 7, and clinic defense was also organized on Cape Cod.

Some 250 people at a "community strategy meeting" January 4 adopted a proposal to make the January 22 demonstration in Boston a national action, encouraging participation from all over. "We have not had social change without a social movement, and we have the beginnings of one here," said Ellen Convisser, president of Massachusetts NOW, in opening the gathering at Brookline High School.

The meeting, called by NOW and the Reproductive Rights Network, brought together many organizations and activists in the area. Workers from the Preterm Clinic announced a fund they have started to repair and reopen the clinic soon. Also attending was Domenic Bozzotto, president of Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union Local 26. The union has volunteered office space and telephone lines for those building activities in defense of abortion rights.

"I'm part of the supposed apathetic Generation X and we are not going to let anyone tell us what to do with our bodies," said a young woman from Brookline High School. She pledged she and her classmates would be out in front of the clinics and at any demonstration or activity organized.

### Right wing divided

Reflecting a growing division among right-wing forces opposed to a woman's right to choose, Bernard Cardinal Law,

head of the Catholic Church in Boston, called for a moratorium on antiabortion protests outside clinics shortly after the killings. Law, who has been a leading proponent of such actions, said "prudential judgment" impelled him to issue the statement. Other bishops have joined in Law's call.

John Cardinal O'Connor of New York, however, rejected the moratorium during a mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral January 8. He said he would join such a call only on condition that a "moratorium be called on abortions." O'Connor lauded Brooklyn Bishop Thomas Daily, who said he would continue leading monthly "prayer vigils" in front of abortion clinics.

The national director of Operation Rescue, Rev. Flip Benham, said he opposed Law's moratorium but acknowledged that the call would limit the numbers willing to join actions against the clinics. Benham announced plans to restart the antiabortion protests. If "there are not local people in the streets in Boston," he said, "we will have some folks come up."

A small number of ultrarightist figures have spoken out in defense of Salvi's action. These include Donald Spitz of Virginia, who lost his post in the Catholic church for his espousal of such views.

The debate among anti-abortion rights forces comes at a time when their ability to mobilize large numbers has been steadily on the wane. In an opinion piece in the *New York Times* January 6, author David Garrow cited the lack of success such forces have had in overturning *Roe v. Wade*. "Operation Rescue and similar groups that harass abortion providers and their patients have been in retreat," he said. "The pro-death language of those extremists who explicitly advocate or condone violence should not divert attention from the much larger reality of such groups' decline."

### Typical rightist cadre

Meanwhile, Attorney General Janet Reno continues to insist that providing protection to abortion clinics would be too expensive. Instead, the U.S. Marshals Service has prepared literature offering up advice for clinic operators such as: "Do not put your name on the outside of your residence or mailbox....Control vegetation to eliminate hiding places....Consider installing a 'buzzer' entry door system."

Since Salvi's arrest, media coverage has centered on speculation about his mental state. But in a letter released from jail, Salvi echoed themes harped on by many

right-wing demagogues to play on fears and insecurities among layers of the middle class and working people facing increasingly harsh social conditions today.

Catholics face persecution, Salvi said, and no Catholic "would lose their home if welfare laws were reformed. Why should a woman without a husband be able to collect if a couple who is married and needs assistance can't get help? These welfare laws seek to break up the family unit." Salvi condemns businesses that lay off "Catholic employees. This layoff procedure for Catholics occurs to a great extent in the U.S. school systems, police departments, fire departments, etc."

"The Catholic Church needs to start realizing that depressions are not correlated to a time period but have to do with a lack of Christian leadership," Salvi said. "Why should there be a depression every 60 years or a war? Can this be prevented? To a great extent yes."

### Defend the clinics?

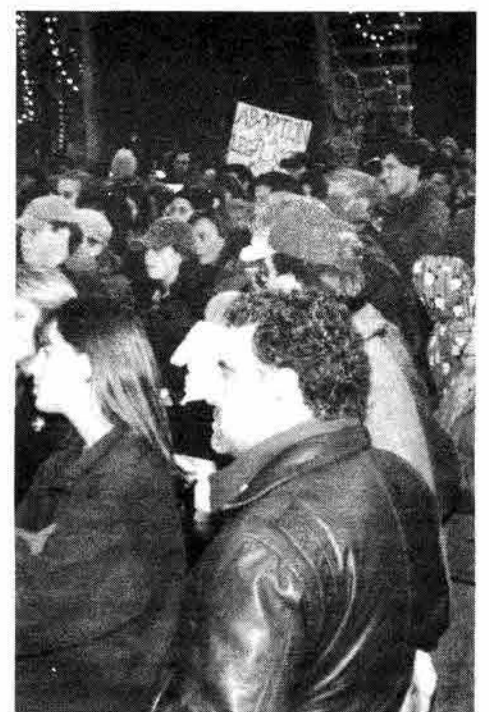
In the wake of the recent murders, abortion rights supporters have been debating how to keep the clinics open and defend women's rights.

On January 7 NOW and other Boston-area supporters of abortion rights organized clinic defense. Following these actions Alice Verhoeven, director of the Planned Parenthood clinic, told the press there should be no further activities in front of the clinics. Similar statements were made by the Preterm Clinic administration.

Some figures in the women's movement have pointed to the attacks on abortion clinics as being — as Convisser put it in a recent statement — part of "a climate of violence" that women face "in the streets, in our homes," and elsewhere. This approach is often accompanied by calls for more gun control and stiffer penalties for violent crimes. A sticker being widely circulated at abortion rights activities uses the image of a coat hanger with a slash through it — a symbol of never returning to illegal abortions — but adds a gun to the coat hanger. The group Massachusetts Citizens to Prevent Handgun Violence has been leafleting at abortion rights protests.

### Activities boost January 22

Abortion rights supporters in Boston are busy carrying out activities to build the January 22 march and rally. Phones at the NOW office are ringing off the hook, and volunteers are coming in to answer calls and distribute leaflets. Calls have come in from Albany to Seattle.



Thousands have joined abortion rights actions in Boston area and around the country since the murders December 30 at clinics in Brookline, Massachusetts.

New York NOW phoned in to say there are buses ready to roll. Peace Youth, also from New York, is organizing participation, as well as Young Socialist chapters around the country. Tahira Duncan from Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, New York, reported at the Militant Labor Forum in New York City January 7 that even though school is not in session, she is organizing with other friends to call as many students as possible to organize their participation in the march.

Abortion rights events, including stepped-up clinic defense, are being organized across the United States. In Pittsburgh 75 people participated in a January 6 protest outside the Federal Building, and several organizations are building a January 22 rally to speak out for choice in the ballroom of the student union at the University of Pittsburgh at 1:00 p.m.

The January 22 demonstration in Boston will assemble at 1:30 p.m. at the Boylston T stop. From there, protesters will march to a rally site soon to be announced. For more information and to help build the event call Boston NOW at (617) 782-1056.

Contributing to this article were Maceo Dixon and Nancy Boyasko in Boston, and Lisa Stolarski and Stephen Poff in Pittsburgh.



# South Africa: farm workers begin to build union, ANC

BY VANA KNAP  
AND GREG MCCARTAN

LYDENBURG, South Africa — Until the African National Congress won a majority in the April 1994 elections, farm workers remained largely unorganized in this country. Large landowners barred unions from farms, and many denied the ANC access to rural workers. Despite these obstacles, the big majority of farm workers and other rural working people cast their ballots for the ANC.

The ANC's victory, along with recent changes in labor legislation, have given farm workers an opportunity to reverse this situation. Here in the fertile farming region of the Eastern Transvaal in the northeastern part of South Africa, farm workers have begun organizing a union, joining the Food and Allied Workers Union, an affiliate of the Congress of South African Trade Unions. These workers are forming an ANC chapter for the first time as well.

Lucas Tau and Jerry Makgata live and work on a huge estate farm Coromandel, owned by multimillionaire S.A. Price. The landlord lives in Johannesburg, a three-hour drive away. Some 800 workers are employed on the farm, which is made up of four subdivisions: a fruit orchard, a nursery, a dairy, and fields raising peas and maize and other grains. Makgata is a laborer who works on planting and harvesting crops. Tau prunes trees in the orchard.

Militant correspondents were taken to the farm by two young ANC activists who live in a nearby township. They have been collaborating with the farm workers' efforts to win union recognition and build the ANC. Translation into English was provided by one of the ANC activists.

Makgata, who has been working on the farm five years, showed the visitors his pay stub. He makes 275 rand a month, the equivalent of under \$20 week. "Our normal workweek is Monday through Friday,



Jerry Makgata (left) and Lucas Tau discuss openings for union and political activity long barred by capitalist farmers during decades of apartheid rule in South Africa.

nine hours a day, but sometimes we work seven days a week," he said. "Overtime is supposed to be optional, but some of us have been fired for not working overtime."

"Health care services are not free," he explained. "If I get hurt, they will take me to the doctor, but I will have to pay for the services. If you are seriously injured, you are simply fired. One worker who was injured on the job received no assistance at all."

Purchases at the company store, where prices are high, are subtracted from each paycheck. Each month workers receive food rations of "a packet of beans and meat bones," for which 55 rand is deducted from their pay.

Housing is one of the issues spurring union organization. After the elections, Price increased workers' pay by 100 rand per month, but at the same time began deducting 100 rand for rent. The workers point out they never paid rent before, and argue that the owner is simply padding their check for public relations, in order to show he is providing housing under a new government law.

When workers are fired, Makgata said, they must move out of the housing. They are demanding that anyone dismissed have

the right to stay in his home, since workers are now paying for their housing. In response, Makgata explained, "The farmer argues this deduction is only a fee and cannot be legally called rent."

Union representatives have been trying to meet with the owner, but "presently there is no agreement with the landowner," Makgata said. "He keeps putting off meetings with the union organizers."

"The landowner is not in favor of the ANC coming on this farm," said Tau. In an attempt to divide farm workers from the ANC, he said, "The landowner asks us, 'Why would you workers associate with the unemployed and students?'"

Tau reported that the boss's efforts have deterred few workers, and that many have joined the ANC, paying the 12 rand yearly membership fee. "People from nearby farms are coming here to join the ANC as well," he added.

The ANC representatives explain there is regular contact between the farm workers and activists who live in the township on the other side of Lydenburg, where many residents work at a local chrome mill owned by the corporate giant CMI. The farm workers join them for social gatherings and ANC mass meetings.

EARNINGS		DEDUCTIONS	
NORMAL	198.00	PAYEE	4.00
O.T. 1	100.00	O.T. 1	4.00
O.T. 2	100.00	CASH STORE	30.00
SICK	0.00	STAFF SERVICES	0.00
LOTH. CHECK	0.00	PENSION	0.00
HOLIDAY BONUS	0.00	SUNDAY DEDUCTION	0.00
SUNDAY ALLOWANCE	0.00	INSURANCE	0.00
RATIONS	55.00	MAINTENANCE	0.00
HOUSING	100.00	RATIONS	55.00
		HOUSING	100.00
GROSS EARNINGS	455.51		
		NET THIS MONTH	265.00

December pay stub with owner's deductions for rent and packet of beans and meat bones. Workers at the Coromandel farm take home less than \$20 per week.

## Afrikaner farmer discusses land, reconstruction

BY VANA KNAP  
AND GREG ROSENBERG

BLOEMFONTEIN, South Africa — At the national conference of the African National Congress held here in December, Militant correspondents met one of the ANC's new members, Mann Oelrich. An Afrikaner farmer who joined the ANC in October, Oelrich was elected a delegate by members of his branch, most of whom are

African.

Following an interview at the conference, Oelrich invited us to his 6,200-acre farm at Tweespruit, where wheat, sunflowers, and sheep are raised. He also owns a 3,700-acre cattle farm.

"My family always opposed the Nationalist government" that consolidated apartheid rule, he said. "My father was a senator for the United Party, and then we

joined the Democratic Party," a liberal party opposed to apartheid. The ANC approached Oelrich prior to the April 1994 elections to stand for a senate position, but he decided to stay with the Democratic Party and headed its slate in the Orange Free State.

"I speak the Sotho language," he said, "and I got a good response when I campaigned in African townships because people know what I've done in the region," he said. "But people would tell me they were going to vote for Mandela. I also saw a tremendous amount of hardship I never realized existed."

After the election, according to Oelrich, these experiences made him realize that "in a small opposition party I wasn't being nearly as effective as I could be, so I decided to join the ANC."

Asked if his large landholdings and position as an employer contradicted the goals of the ANC, which has historically championed the interests of the rural poor and urban workers, Oelrich replied, "I'm still learning about the policies of my organization. The ANC is still more of a liberation movement" than a typical political party. "I regard myself as a moderate" within the organization. "But one thing I never realized is the amount of power and energy generated by a people who are involved in struggle."

### Land reform

Oelrich's landholdings place him among the top 20 percent of farmers in the Orange Free State, and "that's too much given the conditions in South Africa today," he said. Blacks "are demanding land for free. How the democratic government handles that, given that it wants to attract investment [from outside of South Africa], is a tricky question."

"I agree we must have reallocation to enable people to get onto the land," he said.

The farmer said four of the ten African workers he employs want their own land, while the others want to remain farm workers but receive higher wages. He is exploring with several of these workers turning the farm into some form of partnership, he said.

Oelrich supports ANC proposals to provide land to Blacks who want to farm; current plans include government purchase of idle or underutilized land, as well as distribution of state-owned land. He explained that the government will also have to supply cheap credit and training to new farmers, who need skills beyond those they used as farm workers.

The farmer said he had helped initiate efforts in the Tweespruit area to establish an economic development forum. It is composed of 12 members, three each representing farmers, farm workers, businessmen, and unionized factory workers. The goal is to "uplift the economy of the area and empower people who never had much of a say, giving them a say for the first time in their lives." Oelrich is the chairman of the forum, which is identifying projects under the Reconstruction and Development Program and coordinating implementation with local and provincial governments.

### A trip to Tweespruit

When we visited Oelrich after the conference, he took us to a nearby farm co-owned by Don Holmes. Holmes and his partner employ 20 farm workers on a 7,400-acre swath of land, on which maize, wheat, and sunflowers are grown and beef cattle are raised. "We could get by with 15 men," said Holmes, "but we help the others out. It would be nice if we didn't have to."

Holmes doesn't share Oelrich's political views. At various times he has voted for candidates of the Progressive Party, United

Continued on Page 11

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



The Militant's eyewitness reports on political developments in Cuba and South Africa continue in this issue.

Coverage of struggles by rural workers and gold miners, as well as post-apartheid reconstruction and development efforts led by the African National Congress, was gathered by a four-person reporting team during the last two weeks of December.

Militant correspondents have organized three reporting trips to Cuba over the past two months, including coverage of the youth brigade currently visiting the countryside and cities there. Feature articles on the new agricultural markets, farm cooperatives, factory assemblies, and December meeting of Cuba's National Assembly will appear in

coming issues.

Since mid-December, readers of the Militant have contributed more than \$2,000 towards helping to meet the expenses of these reporting teams. This includes \$600 raised by socialist workers who are members of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) at a meeting in Salt Lake City, Utah, last month. Greg McCartan, who was part of the South Africa reporting team, is a USWA member and participated in the meeting a few days before catching his flight.

The Militant depends on generous contributions by our readers to make possible this first-hand coverage. Please send your contribution today!

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# Washington forces detained refugees to return to Haiti

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

On January 6, U.S. Marines unloaded 54 Haitian refugees at Port-au-Prince from a navy ship that had sailed eight hours earlier from Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. The refugees were the first of nearly 4,000 to be forcibly returned to Haiti from the U.S. Naval Station located on a piece of Cuban territory illegally occupied by Washington for nearly a century.

"I know I'll find problems," Magali Elva, 17, told the press after she disembarked. Elva fled Haiti last year after thugs associated with the former military regime in Port-au-Prince attacked her home on Ile de Gonave. Her father was later killed by a similar group of assailants. Elva said she was not reassured by the occupation of Haiti by more than 5,000 U.S. troops, which have been on the island since last September when they reinstalled Jean-Bertrand Aristide to the presidency.

"They're still after people, they still kill people," she said, referring to the paramilitary groups that continue to operate freely in her country, especially in rural areas.

## Incarceration at Guantánamo

Elva was among 21,000 refugees who fled the terror of the former military junta last year, only to be intercepted at sea by the U.S. Coast Guard and incarcerated at camps in Guantánamo. Washington turned down requests for asylum from the overwhelming majority of these refugees. Since the U.S. invasion, some 15,000 Haitians held at Guantánamo have been repatriated. Nearly 4,500 refused to do so, however, despite intimidation by U.S. authorities.

At the end of December the Clinton administration told Haitians held at Guantánamo they had until January 5 to go back

"voluntarily" in exchange for a piddling \$75 and a promise of a job that would last two to four months. Only 667 took the offer. The majority refused and vowed to press for asylum.

The U.S. government claims it is safe for the Haitians to go back. Stanley Schrager, a spokesman for the U.S. embassy in Haiti, said the presence of thousands of U.S. troops there provides "an increased security environment and an absence of political repression."

Refugees and their lawyers disagree. "These Haitians are being told 'Go back or else,'" said Cheryl Little, an attorney for Florida Rural Legal Services in Miami. "Forcing people who have every reason to fear going back now is unconscionable.... They are needlessly risking Haitian lives." On January 5, attorneys for the Haitians asked a federal judge in Miami to issue a temporary restraining order blocking their return. The request was denied.

Washington's forced repatriation is scheduled to be completed by mid-January.

## Making space for Cubans in Panama

Without having said so publicly, the Pentagon is clearing Guantánamo of Haitians to make space for some 8,000 Cubans now incarcerated at bases in Panama. "CNN Headline News" announced January 10 that the Pentagon had already decided to return Cubans held in Panama to Guantánamo. "There is a good possibility that there will be an announcement to that effect in the next few days," said Maj. Richard Scott, in a telephone interview from the Pentagon's headquarters in Virginia the same day.

Currently 21,600 Cubans are detained at Guantánamo, in addition to the Haitians who are being evicted. U.S. forces imprisoned some 30,000 Cubans there who left their country on boats and rafts last August and September seeking to enter the United States. The Pentagon later relocated more than 8,000 of these detainees to U.S. bases around the Panama Canal.

Since August, more than 600 Cubans held at Guantánamo have run through the minefields separating the base from the republic of Cuba, or jumped from cliffs to the ocean below, in order to return to their country. Several have been killed.

On December 8 and 9 thousands of Cubans held in Panama rebelled against conditions in the camps and demanded their freedom. The U.S. military responded with brutality. In the ensuing riots two Cubans were killed and 249 people were injured, including dozens of U.S. soldiers. Two Cubans are still missing.

Since then, the Panamanian government of Ernesto Pérez Balladares has made clear it will not allow Washington to maintain the detention camps beyond the previously agreed March 3 deadline.

Conditions in the camps have worsened for Cubans. After a December 22 visit to Camp No. 1 — the worst of the four detention centers and the camp where the rebellion began — *Havana Radio* correspondent Eddie Zamora reported: "Upon arrival at this installation we observed that it had been ringed with barbed wire, that the military patrols inside the camps were carrying clubs, and that their faces were painted as if they were at war."

"Meanwhile," Zamora continued, "a large number of rafters' faces were black and blue. They say this is the result of the blows received from the U.S. riot squads. They showed us their injured heads. They were openly bitter and expressed this to reporters as we arrived."

A week later, Camp No. 1 was raided by U.S. special forces with armored vehicles who forcibly moved hundreds of women and children to other camps, dividing many families. The camp now houses 1,000 single men. According to the *Washington Post*, psychiatric cases have increased there. Cubans who tried to commit suicide by cutting themselves with barbed wire and even drinking shampoo are held in what the inmates call the chicken coop — indi-



Refugees from Haiti imprisoned at U.S. base in Guantánamo, Cuba, about to be forcibly repatriated. Repression by paramilitary gangs poses threat to returnees.

vidual cinder-block shells.

Despite these conditions, most detainees interviewed by reporters in Panama say they would rather stay there than go back to the Guantánamo base, which many refer

to as a "hell-hole." In order to enforce the expected relocation, the Pentagon recently brought 2,000 fresh troops on the scene, increasing its forces guarding the four camps in Panama to 8,000 soldiers.



## PATHFINDER AROUND THE WORLD

By Mark Friedman and Mary Ellen Marcus

**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.**

Pathfinder Press participated in Latin America's largest book fair in Guadalajara, Mexico, in late November, with a booth featuring the *Bolivian Diary of Che Guevara* and some 150 other titles in English and Spanish. Several hundred thousand workers, students, and others from Mexico and elsewhere attended the fair. The Pathfinder booth — staffed by the publisher's Los Angeles sales representatives and supporters in Mexico — was a hub of political discussion for five days.

Pathfinder representative Roger Calero was interviewed by six radio stations and newspapers, and students and workers who heard the broadcasts came looking for the booth.

Discussions ranged from Cuba's socialist revolution and the anti-immigrant Proposition 187 in California, to debates about the Nicaraguan revolution and its fall, the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the world economic and social crisis from the United States to Mexico and elsewhere in the Third World. Many at the fair were glad to have the chance to look at and purchase books by Che Guevara, Fidel Castro, Malcolm X, Nelson Mandela, Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, V.I. Lenin, Leon Trotsky, and others.

"We need a movement in Mexico to demand the right to abortion" said one young woman, attracted to titles on this question. "Too many women are being forced to have children or are mutilated by self-induced abortions." There was a lot of interest in titles on women's rights.

Pathfinder representatives helped students organize to get books into campus libraries and bookstores. Several teachers bought titles for classroom use and took Pathfinder catalogs. A Nicaraguan book distributor expressed interest in the issues of the Marxist magazines *New International* and *Nueva Internacional* on "The Rise and Fall of the Nicaraguan Revolution." A bookstore owner from

Chiapas, where peasant land struggles are taking place, began working on an order. A delegation of librarians from public and college libraries in the United States and Puerto Rico took note of new titles to order, in particular Guevara's *Bolivian Diary*, as did distributors from Mexico, Argentina, Panama, and other countries.

Despite a devaluation of the Mexican peso in the midst of the fair, more than \$850 worth of books was sold.



"The revolutionary struggle led by Che Guevara and explained in his book, *The Bolivian Diary*, is a powerful example for working people fighting for their rights today," said Carlos Zavala, a union activist in Canadian Auto Workers Local 1900 at Stylecraft.

Zavala was one of several speakers at a December 3 celebration in Montreal of Pathfinder's new English-language edition of Guevara's account of the 1966-67 guerrilla struggle in Bolivia. Zavala told participants that Stylecraft management recently had five workers arrested for taking part in a picket line protesting layoffs and forced overtime; three were suspended. "Che waged war to free us from these kinds of injustices," he said. The book shows why "today's workers in the factories and fields have to fight back to defend our rights."

Michel Prairie, editor of the Marxist magazine *Nouvelle Internationale*, explained that Che understood that the socialist revolution in Cuba could only survive imperialism's efforts to destroy it through new revolutionary victories by workers and peasants in the Americas and elsewhere. "That's why he opened up a battlefield in Bolivia and why to this day Cubans seek to join others internationally who are fighting against injustice and for a better world."

Also speaking at the celebration of Guevara's book were Vicky Mercier — a member of the Young Socialists who said she would be participating in an international youth brigade to Cuba in January 1995 "to see the socialist revolution that Che helped bring about" — and Carlos Pilguil from *Nuestra America*, a Spanish-language newspaper.

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# Effort to sell 'New International' kicks off

BY NAOMI CRAINE

"New International? I just sold a copy last night to a coworker," said Leah Finger, a member of the United Auto Workers at an auto assembly plant in Twin Cities, Minnesota. The sale came out of a discussion with a longtime *Militant* subscriber who was trying to figure out, "What's going on in Russia?"

Finger told him the recently published *New International* no. 10 "helps explain the world. It explains why the imperialists are backing Russian president Boris Yeltsin despite the slaughter in Chechnya, and why there is more instability in the capitalist world after the Gulf war." The new issue features articles entitled "Imperialism's march toward fascism and war," "What the 1987 stock market crash foretold," and "Defending Cuba, defending Cuba's socialist revolution."

Another worker at the Minneapolis plant is considering buying a copy. He attended a January 5 send-off for Minnesota participants in a youth brigade to Cuba and is now interested in reading more.

It is to reach people like these, who are thinking about the world and looking for answers to the economic and social crises caused by capitalism, that supporters of the Marxist magazine *New International* launched a campaign to sell 1,500 copies

of the new issue. The aim of the 10-week drive, which runs through February 28, is to get the magazine into the hands of workers and young people and to organize classes and discussions on its contents. Supporters of the socialist press have also taken a goal to sell 320 renewal subscriptions to the socialist newspaper the *Militant* and 80 to its Spanish-language sister publication *Perspectiva Mundial*.

## Bosses see "tumultuous" times ahead

"The world is in the early stages of what promises to be, for the next ten or 20 years, one of its more tumultuous periods, even by the standards of the past couple of centuries," wrote the editors of the *Economist* in their year-end issue. The British financial magazine pointed to growing rivalries between world powers, conflicts and instability from Bosnia and Russia to Algeria, and the growing likelihood of wars. The notion that "the great powers of the coming century [will be] all democracies," the magazine said, "is far from certain."

A January 10 editorial in the *New York Times* headlined "Feeling Poor in a Rich Economy" commented, "Recent economic gains, though substantial on average, have been concentrated among high-income families." Workers' wages "have languished or, after accounting for inflation,

fallen over recent decades," the *Times* said, concluding that "there is no obvious remedy."

The articles in *New International* no. 10 takes up these themes too, but from the standpoint of the working class. The capitalist ruling classes the world over have no remedy for their economic straits, as they compete to squeeze more profits out of workers and farmers. Intensified austerity, worsening living standards, and the resulting defensive struggles by working people, the articles in the magazine explain, will be answered by the rulers with assaults on political and union rights, the rise of fascist movements, and bloody wars.

Sales of the magazine got a boost at regional socialist educational conferences held December 31-January 2 in Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and Twin Cities. *New International* no. 10 was a top seller at all three gatherings, which featured talks based on the article "Imperialism's march toward fascism and war." One participant in the Twin Cities conference, a student who was about to head to Cuba on the youth brigade, stocked up his library with three issues of the Marxist magazine.

A member of the International Association of Machinists at Northwest Airlines in Boston bought a copy of *New International* no. 10 after a coworker told him

about discussions at the Philadelphia conference. He had considered going to the conference but hadn't made it.

Another new reader in Boston picked up the new issue at a memorial for the two clinic workers murdered by a right-wing opponent of abortion rights in Brookline, Massachusetts. The activist, said Maceo Dixon, "was surprised when I said the right to choose abortion is a working-class issue, and that ultrarightists like the killer at the clinics are bred by the crisis of capitalism. He had never thought about it that way before and was interested to read the analysis" in *New International*.

## Explains rising class tensions

Supporters of *New International* had sold four copies of the new issue on the job to auto workers in New York and New Jersey by the end of the first week in January. "It's clear we can sell a lot more," reported Mary Nell Bockman. She and a coworker were discussing the rising class tensions in the world today, and Bockman suggested he "read this magazine for a perspective on how the working class can fight back, so he borrowed it and came in the next day with his \$14 for the issue."

This new reader of *New International*, like many others, is a *Militant* subscriber. The questions taken up in depth in the magazine complement the weekly coverage in the *Militant* and in the monthly Spanish-language *Perspectiva Mundial*. That's why the renewal effort is an important part of this sales campaign.

One recent *New International* reader in Miami, a 19-year-old student from Uruguay, "read about the magazine in the *Militant*," reports Seth Galinsky. She is one of several young people who have purchased the magazine so far in that city. Galinsky said supporters of the socialist press there will be organizing a class series beginning January 11 on the contents of *New International* no. 10.

Readers in other cities are doing the same thing. A student at Sarah Lawrence College in New York recently called the Pathfinder bookstore to double check the time for the class in Brooklyn. She is organizing other students from the campus to go to Boston January 22 to protest the abortion clinic killings, and had spoken a few days earlier at a *Militant* Labor Forum on defending abortion rights.

Beginning in our next issue, the *Militant* will print the goals and results of the sales campaign so far. To have up-to-date figures included in the weekly chart, supporters are asked to report sales of *New International* by each Tuesday at noon Eastern Standard Time Renewal subscriptions for the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* must arrive in the *Militant* business office by the same deadline. Initial goals and results should be sent in by that time January 16. Readers are also encouraged to jot down their experiences and discussions selling the socialist publications.

## Clinton, Congress aim at labor's gains

Continued from front page

January 28. In recent testimony before Congress, Clinton's secretary of health and human services, Donna Shalala, explained that the administration favored throwing able-bodied women off the welfare rolls who do not comply with work requirements. "We are committed first and foremost to insuring that everybody who can work does work," Shalala said. Children whose parents lose their welfare benefits could be taken away and put in foster homes, group homes, or put up for adoption, according to the White House official. After her testimony, Republican congressman Bill Archer of Texas commented that Shalala's proposals were somewhat similar to the Republican position.

While Republicans and the administration are pushing ahead to revamp the welfare system, not everything is exactly falling into place. Gingrich has been forced to drop for now his proposal to deny immigrants with legal status in the United States food, health, and other social benefits. This proposal was touted to be a savings of \$22 billion for the government, which would help to pay for tax cuts.

The Social Security Administration issued a report recently that more than 400,000 elderly and disabled legal immigrants now receiving monthly checks would be denied federal aid if the Republican plan was passed into law. Sensing he may have pushed too far, Gingrich backed off. He said it wasn't "a change of heart." He was just "fine tuning" his election program.

## Taking aim at Social Security

While strident proposals to demolish welfare programs get the most attention and seem the most likely to succeed, the capitalist politicians are after a much larger target, cuts in the Social Security system. Big-business spokespeople point to the massive funds that go toward Social Security as the only realistic place to find the billions needed to reduce the government deficit. As the Congress session opens, a new round of trial balloons are being floated to see if progress can be made in making cuts in Social Security politically tenable.

Gingrich called for replacing Medicare, the health insurance system that benefits 34 million retired and disabled people in the United States, during a recent hearing in Congress. "We need to transform Medicare into another system," Gingrich told the House Ways and Means Committee. He concluded that doing so would, "save a heck of a lot of money." But the Georgia Republican would set no timetable for a radical overhaul of Medicare.

Senator Bob Packwood told John McLaughlin's "One on One" television show that the Social Security retirement age would eventually have to be raised, though he said there is currently no political will to do so. He suggested the far

off — and he hoped politically safe — year of 2010 to raise the age of retirement to 70.

And Democrats and Republicans recently got a helping hand in their quest to slash the social wage working people have fought for and have earned throughout their working lives. During a joint meeting of the House and Senate Budget Committees, Alan Greenspan, head of the Federal Reserve Board, suggested that the Consumer Price Index (CPI) exaggerates annual inflation by 0.5 percent to 1.5 percent. This situation leads to higher payments for Social Security than are warranted, according to the Fed chief.

Since cost-of-living increases in Social Security benefits are tied to the CPI, lowering the calculation could offer a "painless way" to cut the benefits of millions of retired workers.

Greenspan's proposal would "save" up to \$150 billion to pay off wealthy bond holders over the next five years. It would also lower Social Security payments and adversely affect workers' company and union pensions, which are also pegged to the rate of inflation. Workers with cost-of-living clauses in union contracts would lose out as well.

Welcomed by politicians in Congress, Greenspan suggested that they pass a law lowering the CPI so that payments to Social Security recipients would not have to be raised accordingly. Otherwise, the gov-

ernment would have to wait for the Bureau of Labor Statistics to revise the price index, and it is not certain the agency would agree with Greenspan's numbers or decide in a timely enough way to suit big business.

Although prodded by Greenspan, one of the chief spokespersons for bankers and stock and bond market investors, few capitalist politicians are willing to risk their political futures on a campaign to cut into Social Security right now.

Social Security is not a government handout, although the employers almost always present it that way. It is a deferred social wage that the labor movement fought bloody battles for as it mobilized to build industrial unions and reverse the crushing impact of the Great Depression in the 1930s and 1940s.

Neither Clinton, Gingrich, or Senate Republican leader Robert Dole are eager to invite the certain opposition they sense would be mobilized against any attempt to cut, or gut, Social Security.

The framework of bourgeois politics continues to shift to the right. With no mass voice coming from the working class speaking in its own interests, capitalist politicians feel free to constantly probe and push programs that don't have the support of the working class.

But this has not meant that the rightist program of Gingrich, and the anti-

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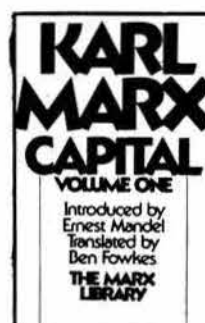
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# Young socialists get view of Cuba today

In December two members of the Young Socialists, Brian Taylor and Naomi Craine, spent three weeks touring Cuba, speaking to workers and young people about politics and the class struggle in the United States. Below are some of their observations, as they learned more about how workers and youth in Cuba are fighting to defend the socialist revolution today.

BY NAOMI CRAINE  
AND BRIAN TAYLOR

HAVANA — One night we visited the home of Vilma Iturralde, a union leader at a tobacco factory here. She was ill and had been to the hospital days earlier for some tests — entirely free, of course, as is all health care in Cuba.

While we were talking in the living room of her small apartment in Old Havana, a run-down neighborhood, the family nurse dropped in to check up on her and

without insurance.

By mid-morning December 25 the Malecón, the waterfront drive in Havana, began to fill with children in costumes, floats from various neighborhoods and organizations, food vendors, and spectators. Young people played board games in one area and danced to music in the street in several others. The one-day carnival, organized by the Union of Young Communists (UJC), was the first in several years. While not on the scale of end-of-the-year festivities before the special period, the event was quite a success.

Many people said the economic situation is looking up a little. "The worst years were 1992-93," commented a young scientific researcher from San José de los Lazos, Havana province. "Things are a little better now. For a while there weren't any restaurants or discos where you could go. Now some are beginning to reopen."

## REPORTERS NOTEBOOK

give a needed injection. Quite a difference from our experience as workers in the United States, where you expect to pay an arm and a leg for health care and can't even dream of getting a house call anymore!

Many Cubans point with pride to their health system, which includes family doctors and nurses in every neighborhood. Maintaining this system has been a government priority, despite the "special period" triggered by the collapse in preferential trade arrangements with the former Soviet bloc, which has meant shortages of everything from antibiotics to detergent.

In many places we visited, Cuban workers, doctors, and students questioned us about the state of health care in the United States. Many were shocked to hear examples of what a worker pays for routine medical and dental treatments, with or

Nestled in a beautiful spot in the mountains near the town of Manicaragua in Villa Clara province is a Pioneer campground. During most of the year the bunkhouses are full of kids who come for two weeks of recreation, nature classes, and other activities organized by the Pioneers children's group, at no cost to their families. In December, the camp is used by students like Yanet Linares, 14, who came for a month to help with the coffee harvest. She was with four classmates when we stopped to speak with her, all children of factory workers in the provincial capital Santa Clara. Linares said this was her third year coming to help pick the beans.

Just down the road is another camp of middle school students and their teachers, also from Santa Clara, working in the harvest. This annual "school in the country" is aimed at linking labor and education, and at helping the economy in the process. Many of the young people were excited to spend an hour of their free time on a Sunday afternoon talking about their camp and asking us questions such as, "What do you



Militant/Laura Garza

Brian Taylor (right) in meeting with students at V.I. Lenin high school in Havana

think about Fidel Castro?" "What do they say about Cuba in the U.S. press?" "How do kids live in the United States?" "What will happen to you when you return?" and "Would you like to live in Cuba?"

The Pathfinder pamphlet *Abortion is a Woman's Right* sparked a discussion with some members of the UJC in Quemado de Guines, another rural municipality in Villa Clara. "I think there are too many abortions," one woman began. "Some women use it instead of birth control, and that's wrong," she said. We described the attempts to curtail abortion rights in the United States today, both through legal restrictions and through violent attacks on clinics and physicians, as well as the mobilizations by young people to defend the clinics.

"Well, of course, it should be a legal right," the young Cubans agreed.

A November supplement to the UJC paper *Juventud Rebelde* focusing on various aspects of sexuality took up the question of abortion. Abortion has been available to any woman who requests it in Cuba, completely free, since 1965. By comparison, in

the majority of countries in Latin America, Africa, and Asia abortion is illegal in most or all cases. The paper noted that 200,000 women die each year around the world from illegal and botched abortions.

Today there are 56.6 abortions per 100 live births in Cuba — fewer than in the 1980s but still a high figure. The *Juventud Rebelde* supplement encouraged greater use of birth control and sex education to reduce the need for abortion.

It is commonly stated by the bourgeois press and other opponents of the Cuban revolution that Cubans themselves do not have access to any tourist facilities. Ibis would surely disagree. She manages the Motel Las Teras, a hotel in Ranchuelo, Villa Clara, for Cuban tourists and travelers. The hotel, which had been the guest home of a wealthy factory owner before the revolution, is mainly geared towards providing a honeymoon spot or awards for model workers in state enterprises.

The hotel is not unaffected, however, by pressures to become an international tourist establishment. A new section is planned for guests who can pay in hard currency. But "we are fighting to keep this location available for national tourism," Ibis said determinedly.

It is also noteworthy that in both hotels where we stayed, the overwhelming majority of guests were Cuban. The Hotelito in Alta Habana, for example, was hosting a group of about 40 workers who had each worked more than 50 years in the sugar industry. While there, they toured Havana, going to a dance club, museums, and dinner at one of the city's finest restaurants.

"Though our equipment is basic and inferior to bigger, more developed countries, Cuba continues to win medal after medal." That's what Jorge Ginebra Carril said when we visited Cerro Pelado, Cuba's main training facility for its top athletes. "We are the country with the most physical education and sports teachers per capita," Fidel Castro noted in an address to the World Meeting in Solidarity with Cuba in November. This means young people in Cuba have the opportunity at an early age to practice a wide variety of sports, from basketball to fencing. The best of the up-and-coming athletes can opt to enter the Cerro Pelado program and train alongside Cuba's national teams. Athletes participate in the program free of charge, with all their equipment, room, and board free. They also study to obtain a degree in their field of interest.

Because Cuba has so many high quality athletes, many of them receive substantial offers to leave Cuba and practice elsewhere. A few take these offers; many others refuse. One international women's judo champion told us she doesn't accept U.S. big money offers because, "Cuba is my home. I grew up here having the right to education, medical treatment, and the right to be able to practice judo. All free of charge. I represent this country in the Olympics. I don't want to leave."

## Cuban youths receive dozens of invitations for U.S. speaking tour

BY DOUG JENNESS

MINNEAPOLIS — Letters from 58 faculty members and a student group at 42 universities and colleges, inviting two Cuban youth leaders to speak on campus have been delivered to Cuba. Kennia Serrano and Rogelio Polanco, researchers at the Center for Youth Studies in Havana, will submit the letters, from 18 states and Washington, D.C., to the Cuban Interests Section in Havana. They are applying for visas to come to the United States in

March and April.

The Faculty-Student Cuban Youth Lectures Committee based at the University of Minnesota here is coordinating the invitations and speaking engagements. The committee coordinated the successful tour of Cuban youth leader Pavel Díaz in March-April 1994.

In a letter to Serrano and Polanco, submitted with the invitations, spokespersons for the committee stated, "The lectures and classroom exchanges will offer an opportu-

nity for discussion in the spirit of free speech and academic freedom among people of diverse and even opposing views." Signing the letter were Dennis Valdez, professor of history and chair of the Chicano Studies Department; August Nimtz, professor of political science; and Gilberto Vasquez, La Raza Student Cultural Center.

Serrano, 21, has been a student leader in Cuba since she was 13 and is currently the secretary of international relations of the University Student Federation (FEU). Polanco, 28, has been an FEU leader and has participated in many international youth forums in Cyprus, the Middle East, and throughout Europe and the Americas. Both are members of the Union of Young Communists.

Letters of invitation are still coming in. Those sent by January 15 will be forwarded to Serrano and Polanco in Cuba by the Faculty-Student Committee in order to supplement those already submitted to the U.S. State Department.

According to Adriana Sanchez, a student at the University of Minnesota and an activist in the committee, a proposed itinerary will be drawn up later in January. Serrano and Polanco will be traveling together, and organizers in each locality where they go will be expected to raise at least \$1,000 to cover travel and related expenses. For information on the tour contact: Faculty-Student Cuban Youth Lectures Committee, Latin American Studies, 214 Social Sciences Tower, 267 19th Ave., S., University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455. Phone (612) 624-1512; Fax (612) 626-2242.



Militant photos by Brian Taylor

Rogelio Polanco and Kennia Serrano have been invited to dozens of U.S. campuses



# Youth brigade to Cuba gets under way

BY JON HILLSON

MINNEAPOLIS — Dozens of coworkers, activists, friends, and family members filled Jitters, a popular downtown youth bar here, to send off a seven-member Minnesota contingent for an international youth brigade to Cuba.

The bar was decorated with signs about the brigade, whose participants and supporters staffed a table at the door and sold raffle tickets. The table was piled with work boots to be taken as a solidarity donation to the brigade's Cuban hosts at an agricultural cooperative. Boots were contributed by railroad workers, airline baggage handlers, steelworkers, and others.

The January 5 event was preceded by a news conference at the State Capitol building. Brigade organizer Lisa Rottach was interviewed by a local radio station.

*The Minnesota Daily*, published by students at the University of Minnesota here, ran a front-page article on the brigade January 6. Picking up on the brigade's planned donation, the continuation on an inside page was headlined, "These boots are made for farming." The boots are an expression of solidarity, not charity, brigade participant Ryan Kelly explained. Kelly told the student paper he sees Cuban workers "as fighters, rather than victims."

Through the send-off and other fundraising efforts, the Minnesota contingent raised nearly \$2,000 to finance the two-week trip. Union supporters of the brigade sold more than \$150 in raffle tickets to coworkers at area factories, including the Ford truck assembly plant, 3M, Northwest Airlines, the Canadian Pacific-Soo Line Railroad, and Advanced Circuits. Fundraising will continue, leading up to a drawing at a welcome-back party when the brigade returns from Cuba.

The brigade includes four University of



Youth brigade will donate work boots to farm workers in Cuba. Above, participants in New Year's socialist educational conference in Minneapolis contribute to project.

Minnesota students, two from the La Raza Cultural Center, one from the African Student Cultural Center, another from the Women's Studies Department, and a member of the Young Socialists.

Brigade activist Meagan Arney, a student and bartender at Jitters, thanked the send-off crowd. The most important thing "we'll be doing is seeing Cuba with our own eyes," she said, "and telling you, and as many people as we can when we come back, what we have learned."

She also introduced a young Cuban exchange student at the university. "I cannot find the words," he said, "to thank you for the solidarity you show my country."

BY STEPHEN JENNER

LONDON — Friends and supporters of an international youth brigade to Cuba gathered here January 4 to send off 12 participants hailing from several cities in the United Kingdom, and from Sweden, Ice-

land, eastern Germany, and Turkey. They are students and workers who over the last few months have raised their fare through contributions from friends, coworkers, and unions. Several will be writing about their experiences in student and trade-union newspapers when they return, as well as speaking to help get out the truth about Cuba.

Some participants first heard about the brigade from Pavel Diaz, a leader of the Union of Young Communists of Cuba who toured Britain in October 1994. Others had met Diana Newberry, a leader of the Young Socialists in the United States, when she spoke in Iceland and Sweden a few months ago.

Several brigade participants are members of the Young Socialists.

During the send-off, the brigade members had a chance to meet each other, tie down last-minute details, and discuss their itinerary, which includes visits to hospitals, schools, factories, and local Popular Power assemblies. They will also spend time with a volunteer contingent doing agricultural work.

All the participants had brought an extra pair of boots, which they will leave in Cuba together with their own pair. The boot shortage in Cuba makes agricultural labor very difficult. This act of solidarity will make a practical contribution to production and to the morale of Cuban farm workers.

Brigade participants met with *Cuba Si* editor Steve Wilkinson, who plans to include an article on the brigade in the next issue. Manuel Vinas of the Cuban embassy in London addressed the gathering.

*Jon Hillson is a member of the United Transportation Union. Stephen Jenner is a member of the Young Socialists.*

## — YOUNG SOCIALISTS AROUND THE WORLD —

# All out to defend abortion rights, clinic by clinic

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.

"All fighters for democratic rights and women's equality should join the protest action on January 22 being called by the National Organization for Women," says a statement issued by the Young Socialists protesting the December 30 murder of clinic workers Shannon Lowney and Leanne Nichols in Brookline, Massachusetts.

"In the Midwest, people should organize to defend the clinics in Fargo, North Dakota, where Operation Rescue has announced a campaign to shut down the only clinic in this state."

Urging students and young workers to mobilize, the Young Socialists explain, "These actions will be the most powerful answer to this attempt to drive down the confidence and freedom of women. It will send a message that people will not stand for rightist terror and that the overwhelming majority of people support a woman's fundamental right to choose abortion."

For several years "young people have been in the vanguard of the fight to keep the clinics open," the statement notes. "Over the last few years, pro-choice forces have dealt decisive blows to this rightist campaign, outmobilizing and successfully defending clinic doors across the country from attempts by anti-abortionists to shut them down. As an outcome of these defeats, some opponents of abortion rights have resorted to desperate acts of individual terrorism." The murders, the statement says, is part of the brutal face of capitalism, "which resorts to more and more violent means to maintain itself during its decline."

While working people cannot rely on the cops and courts to defend abortion rights, "we must demand that the U.S. govern-

ment carry out its responsibility to uphold the constitutional democratic right of women to choose abortion and use whatever means necessary to bring an end to this clinic violence, up to and including putting federal troops at every clinic door," the Young Socialists continue.

In addition to mobilizing to defend the clinics, the organization invited all young people to "join the socialist movement and be a part of the fight to do away with the system that creates rightist assaults like the one in Brookline."

"All out to Boston on January 22!  
"Defend abortion rights clinic by clinic!"

Young Socialists in Chicago are part of a protest campaign against the passage of anti-immigrant Proposition 187 in California and similar initiatives in Illinois. A demonstration is planned in downtown Chicago February 7. This follows a successful march and rally of 500 people on the city's south side December 10.

The Coalition to Promote and Defend the Rights of Immigrants is organizing the protests. Made up of a range of political and community organizations, its newly elected steering committee includes representatives from the Irish American Student Organization, Committees of Correspondence Youth Task Force, Southwest Youth Collaborative, and Young Socialists.

The coalition is also organizing public forums and educational activities to oppose Proposition 187.

The British Columbia branch of the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) has been contacting labor unions and high school students to help build the national day of action set for January 25. Students and unionists will hold rallies to protest the Liberal government's plans to put education and other social programs on the chopping block.

On January 21 the Vancouver High School Students Against the Cuts will hold

an awareness-raising concert, featuring local bands and speakers from the CFS.

The government says it must slash social programs to cut the budget deficit. Minister of Human Resources Development Lloyd Axworthy has proposed eliminating federal payments to post-secondary education, as well as cuts in welfare and unemployment insurance. The bottom line for students is that tuition fees would rise from about \$2,000 to \$5,200 per year. The prospect of going \$20,000 in debt is unrealistic for most young people, especially since a university degree is no longer any guarantee of a well-paid job.

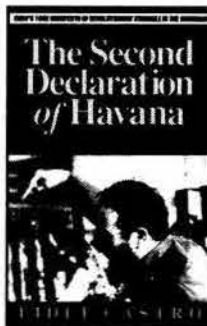
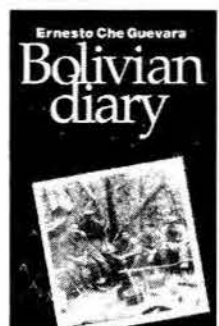
What's more, under the plan devised by Axworthy, those with the lowest wages after graduation will have their debt repayment stretched out the longest, and will therefore be soaked for the most interest. This aspect of the plan discriminates against women and minorities, who receive lower wages on average. Young Socialists from as far away as Los Angeles will fly to Vancouver January 25 to show solidarity with the students and workers in Canada.

*Young Socialists members Robin Kissinger in Chicago and Vivian Hoffmann in Vancouver contributed to this week's column.*

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# Caterpillar strikers: worker solidarity is key

BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

PEORIA, Illinois — The strike being waged by thousands of United Auto Workers (UAW) members against Caterpillar, Inc., is now the longest labor battle in the company's history. UAW members have been walking the picket line for more than 205 days to turn back Caterpillar's efforts to inflict a crushing blow to the union.

Many strikers here say Caterpillar failed in its attempt to launch a back-to-work movement January 3. Only a few "stragglers" went back to work, according to union activists in the Peoria area, where the company's main production facilities are located.

This judgment was echoed in the *Wall Street Journal* January 10, which reported, "Many labor experts believe Caterpillar has the upper hand.... At the same time, the union appears to have had few defectors from its ranks in recent months."

## Sticking with the fight

Huddled around a fire barrel at Building HH in East Peoria, Illinois, strikers Don Corley, Larry Harris, and Rick Higgins said they were sticking with the fight despite the hardships of a long strike. "I'm 51 years old; I've had two back operations. If I lose this job, where am I going to go to get work?" asked Corley. "But I'm here now, and I'll stay out until the bitter end," he quickly added.

Pointing to a hand-made picket sign that reads, "Scrooge's philosophy: Money is 'God' in action," Larry Harris noted that "after seven months, we still have 70 percent on the picket lines."

After a five-month strike in 1991-92, Rick Higgins's job was awarded to a strikebreaker by his foreman. "My first day back, he told me to train this guy on the T-30 Cincinnati lathe, and then he'd show me my new job," Higgins explained. "I ended up a shop laborer loading 15- to 45-pound chains for a robot to pick up, until I finally got off that job a year later. I lost \$4 an hour."

"Well," Higgins said, "the holiday check I just picked up shows me back in the labor pool again. That tells you what I'll be doing and how I'll be treated when we go back."

"I am out here until we get a contract," interrupted Harris. "If we go in without one, we couldn't last until lunch."

Many strikers with 30 years and more at Caterpillar remain on strike in spite of the company's unilateral decision to deny pension credits for striking workers retroactive to Aug. 31, 1994. Almost 80 percent of the strikers are eligible to retire in one to five years.

## Courts back Caterpillar

In the past few months the courts have given a boost to the company's union-busting campaign. In the Peoria area, Caterpillar was able to get a Tazewell County judge to open his courtroom on Veteran's Day and impose an injunction limiting pickets to 10 people per gate. In Decatur, a court imposed a limit of four pickets per gate.

Union members point to other examples of the government coming to the aid of Caterpillar. In September, for example, the

company presented Peoria-area police with a "hit list" of strikers. So-called troublemakers were identified to the police not only by name and Social Security number, but also by their company ID.

Bill Wheat, a UAW member fired by the company, related how East Peoria police arrested seven strikers and supporters December 9. "Thirty of us were at Building SS. We parked where we are supposed to; we stood where we are supposed to — about 500 feet from the gate. The lieutenant told us to move closer to the gate, which we cannot do because of the injunction."

"Then one of the cops began pulling at his gun, jerking it out of his holster and pointing it at one of the women. Then they started to make arrests. They went straight for three of us who are on the 'hit list.'"

"We are going to fight them all the way on the charges," pledged Wheat.

At least three strikers face felony prosecutions now. UAW member Austin Cranford was charged with carrying explosives in his pickup truck near a Caterpillar plant gate January 5. Police allege they found explosives in the bed of the truck about three weeks after a company security guard showed police a videotape of Cranford at Building LL.

## 'Solidarity is the key thing'

The company's ability to maintain a certain level of production has enabled it to weather the strike thus far. According to *Starks Off-Highway Ledger*, an industry newsletter that relies on internal Caterpillar sources, production is down in East Peoria, Decatur, and Aurora, Illinois, by nearly a third. At the same time, Caterpillar's U.S. sales rose 26 percent according to recent year-to-year figures.

Bob Dunn, a member of UAW Local 974 and one of the first workers fired for alleged picket-line misconduct in April 1992, said the reason the company can hold out is its strong sales. "They have a sellers market. They can sell anything they make," Dunn said.

"What can make a difference now? Worker solidarity is the key thing," the

union activist explained. "Had no one crossed at any time, especially in 1992, we would have this fight behind us. Caterpillar used the threat of replacement workers as a bully tactic. Scare and see. The influx of workers, in Cat's eyes justified using money and resources against us."

The resolve of so many union members has some investors at least a little nervous, in spite of the company's positive economic figures. *Value Line*, a big-business publication, remarked in a recent article, "With passions riding high, most anything can happen. Therefore, investors should not underestimate the risk involved in investment in Caterpillar shares."

## Company, union to resume meeting

Following a January 5 meeting of the UAW bargaining committee, Bill Casstevens, the union's international secretary-treasurer, contacted the federal mediator to request a meeting with Caterpillar to "discuss any issues that separate the parties." Earlier the company had rejected Casstevens's proposal to meet in December after National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) administrative law judge James Rose ruled against the company on a number of unfair labor practice complaints.

The company's position, according to its vice president for human services, Wayne Zimmerman, is that "unfair labor practice allegations, charges, complaints, and findings will not bring about a new contract." Zimmerman threatened that the company is prepared for an even longer strike. "Caterpillar is willing to continue the [NLRB] process — the proper forum for resolving the [unfair labor practice] charges — to its conclusion," he said.

Caterpillar announced January 10 that it would now meet with the union to talk about a new contract, but would exclude any discussion of unfair labor practices from the talks.

In another development, strikers at Bridgestone/Firestone and Caterpillar and workers locked out by A.E. Staley in Decatur, won a small victory when the city government backed off from its decision to

Continued on Page 12



Militant/John Sarge  
October 15 march in support of Caterpillar strike in Decatur, Illinois.

# Firestone workers vote to stay on picket line

Continued from front page

offer" also provides that workers will be fired if they miss three days of work in six years.

"There's no way a tire builder can work 12 hours a day—over and over lifting tires that weigh 25 to 60 pounds on and off the machine," striker Bob Fischer told the *Militant* outside the meeting of United Rubber Workers (URW) Local 713 in Decatur. "There will be a lot of people hurt."

A thousand strikers attended the Decatur meeting and voted to continue the walkout. The members "were very strong against pulling the pickets when we met," said Randy Gordon, vice president of the local. The tone was "upbeat," he noted.

"If we hang in there we can win this one," said Roger Walker after the meeting. "I think the company has changed the mood from fear to anger. We've been pushed and pushed, and now we're finally

standing up for what we believe in."

Here in Des Moines, more than 1,000 members of URW Local 310 turned out at a high school auditorium. The mood was determined. "I won't go back and work next to a scab," Dave Bailey said. Most echoed the sentiments of one 25-year Firestone employee who said, "Until hell freezes over we're staying out!"

Hundreds of strikers here registered their opinions by holding up the local's new bumper sticker: "We will never surrender!" The evening television news carried footage of the rubber workers waving the bumper stickers.

At the same time, many strikers say they don't see how the battle will turn out. Some say they are going to have to start looking for a new job in between their picket duty.

Some voiced the hope that Congress will pass an anti-scab bill, barring employers from hiring replacement workers. A few state representatives visited the union hall after Firestone announced the firings, saying they would introduce a bill in the Iowa legislature urging Congress to act. The local is organizing a march to the state capitol January 11 to support the move. (On February 9, the U.S. Senate, by a 56-23 vote, rejected an amendment that, according to an AP dispatch, would have put it "on record as urging [Firestone] to bargain in good faith" and "reconsider its decision to replace striking workers.")

Many strikers are looking to solidarity from the broader labor movement. A number are getting involved in the Des Moines URW local's newly formed Family Support Committee. This group meets weekly, drawing together strikers, family members, and supporters from other area unions. The committee is organizing workers to speak before local union meetings, sell T-shirts and raise funds, and aggressively distribute the new bumper stickers.

In both Des Moines and Decatur, workers debated whether strikers who crossed the picket line to put their names on the sign-up sheet earlier in the week should be allowed in the meetings. After heated de-

bate in both cities, they were allowed to stay. A number said they regretted signing the list and would abide by the vote to continue the strike.

Prior to the Sunday meetings, many rubber workers were concerned by media reports that Firestone was saying hundreds had returned to work in Oklahoma City. But the *Des Moines Register* quoted Jim Cassie, president of Local 998 in Oklahoma City, as saying the local had voted "to stay out and stay strong. Our membership didn't want to pull down the pickets."

Big business is closely watching Firestone's moves and the union's reaction. "Industry analysts predict that if Bridgestone/Firestone can successfully raise production levels in the next few months to prepare for the May-August peak selling season, and operate without a URW-imposed wage structure, other tire companies will resist new wage contacts proposed by the union," the January 5 *Wall Street Journal* commented.

Pointing to Firestone's claim that 600 of 4,200 striking rubber workers have crossed the picket line system-wide, the *Journal* admitted that even if the figure were true, "picket crossers represent only 14% of the strikers" and "the union so far has shown solidarity within its ranks."

Des Moines URW member Mark Allen said the company's aim is to break up the union. "They want to pit us one against another, neighbor against neighbor," he said. "And that's not going to happen."

"People couldn't believe we were being made out to be the bad guys. But now we believe it and we're mad as hell," said Bob Peters, a 36-year-old striker.

"There is a war waged against working people in this country," Peters added, "and no one with a sense of decency and responsibility can turn away and ignore it."

Shirley Peña is a member of United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 997 in Newton, Iowa; John Studer is a member of UAW Local 270 in Des Moines. James Harris in Decatur also contributed to this article.

## The Changing Face of U.S. Politics

### Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions

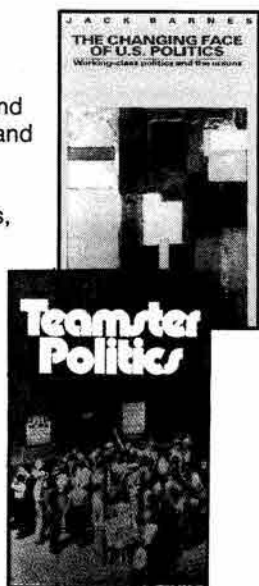
By Jack Barnes

A handbook for workers coming into the factories, mines, and mills, as they react to the uncertain life, ceaseless turmoil, and brutality of capitalism in the closing years of the twentieth century. It shows how millions of workers, as political resistance grows, will revolutionize themselves, their unions, and all of society. 459 pp. \$19.95

## Teamster Rebellion

By Farrell Dobbs

The 1934 strikes that built a fighting union movement in Minneapolis recounted by a leader of that battle. The first in a four-volume series on the Teamster-led strikes and organizing drives in the Midwest that helped pave the way for the CIO and pointed a road toward independent labor political action. 195 pp. \$15.95



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# Britain: a falling out among Tories

Continued from Page 16

rope. The European Union is the biggest game in town, they insist, and British capitalism will hold back at its peril.

For Clarke, Hurd, and others, the issue is not the dream of the peoples of Europe coming together but interests of Britain's capitalist class. They are concerned with capital flows, with having access to investment funds in one of the world's biggest pools of capital, and with investing in the markets opening up in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

## Imperialist competition

They are concerned about competing against German big business to maintain London, not Frankfurt, as the top international finance center in Europe. They are tidying up their own back yard by attempting to draw the whole of Ireland — the Republic, as well as the six counties more directly under London's rule — more closely into the capitalist economy of the United Kingdom — and running into stiff competition from Wall Street and Washington as they do so.

On the other side, the "Euro-sceptics" within the ruling class contend that the interests of British capital can best be defended by prioritizing an international course focused on lucrative investment opportunities in Latin America, China, and the rest of Asia. These forces are also the most vocal in opposing any change in the position of the monarchy or the constitutional position of the north of Ireland as part of the British state.

Both sides agree, however, in rejecting the so-called Social Chapter of the December 1991 Maastricht Treaty that is supposed to set the ground rules for the European Union. British capitalists unanimously agreed that they have no interest in allowing rival European governments to impose restrictions with regard to workers' and union rights that they have largely freed themselves from over the past 15 years.

The ruling classes in France, Germany, and the Scandinavian countries are still at an earlier stage in eroding working conditions and social benefits to the extent already done in the United Kingdom.

## Working class still center stage

While losing substantial sections of support for the Conservatives, prime minister Major, like Thatcher before him, has failed to settle accounts with workers and ensure there will be no labor unrest for the foreseeable future.

Despite the lowest number of days lost in strike action for decades, as well as deep inroads into workers' conditions through large-scale unemployment and anti-union legislation, the railway strike this summer by signal workers showed how vulnerable the bosses are.

The employers were fought to a stalemate by a small number of strategically placed workers taking one-day strike ac-



Some 40,000 protesters marched July 23, 1994, against the Criminal Justice Bill. Labour Party abstained from the vote in Parliament on the widely condemned bill, which granted expanded powers to police and curtailed democratic rights of the accused.

tion over a period of months. Perhaps the most telling aspect of the dispute was its deep and widespread popularity, even among people whose journey to work was disrupted.

The fear that workers may demand to

taste some of the fruits of British capitalism's economic recovery since 1991 is exercising sections of the ruling class. In face of the Tory crisis, big business figures are now looking toward the Labour Party to form the next government. Howard Davies,

director-general of the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), explained in June that "it would be churlish not to recognize the Labour Party has changed in important ways and is offering a set of policies which at least deserve our attention."

In an opinion piece written for the traditionally Tory *Daily Telegraph*, the new Labour Party leader Tony Blair said "There is a new mood in Britain. New Labour is capturing it.... The politics of this country must move beyond the traditional lines of left and right."

"The old battles between public and private sector or management and workforce, are quite simply irrelevant to the challenges Britain faces in the 1990s. The priorities for a Labour government are not about turning the clock back."

## Labour Party abstained

The Labour Party did not support the signal workers strike this summer. They also abstained in the vote in Parliament on the Criminal Justice Act, which removed a wide range of democratic rights — including the right to remain silent when arrested — and which generated widespread protests. Despite universally favorable coverage in the bourgeois press, Blair is not popular among workers.

Although all of Labour's top guns had been campaigning in the recent by-election, only 46 percent of those eligible voted and Labour won the seat with a smaller number of votes than it got in the area in the last general election.

# Afrikaner farmer discusses land question

Continued from Page 5

Party, National Party, and Conservative Party. In the April elections he voted for the Democratic Party.

Holmes described the situation in South Africa today as "the honeymoon phase. It's marvelous that South Africa has a democratically elected government and we're no longer the polecat of the world. But more time will show that the ANC can't deliver the goods. We have an unsophisticated electorate who are expecting the ANC to fulfill its election promises."

Asked about the Restitution of Land Rights Act recently adopted by the new Parliament, Holmes replied, "I've got no problem with that. There were people forcibly evicted during the separate development experiment," that is, during apartheid. "Either restitution or compensation would be appropriate," he said.

The ANC's proposal to redistribute 30 percent of agricultural land over the next five years would be "fine — if they can supply support services" to those setting up small farms. "Just to put peasants on farms would be a disaster," said Holmes. He added that he would oppose any expropriation of farmers' land. "Two wrongs don't make a right."



Don Holmes and his wife on their farm in the Orange Free State.

Holmes said he pays workers in his employ between 300 rand and 600 rand a month, the equivalent of \$85-\$170. All of them live in small brick or mud dwellings on the farm. He points out that the wages are in addition to payment "in kind" — housing is provided and electricity and fuel are subsidized.

## Capitalist recession

"Economically, it hasn't been easy the past five years," says Holmes. "With the economic downturn, high inflation, and the cost of imported machinery," organizing a profitable farm has been more difficult than before.

Holmes said that given the poor shape of the South African and world economy the protections afforded white farmers by the apartheid regime began to come apart. "We had a variety of subsidies. For example, we kept domestic maize prices higher than the world market price and banned imports," enriching local farmers and keeping food costs high. "The remnants of these subsidies all expire within the next three years," said Holmes.

The decision of the South African government to sign on to the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade "will be fine with me if the U.S. and European governments are stopped from subsidizing their farmers. We can compete with farmers, but not with

governments," he said.

He emphasized he was referring to competition at home, not on the world market, since South Africa's yields are lower than those of farmers in the United States, a fact he attributes largely to weather and soil factors.

Back on Oelrich's farm the severe impact of a drought afflicting the Orange Free State was evident. Water was being conserved for use only for drinking water and livestock.

Holmes said the lack of rain had led to "a terrible wheat crop. It knocked our cash flow. We haven't been forced to sell capital or lay off, but it puts back planning and investment in the farm a couple of years."

## Visit to township

Oelrich took us from his farm to the Black township lying on the outskirts of Tweespruit. Residents there said that for two days there had been no water at all. All the wells were dried up.

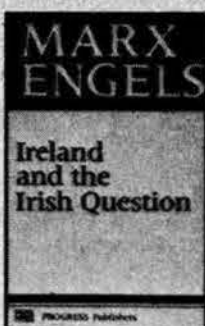
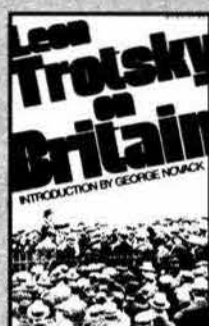
One woman wondered aloud why there were no piping connections to the Coloured township across the road, which did have water.

The 24-year-old mayor of the township said the local government had been contacted and pledged water would be made available in three days time, after the Christmas holiday.

## For Further Reading

### LEON TROTSKY ON BRITAIN

The displacement of British industry, trade, finance, and diplomacy by its U.S. rival following World War I opened a period of social crisis and class battles across Britain, discussed in these articles by Trotsky. \$23.95



### IRELAND AND THE IRISH QUESTION

By Karl Marx and Frederick Engels

For workers in Britain, Marx and Engels explain, "the national emancipation of Ireland is no question of abstract justice or humanitarian sentiment, but the first condition of their own social emancipation." Progress Publishers. \$19.95

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# Clinton

Continued from Page 7

working-class proposals coming out of the White House can simply be adopted and rammed down the throats of working people. Gingrich has already been forced to retreat on his proposal to introduce prayer back into the schools and his recent attempt to hire someone with sympathetic views of the Ku Klux Klan and the Nazis as House historian.

It is notable that as the 104th Congress opens, capitalist politicians from both parties have barely a word to say attacking abortion rights. Just a few years ago congressional leaders would not have missed an opportunity to open the debate and attempt to put some further restrictions on a woman's right to choose.

While this year's election, like the presidential contest that preceded it, supposedly centered on "domestic" politics, Washington's need to assert its weight in the world remains the axis of government policy and debates in bourgeois politics. "When reporters and photographers withdrew" from the meeting of Republican leaders with the president, according to the January 6 *Washington Post*, "Clinton's first pitch to the Republicans was to cooperate in retaining the tradition of a bipartisan foreign policy and U.S. engagement abroad."

Although much play has been given to Newt Gingrich and his pursuit of the right-wing "Contract With America" agenda, Dole is also pushing his proposals in the Senate. Among his top five priorities for the congressional session is repealing the provision of the 1973 War Powers Act, which calls for the withdrawal of U.S. forces from potentially hostile situations if their deployment is not approved by Congress with 60 days. While the law has never deterred U.S. military interventions since it was passed more than 20 years ago, capitalist politicians have never been happy with the nuisance factor it added to their war plans.

## Caterpillar strike

Continued from Page 10

deny union members shelter at struck plants. Although still refusing to allow strikers to put up picket shacks, bus shelters have been erected for the strikers to use.

Charges were also dropped against 31 strikers and their supporters arrested at the Illinois State Capitol in Springfield December 1, when strikers demanded to see the governor in an effort to reverse the Decatur city government's attack on the shelters.

According to Sharon Fisher, a strike activist and spouse of a UAW Local 974 member arrested at the protest in Springfield, "The camaraderie of being with union people means more than anything the police or companies can do to us."

## CALENDAR

### ILLINOIS

#### Chicago

**Solidarity & Fight Back Rally!** The United Auto Workers, United Rubber Workers, United Paperworkers, Jobs with Justice, and the Staley Workers Solidarity Committee invite you to join the locked-out Staley and striking Caterpillar and Bridgestone/Firestone workers at the rally. Sat., Jan. 28, 1 p.m. Teamster City, 300 S. Ashland. For more information, call Jobs With Justice (312) 738-6060.

### WASHINGTON

#### Seattle

**Young Socialists Weekend in Seattle, January 28-29.** Come and discuss world issues with young people from throughout the Northwest. Topics: Reports back from youth participants in recent trips to South Africa and youth brigade to Cuba; video show of youth protests against Proposition 187 in San Francisco and Los Angeles; discussion on the January 25 national day of action in Canada against the doubling of tuition rates. Weekend donation: \$10. Pathfinder bookstore, 1405 E. Madison. Tel: (206) 323-1755.

### NEW ZEALAND

#### Auckland

**Communist League Convention and Socialist Educational Weekend.** Sat., Feb. 4 to Mon., Feb. 6. For further information, call (9) 379-3075 or (3) 365-6055.

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The Militant Labor Forum is a weekly free-speech meeting for workers, farmers, youth, and others. All those seeking to advance the fight against injustice and exploitation are welcome to attend and participate in these discussions on issues of importance to working people.

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### CALIFORNIA

#### Los Angeles

**What's Behind the Collapse of the Peso?** Speakers: Jorge Mancillas, professor, UCLA; Anibal Yáñez, professor, California State University San Marcos; Gene Hansen, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Jan. 21, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W. Pico Blvd. Donation: \$4. Translation into Spanish. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

### FLORIDA

#### Miami

**Speak out to Protest Clinic Violence and Defend a Woman's Right to Choose Abortion.** Speakers: Participants from several campus National Organization for Women (NOW) chapters, Miami Clinic Access Project, Young Socialists, and Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Jan. 21, 7:30 p.m. 137 NE 54th St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (305) 756-1020.

### GEORGIA

#### Atlanta

**Mexico: The Meaning of the Crisis Confronting Workers and Peasants.** Panel discussion. Sat., Jan. 21, 7:30 p.m. 803 Peachtree St. (between 5th and 6th streets). Donation \$3. Tel: (404) 724-9759.

### ILLINOIS

#### Chicago

**Cuba: An Eyewitness Account.** Speaker: Brian Taylor, member, Young Socialists, just returned from a three-week speaking tour team hosted by Cuba's Union of Young Communists (UJC). Sat., Jan. 21, 5 p.m. 545 W. Roosevelt Rd. Donation \$4. Translation into Spanish. Tel: (312) 829-6815.

### MASSACHUSETTS

#### Boston

**What's Behind the Rightward Shift in World Politics.** Speaker: Maceo Dixon, former Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Boston. Sat., Jan. 21, 7:30 p.m. 780 Tremont St. Donation \$4. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

### MICHIGAN

#### Detroit

**Behind the Crisis in Mexico.** Speaker: Cindy Jaquith, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Jan. 21, 7:30 p.m. 7414 Woodward Avenue (1 block north of Grand). Donation \$4. Tel: (313) 875-0100.

### TEXAS

#### Houston

**Death at the Workplace.** Labor's role in defending health, safety, and the environment. Sat., Jan. 21, 7:30 p.m. 6969 Gulf Freeway #250 (In the Woodridge Plaza, Woodridge exit off I-45). Donation \$4. Tel: (713) 644-9066. **The Chechnya Rebellion, Russia's Deepening Crises.** Sat., Jan. 28, 7:30 p.m. 6969 Gulf Freeway #250 (In the Woodridge Plaza, Woodridge exit off I-45). Donation \$4. Tel: (713) 644-9066.

### WASHINGTON

#### Seattle

**Imperialism's March Towards Fascism and**

**War.** Speaker: Michel Dugré, Central Committee, Communist League of Canada, and member, United Steelworkers of America Local 6932, Montreal, Quebec. Fri., Jan. 20, 7:30 p.m. 1405 E. Madison Avenue. Donation: \$5. Tel: (306) 323-1755.

**Youth Speak Out on Cuba: Eyewitness Report from Youth Brigade to Cuba.** Speakers: Members of youth brigade to Cuba just returned from a three-week tour hosted by Cuba's Union of Young Communists. Sat., Jan. 28, 7:30 p.m. 1405 E. Madison Avenue. Donation: \$3. Tel: (206) 323-1755.

### CANADA

#### Vancouver

**Cuban Workers and Farmers Defend their Socialist Revolution.** Speaker: Michel Dugré, Central Committee of the Communist League and member, United Steelworkers of America Local 6932, Montreal, Quebec, who attended the solidarity conference in Havana last December. Sat., Jan. 21, 7:30 p.m. Buffet Supper 5:30 p.m. 3967 Main St. (between 23rd and 24th avenues). Donation: \$4. Forum and buffet: \$10. Tel: (604) 872-8343.

#### Toronto

**Support January 25 Student Day of Protest Against Educational Cuts.** Panel of Student and Labor Activists. Sat., Jan. 21, 7:30 p.m. 827 Bloor Street West (between Ossington and Christie subway stops). Donation \$4. Tel: (416) 533-4324.

### NEW ZEALAND

#### Auckland

**Chechnya's Fight for Independence.** Speaker: Felicity Coggan, member, Communist League. Sat., Jan. 21, 7 p.m. La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Road. Donation: \$3. Tel: (9) 379-3075.

## Joe Slovo, longtime leader of ANC, dies

BY GREG ROSENBERG

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — Joe Slovo, a member of the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress and chairman of the South African Communist Party (SACP), died of bone marrow cancer here January 6. Slovo, 68, was Minister of Housing in the South African government.

ANC Secretary General Cyril Ramaphosa announced that a state funeral for Slovo would be held January 15 at Orlando Stadium in Soweto. A funeral committee has been formed by representatives of the ANC, SACP, Congress of South African Trade Unions, South African National Civic Organisation, and the government.

South African president Nelson Mandela announced the appointment of Deputy Welfare Minister Sankie Nkondo to the position of Housing Minister.

The Lithuanian-born Slovo emigrated to

South Africa with his family in the 1930s and joined the Communist Party of South Africa as a teenager. He met Nelson Mandela as a law student in the late 1940s. In 1956 Slovo was one of 153 anti-apartheid activists charged in the Treason Trial. Acquitted two years later, he was arrested and held for six months during the state of emergency after the 1960 Sharpeville massacre.

In 1961, as the ANC decided to launch an armed struggle against the apartheid regime, Slovo became a member of the command of Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation), serving as chief of staff from 1983 to 1987. He left South Africa in 1963 and spent the next 27 years in exile. He returned in 1990 when the ANC, SACP, and other organizations were unbanned. Slovo was a member of the ANC's negotiations team leading up to the first nonracial, one-person, one-vote elections

in April 1994.

On behalf of the Political Committee of the Socialist Workers Party of the United States, Steve Clark sent a message of solidarity to ANC president Nelson Mandela. Pointing to apartheid's long and unsuccessful efforts to divide the ANC along racial and political lines and bring about its defeat, the message pointed out that Slovo's "election to the ANC National Executive Committee in 1985 was seen by many the world over as an affirmation of the ANC's nonracialism, as well as an example of the potential to win growing numbers of white South Africans to the revolutionary-democratic movement."

Slovo's political life, the message said, "spanned many key turning points in the struggle to bring an end to white minority rule and to open the broader battle today to build a nonracial, democratic, and nonsexist South Africa."

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**MINNESOTA: Twin Cities:** 2490 University Ave. W., St. Paul. Zip: 55114. Tel: (612) 644-6325.

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

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**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.



**The sane society** — U.S. mayors reported a 12 percent jump in emergency food requests in major cities last year. Meanwhile, because of a record crop last year, corn farmers receiving federal



Harry Ring

price support will be required to cut back production by some 200 million bushels.

**Wonder what she lives in** — Lucie White, a Harvard and UCLA

prof, says providing homes for the homeless isn't necessarily the best answer. Instead, they should be encouraged to create their own. Like, in South Africa, she enthused, she saw whole villages where people built "wonderful dwellings for themselves from used milk cartons."

**You mean 'our' company?** — Despite six years of record profit, Mattel, the toymaker, will chop 1,000 jobs. They said it was "in the best interests of the company."

**Of course, who else should pay?** — The International Monetary Fund, a strong partisan of Third World belt-tightening, threw a year-end bash in Washington,

hiring three ballrooms, two bands and a deejay. An official assured that the \$128,000 tab was financed entirely from "the fees paid by borrowers."

**Give and take** — Under a new California law, professional fundraisers hired by charity outfits are not permitted to pocket more than 50 percent of the take.

**Know how much a car costs?** — A Los Angeles garage for state employees was shut down because it's among 20 state-owned buildings most likely to collapse in another earthquake. Meanwhile, a building next door, with 800 state employees, and equally dangerous, will remain open. Officials said they expect to begin reinforcing it

soon and, besides, no earthquake is imminent.

**And you thought you were psycho** — "According to a study of 757 workers at a Midwestern manufacturing plant, employees who are cynical about workplaces have normal, positive personality traits and are reacting to what they perceive to be genuinely bad circumstances on the job." — News item.

**Talk about lean and mean** — The west coast Longshore union reports an employer complaint that their workers are using too much toilet paper.

**American Way of Death** — Forest Lawn, the burial biggie, of-

fers money-saving above-ground burials in multioccupancy mausoleums. Caskets are placed in a wall of crypts that suggest king-sized file cabinets but which, a brochure advises, are clean, dry and ventilated. And they offer protection from the harsh elements of earth.

**Those dreadful Bolsheviks** — In its column about earlier days, the *Guardian* of London cited the 1917 diary of a diplomat in Russia: "The Bolsheviks have now acquired the mentality of autocrats and are mercilessly breaking down all resistance.... And during all this time, the theaters of Petrograd are full and I found it impossible to get a seat for the ballet tonight."

## Grand jury exonerates cops in New York killing

BY FRANK GORTON AND BILL ARTH

STATEN ISLAND, New York — A grand jury here has exonerated six cops in connection with the April 29, 1994, murder of Ernest Sayon. A Liberian-born resident of the Park Hill housing project, Sayon died of suffocation while in police custody.

The New York Chief Medical Examiner's Office had issued a report May 9 calling Sayon's death a "homicide." The report said the cause of death was "asphyxia by compression of chest and neck while rear-handcuffed and prone on the ground immediately following a struggle in which he sustained blunt impacts to his head and trunk." The "blunt impacts" were from a cop's pistol.

Sayon's murder sparked spontaneous protests last year by youth and other residents of the housing project. As the grand jury verdict was announced in December, a division of mounted police mobilized in the vicinity of the assault to quell any protests. None occurred, however.

The grand jury dragged out the testi-

mony of 87 witnesses over a six-month period, but deliberated on the testimony for only one hour. District Attorney William Murphy praised the grand jury decision, calling Sayon a "very dangerous man" and "a major drug dealer," and saying that the police behaved "bravely and appropriately."

Darren Glasper, a friend of Sayon's who testified before the grand jury, told the *Militant*, "I saw it with my own eyes. The cops came out like savages. It was the same cops who were caught on videotape a week earlier beating a kid next door at 260 Park Hill Ave. People are angry that the cops got away with murder."

Bill Tarplian, a member of the Sayon family, said the killing "was cold-blooded murder." Sayon had "no weapon, no drugs.... [The cops just] picked him up on the street and killed him."

Tarplian held to the hope that the U.S. Justice Department will prosecute the cops on federal civil rights violations. The Justice Department says it is investigating the matter.



Protest rally on May 9, 1994, in New York after medical examiner ruled that cop brutality victim Ernest Sayon's death was homicide.

## Montreal cops charged with assault after beating taxi driver into coma

BY GRANT HARGRAVE AND ROSEMARY RAY

MONTREAL — Five Montreal Urban Community cops were charged with aggravated assault Dec. 12, 1994, for their role in the severe beating of Richard Barnabé. The 39-year-old taxi driver has been in a coma since his arrest in December 1993. The judge at the preliminary hearing ordered further charges be added of "unlawfully causing bodily harm" and "aggravated assault that wounds, maims, disfigures or endangers life." A sixth officer was discharged for lack of evidence.

Barnabé was arrested, following a car chase, for allegedly breaking a church window in an attempt to wake a priest. Forty-five minutes later he was rushed to a hospital, where he suffered a heart attack and slipped into a deep coma. He had multiple facial fractures, cranial trauma, brain lesions, broken ribs, and a broken arm.

A court injunction has blocked public release of a 500-page report on the beating. Even Barnabé's family and their lawyer have not been informed of its contents.

Barnabé's family filed a lawsuit on December 5 seeking CAN\$7.95 million in damages against the six officers originally charged in his beating. They also named two other cops and two superior officers who witnessed the beating, the Montreal Urban Community police, the Montreal Urban Community, and the attorney general of Quebec.

Denis Dionne and Sabin Ouellet, the government prosecutors in the case, expressed sympathy for the cops in a recent interview, saying that they hadn't actually beaten Barnabé but only used "excessive force."

Dionne said it was "emotionally difficult" for him to lay charges against the cops because "their careers will be ruined" and whether they are "found guilty or not...they will have to live having been branded by public opinion."

Peggy Curran, a columnist for the Montreal daily *The Gazette*, commented that it

is "strange for a...case involving police officers to adjourn for five months in mid-stream."

"It was odd when the officers were charged by summons instead of being arrested...."

"It was bizarre when the lawyer representing two of the officers objected to Judge Guberman's request to identify the six accused — and the judge agreed."

Is there one kind of justice, Curran asks, for "a depressed taxi driver with long hair and a beard, suspected of breaking a window and another for clean-cut upstanding police officers charged with beating a man half to death?"

In another police brutality case, the Montreal Urban Community city executive committee is appealing a Quebec Superior Court ruling that ordered more than CAN\$500,000 be paid to Donna Patenaude. Her husband, Marc, was murdered by a cop SWAT team in Montreal in 1978.

Six police officers burst into the Patenaude home using a battering ram and sprayed the family with bullets as they were watching television. Patenaude was killed and his wife wounded as she dove to the floor to protect her baby.

The cops claimed their attack was justified because they had a warrant and were seeking someone they alleged had tried to kill an off-duty cop three days earlier.

In a 1988 ruling, Justice Paul Martineau said the raid "showed supreme contempt for the privacy of the home and for the lives of the occupants." He awarded Patenaude \$124,000 and \$50,000 in damages, which was later doubled to \$100,000 by the Quebec Court of Appeal in October 1994. The accruing interest, of more than \$4,000 a month, brings the total award to \$520,000.

Grant Hargrave is a member of Local 581 of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada; Rosemary Ray is a member of Canadian Auto Workers Local 1900.

## —25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

### THE MILITANT

Published in the Interest of the Working People  
January 23, 1970 Price 10¢

A Ft. Hood GI active in the antiwar and GI rights movement has been convicted for refusing to take part in "Operation Garden-plot," the government's national "riot control" training program. After being held in the Ft. Hood stockade since mid-October, Pvt. Richard Chase was convicted of the charge and sentenced on Dec. 20, 1969, to two years at hard labor and a dishonorable discharge.

When he was assigned to Ft. Hood at the beginning of 1969, Chase informed his first sergeant and his commanding officer that he would not take part in "riot control" training. By early summer he had become active in the GI antiwar movement. He also wrote for *Fatigue Press*, a Ft. Hood GI antiwar newspaper.

It was after becoming an antiwar activist that he was ordered on Sept. 11 to participate in "riot control." According to defense committee literature on his case, he refused the order because he did not wish "to be used to crush movements that he supported."

### THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE  
NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS  
January 20, 1945

In the cold statistical figures of his annual budget message to Congress, President [Franklin] Roosevelt last week revealed the monumental costs and crushing burden of debt which Wall Street's war for world domination has placed upon the

American people for generations to come.

At the same time he gave an intimation of the conditions which will confront labor in the "reconversion period" and his plans to continue wartime restrictions against the labor movement even in the "postwar" era.

By June, the end of the fiscal year for which Roosevelt seeks additional military appropriations, the cumulative government war expenditure will total nearly half a trillion dollars, approximately \$450,000,000,000 (billions!).

In spite of a tremendous wartime increase in taxes, falling heaviest on low incomes, the federal debt by next June will mount to \$252,000,000,000. By June 1946, it is expected to reach the neighborhood of \$300,000,000,000.

To get a faint comprehension of what this war has cost and will cost the American masses — aside from the slaughter and mutilation of their loved ones — we need only compare the \$300,000,000,000 war debt to the assessed valuation of the whole United States, estimated at \$144,000,000,000 by the U.S. Department of Commerce.

This debt is four times greater than the high peacetime total national income of approximately \$71,000,000,000 in 1939. All the farm lands and buildings in the country, valued at about \$34,000,000,000, could pay off only a tenth of this gigantic war debt!

That is why, while cynically palavered in his budget message about "60,000,000 postwar jobs" based upon a "50 per cent" increase over the 1939 national income, Roosevelt hinted at the real course of the workers' incomes in the coming period.

"The reduction in war expenditures...will result in somewhat lower wartime incomes, even if wage ceilings are adjusted upward to avoid reduction in average hourly rates when overtime is curtailed." This means that the total earnings of the workers must fall.



## Death penalty: a class weapon

The January 4 execution of Jesse Dewayne Jacobs in Texas must be condemned by labor and all supporters of democratic rights. Twice during the week of his legalized murder, the U.S. Supreme Court rejected Jacobs's motions for a stay of execution. It did so although the state of Texas conceded he was not guilty of the crime he was convicted of. Yet the court said it had no reason to overrule the jury's decision.

The case highlights not only the class injustice of the death penalty, but also the increasing steps by legislatures and courts to choke off the right to appeal a conviction. In July 1993 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that a belated claim of innocence does not necessarily entitle an inmate to a new federal hearing before being executed. That same year the court put the burden of proof on inmates to show they suffered "actual prejudice" as a result of violations of their trial rights. And these are just pieces of a bigger pattern.

The death penalty is a class weapon used by the capi-

talists to try to terrorize workers into submission. The Clinton administration pledged in 1993 to prepare new legislation to speed executions by further cutting back appeal rights. And last year Clinton signed an "anticrime" bill expanding capital punishment to more than 50 crimes.

The executioner's ax falls almost exclusively on working people, with a special vengeance on the most exploited and oppressed. Some 40 percent of death row prisoners are Black, for example, although Blacks make up just 12 percent of the population.

The employers wield the death penalty as a political weapon against the working-class movement, executing frame-up victims such as Joe Hill, Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, and Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, to name a few.

It's long been true there's no justice for workers under capitalism. Now the rulers want to make sure there's not even a chance to appeal.

## Help stop the lies about Cuba

This issue of the *Militant* reports the beginning of a two-week international youth brigade to Cuba. It also announces the start of a campaign to win visas from the U.S. State Department for two Cuban youth leaders, Rogelio Polanco and Kenia Serrano, to visit the United States on a speaking tour in March and April. Both projects deserve to be supported and advanced.

One brigade member at a send-off celebration explained the value of the trip as "seeing Cuba with our own eyes, and telling you, and as many people as we can when we come back, what we have learned." It is an opportunity for young workers and students from the United States and elsewhere to exchange experiences with those in Cuba, to learn about the class struggle in each other's countries, and break through the isolation Washington has attempted to impose on the Cuban revolution for 36

years. The planned tour for Polanco and Serrano can do the same.

The capitalist rulers can't stand the example of the Cuban revolution, because it shows there is an alternative for working people to the exploitative and degrading capitalist system. Washington has used a travel ban, trade blockade, and other methods to try to block contact between working people in Cuba and the United States.

We urge our readers to take advantage of the opportunities to join in breaking through the lies about the Cuban revolution. You can attend report-back meetings for the returning brigade members, invite one of them to speak at your union or campus, and help build the tour for Polanco and Serrano. In the process, more workers and youth in the United States and elsewhere can be won to the fight for socialism.

## Mexico exposes market myth

Continued from front page

Monday and Tuesday, stock values in Mexico City plunged more than 6 percent each day, the sharpest fall since the worldwide crash of October 1987. Interest rates soared to 55 percent, as the regime desperately sought to keep the peso afloat. To no avail. The peso was devalued further, bringing its cumulative decline against the dollar to 40 percent since the end of December.

The turmoil shook financial markets throughout Latin America. Stock values dived in Argentina, Brazil, and Peru by up to 10 percent. Even Chile, touted by the business press for its economic strength, did not escape a 5 percent fall.

In response to the crisis in Mexico, Volkswagen shut down its plants there, idling 16,000 workers, signaling Zedillo to offer up a plan more to the liking of foreign capital. The Mexican government had already pledged austerity, a sharp reduction in real wages, and an accelerated sell-off of the national patrimony to imperialist big business. But capitalists from New York to Frankfurt and Tokyo were not confident their junior partners in Mexico could make the deal stick.

Of course, the panic-driven sell-off of stocks and bonds in Mexico doesn't mean capital flows will dry up south of the Rio Grande. As long as imperialist big business figures it can make a high enough profit by forcing local bourgeoisies to sell assets dirt cheap, it will keep investing in Mexico and elsewhere in Latin America. There will continue to be industrialization and the growth of an urban working class, as well as indebtedness, dispossession of the peasantry, ruination of nature, and superexploitation of all toilers.

After nearly a decade marked by privatizations and "free trade" agreements, average real wages in Mexico are still below their level in 1980, when foreign debt ballooned, causing a near economic crash. And the gap continues to widen between the income and social conditions of the local bourgeoisie and a growing middle class, on one hand, and the masses of workers and peasants, on the other.

"Mexico will enter the next century far poorer than it was two decades ago," concluded a lead column in the January 16 *Business Week*. The column was headlined, "We have [former president Carlos] Salinas to thank for the peso debacle."

But the demise of the Mexican miracle is not the chaotic outcome of an ill-chosen economic policy drawn

up by politicians and technocrats. It is the inevitable result of the lawful workings of capitalism, which has been mired in depression conditions since the opening of the 1990s.

As Cuban president Fidel Castro aptly put it last year, "On New Year's Day, when we reach the year 2000, we won't be able to greet each other with a 'happy new century,' not in Latin America or many other parts of the world. The reality that awaits us — which is manifest now before the turn of the century — is a reality of much effort and struggle."

Precisely. Political turmoil and struggle is what lies ahead.

As Mexico's Black Tuesday was unfolding, Domingo Cavallo, Argentina's economics minister, was meeting with New York bankers in an effort to assure them things were more suave in the Southern Cone. Cavallo said his government would impose steeper spending cuts — that is, further attacks on the living standards of workers and peasants. That's what his cohorts are doing throughout Latin America. But their calculations, as usual, leave out the working class and rural toilers.

The *Santiagazo*, the rebellion by thousands of unpaid state employees in northern Argentina a year ago, and the ongoing peasant unrest in Chiapas, Mexico, are only harbingers of coming social explosions. Chiapas — where bonded servitude among peasants lasted well into this century, and where its forms live on today — also shines a spotlight on the distorted class structure of semicolonial nations that reinforces their second-class position in the world capitalist market.

Some three quarters of a century ago, Russian Bolshevik leader V. I. Lenin explained that "the characteristic feature of imperialism consists in the whole world...being divided into a large number of oppressed nations and an insignificant number of oppressor nations, the latter possessing colossal wealth and powerful armed forces."

Since Lenin spoke these words at the Second Congress of the Communist International in July 1920, not a single semicolonial country has joined the family of economically developed oppressor nations.

Mexico once again shows why such change should not be expected now. And why millions of working people will be drawn into struggle against the system of imperialist domination and capitalist exploitation that offers nothing to humanity today.

## Worker describes conditions facing immigrant seamen

BY HARRY RING

LOS ANGELES — Among those attending the socialist educational conference here over the New Year's weekend was Marcial, a Central American. During most of the 1980s he had been a merchant seaman, so he was particularly interested in the class by veteran Socialist Workers Party leader Tom Leonard on the maritime industry in the 1940s and 50s and the role played by party members who were seamen at that time.

Marcial had worked mainly on big Caribbean cruise ships and, sometimes, on oil tankers or other cargo vessels. In an interview, he described his sea-going experiences.

To work on a cruise ship, he said, you had to sign on for as long as a year. If you left the ship before then, you couldn't work for the company again. There were no unions on the cruise ships, and there were different conditions for different crew members. Most of the better-paying jobs went to Anglo workers — Europeans, Australians, and some of U.S. origin.

Central American workers, usually a minority on the ships, invariably fared the worst.

Some cargo vessels and oil tankers were union. While there was always a fight to enforce the contract, "life was better" than on the cruise ships, Marcial said. On the cruise ships, he worked mainly as an engine room oiler. But he was classified as a "utility worker." While the utility workers had to put in the full period of their contract, with no time off, other workers had the option of taking vacation time after four or six months.

Were these workers also paid better?

Marcial shrugged, "Of course."

The utility workers could be assigned anywhere they were needed. This could include working on deck, he explained, where, "without the necessary skills, it could be dangerous."

In the 1980s, he continued, utility seaman made as little as \$200 a month base pay. There was more than enough overtime. He often worked 14-hour shifts, and some as long as 18. But schedules were juggled so that you lost a lot of the overtime pay. "They abused international laws on overtime," he said.

### Worst jobs and pay

On the cruise ships, he continued with a note of anger, "There were no days off. It was Monday to Sunday for 8 or 10 months at a time."

The worst job he had was as a dishwasher. It was hard work, long hours, and a lot of abuse. "They were always trying to get you to work faster," Marcial recalled. "They'd bark at you, 'Move your ass!'"

For the immigrant workers, living conditions on the big ships were miserable. "It was worse than a prison," Marcial exclaimed. "Up to eight people in tiny cabins. For the better-paid workers, it was one or two in a cabin. We lived in stacked-up bunks. With such crowding it was hard to maintain sanitary conditions."

"The work schedules varied. You might be sleeping. Someone else just got off work. He wants to turn on the radio, have a drink.... There's no other place. It's not the fault of the crew. It's the conditions imposed on the crew."

While the work was hard, and the discrimination rankled, for Marcial the rewarding side was being able to see other lands. A highlight was working on a European oil tanker that visited various African ports.

His greatest experience was when they docked at a port in Angola. There he was able to talk with some of the Cuban volunteers who played a crucial role in beating back a South African invasion of that country.

"We talked about the struggle in Angola, the Nicaraguan revolution, the Cuban revolution," Marcial recalled. "The thing that impressed me the most," he chuckled, "was seeing a well-armed army of Latin Americans helping a revolution in Angola."

He had always been a partisan of the Cuban revolution, Marcial added. "I never accepted the propaganda caricature. But it was very impressive to see how Cuba, after 30 years of the blockade and other difficulties, had the strength to help another people."

Marcial said he learned a good deal at the educational conference and felt he was "enriched" by it. He added that he didn't understand all the points that were made, "Maybe because of my lack of reading."

"But that's why you have conferences like this. To encourage you to read."

### Correction

The article "Firestone sacks striking workers" that appeared on the front page of issue no. 2 dated Jan. 16, 1995, contained an error. The second sentence in the third paragraph of the article should say that "workers would be hired with a 30 percent decrease of the old wages and benefits and without representation by the URW."

In the same issue, the photograph on page 7, accompanying the article "Cuban workers tell U.S. youth of efforts in sugar harvest," was misidentified. The picture is of a meeting with students at the University of Havana.



# Bus drivers in Britain challenge company firings

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

support for their fight and cutting into Eastern National's profits by running a free bus service with the help of TGWU financing. Currently five minibuses are running over two routes, and plans are under way to increase the service. Many people now use the union bus service — and not just because it is free. Most riders throw their saved fare into a donation bucket for the strike. More than \$3,000 was donated in just the first

## ON THE PICKET LINE

other workplaces in your area, including interesting political discussions.

"The company thought they'd be able to get rid of us by sacking us," said one of the bus workers on the picket line outside Eastern National's Chelmsford, England, bus garage. "But we won't go away."

More than 100 bus drivers, members of the Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU), were fired November 19, after staging a half-day strike against the company's attempt to impose longer driving hours. "We were being expected to work for five hours without a break, putting both our own safety and that of passengers at risk," said Bill Horslen of the strike committee.

Eastern National is owned by Badgerline, one of three companies that have a near monopoly on the bus industry in Britain. Despite its denials, the company was clearly prepared for the lockout, according to the strikers. The day the drivers were fired, 50 others from elsewhere in the country were brought in, and the locks on 200 lockers were changed.

Drivers are picketing the garage and winning support for their fight. "It was a great Christmas," said one of the strikers. "People were bringing us bottles of wine, chocolates, and everything." Auto and bus workers in London have been making financial contributions to help the strike.

Strikers are increasing public

few days of the strike. One young woman tossing in her contribution explained that her friend's father had been fired. "It's great that they're doing something about it."

"A lot of people in the bus industry are looking at Chelmsford," said Horslen. "Drivers all over the country are seeing how they're ending up as slaves. This dispute is giving out messages, especially on the right to strike."

"The company thought we were going to take it. I reckon we're going to beat them."

### Company hinders probe of plant explosion

The Iowa Occupational Safety and Health Bureau recently filed an affidavit in court against Terra Industries for hindering the state's investigation of an explosion at its chemical plant near Sioux City December 13. Four workers were killed and 23 others were injured as a result of the blast. The plant explosion also spewed a noxious cloud of ammonia that forced the evacuation of 4,000 residents of Iowa and Nebraska.

The Iowa officials contend that Terra has removed documents from the plant, prohibited investigators from conducting private interviews with employees, blocked access to original documents, and denied state safety investigators entrance to certain buildings. The owners of Terra Industries have denied the allegations. Spokesperson Paula Norton defended the



Militant/Martin Hill

Bus drivers on strike at Eastern National's Chelmsford garage. "The company thought they'd be able to get rid of us," said one striker. "But we won't go away."

company's efforts to control OSHA inspections at the plant. "It's for their own safety," she said. "The plant hasn't been secured yet totally."

### Union organizers beaten by company thugs

Two organizers for the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) filed a \$10 million lawsuit December 29 against United States Service Industries (USSI), charging they were severely beaten while trying to talk to janitors leaving work in Washington, D.C.

Jose Lindolfo Caraballo and Mauricio Vasquez, SEIU organizers, said they were on the sidewalk outside the Washington Harbour complex around midnight September 8 when USSI officials and guards ordered them to leave. Caraballo was then thrown to the ground and hit with a golf club. "I saw them beating Lindolfo, so I got out of my car to help, and then I felt a heavy blow on my back like a baseball bat," stated Vasquez.

The suit, filed in D.C. Superior Court, alleges that the attack was the result of a "conscious management decision" by USSI to use vi-

olence "to stop union activity."

The union, through its "Justice for Janitors" campaign, has been attempting to organize workers employed by USSI who clean offices in Washington, D.C., and surrounding suburbs. The company employs about 1,400 workers to clean 50 buildings at night. The majority are women from Central America who work part time for near-minimum wage.

In November a federal judge in Washington issued an injunction ordering the company to refrain from "interfering with, restraining or coercing employees" who try to form or join a union. USSI has threatened workers, engaged in surveillance, ordered workers to hand over union pamphlets, and told them they had been replaced permanently for holding a protest strike.

### GM workers strike at Quebec assembly plant

Workers at the GM assembly plant in St. Therese, Quebec, occupied the factory for 24 hours January 5 after a dispute involving several workers and a "pushy" supervisor. Tensions in the plant have been high since the fall, when

the company ratcheted up the line speed causing increased health and safety problems. Workers are also angry about the massive amount of overtime they are being forced to work. The Montreal newspaper *La Presse* called the incident that touched off the work stoppage simply "the drop of water that overflowed the glass."

Canadian Auto Workers officials halted the job action after a provincial court ordered the workers to return to their jobs "without a meeting and without conditions." The judge threatened the union with penalties under the province's labor laws.

GM estimates that it lost production of between 800 to 1,000 cars during the shutdown, valued at 16 million to 20 million Canadian dollars. The company agreed to transfer the offending foreman to a department where he wouldn't be in contact with union workers.

The following people contributed to this week's column: Caroline Bellamy and Martin Hill, members of the TGWU in London; Bill Kalman, member of the United Transportation Union in Boone, Iowa; and Brian Williams from Washington, D.C.

## LETTERS

### Surprised by coverage

I was surprised by the fact that in its coverage of the trials of Paul Hill (the murderer of Dr. John Britton and escort James Barrett outside of a Pensacola, [Florida,] abortion clinic), the Militant did not reiterate its opposition to the FACE (Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances) law. Hill was found guilty in two courts — in an October federal trial for violating the FACE law, and in a November state trial for murder and other charges.

By quoting without comment National Organization for Women (NOW) officials who hailed the federal verdict in the October 24 Militant, readers might have concluded that the paper agreed with that view.

NOW officials and clinic owners see the courts and the legislatures as the main arena in the fight to defend abortion rights today. This contrasts with the view of the mainly youthful activists who have mobilized in their thousands to beat back the rightists all over the country since the debacle in Wichita, [Kansas,] in the summer of 1992. Many of these fighters have become convinced that this struggle will be decided in the streets, clinic by clinic where necessary.

As I recall, the Militant opposed the FACE law on two grounds: 1) the working class must oppose every attempt to restrict the democratic and constitutional rights that

workers and farmers have conquered in struggle; and 2) this specific law will be used against defenders of abortion clinics when the authorities find it necessary.

The Militant shouldn't shy away from raising it where appropriate. This question is not going to go away. Since the October FACE trial of Hill, I believe that a second trial for violating the FACE law occurred in Milwaukee.

A few days ago, I heard a broadcast on a federal grand jury convening in Virginia to investigate antiabortion "conspiracies". The Militant should be covering (and commenting on) these developments.

Gary Boyers  
Detroit

Editor's note: The October 24 'Militant' article was a news item on the trial of Paul Hill and the fight in Pensacola to defend abortion rights. By reporting the FACE conviction and reaction to it, the 'Militant' did not imply support to the law. The Militant has made clear its view of this law and others like it that substitute restrictions on political rights for simple and decisive enforcement of existing laws against murder, assault, vandalism, and other crimes. As explained in an editorial in the May 30, 1994, issue headlined, "Clinic Act saps liberties," the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act, "while touted by many as a gain for women's right



to abortion, actually sets a dangerous precedent for democratic rights."

### More on Kmart fight

I would like to add a few things to a recent Militant article on the Kmart strike. Workers held a mass union meeting in the company cafeteria as we returned to work November 29. Many spoke with pride of their participation in the strike and our determination to continue the fight for a contract.

Since returning to work some workers who chose not to strike have joined the union. On the

other hand the company began to carry out a campaign of harassment and victimization of some workers. A layer of strikebreakers were promoted to "group leaders," a step toward management.

In response to the company offensive, the union ranks on second shift held a break-room meeting. Those who stood up to speak pledged that union members would back up anyone who is being singled out. This turned out to be an effective way to unite the members against the company's attempt to divide us; the harassment has subsided.

As the company Christmas din-

ner event approached, several second-shift workers organized a "union pizza" dinner instead, saying we didn't want a free meal — we want a contract.

The December union newsletter carried several write-ups by strikers answering company attacks. Many emphasized that the strike was an important way for us to stand up for our rights "and most of all our dignity."

The majority of union members felt we would go back stronger by not prolonging the strike at this time. We had successfully put the lie to company claims that ACTWU [Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union] didn't represent the majority of workers in the warehouse. With 75 percent to 80 percent of the warehouse on strike, and with 39 new members joining the union right on the picket line, we showed what unions are capable of when we are united and determined to fight for our rights.

M.J. Rahn  
ACTWU Local 2603 (Kmart)  
Greensboro, North Carolina

### A welcome change

Your paper is a welcome change from the yellow-dog press of this city and other papers. I particularly appreciate the articles concerning Cuba, which I visited in March of 1993.

Robert Sheehy  
Tecumseh, Ontario



## Britain: a falling out among Tories

Rulers debate defense of capitalist interests against European, U.S. rivals

BY MARCELLA FITZGERALD

LONDON — Each week brings new disasters, humiliations, and failures for the British government of Prime Minister John Major.

The crisis stems from the long-term decline of British imperialism, and runs through every institution of class rule from the monarchy and the Church of England to the armed forces and the two-party system. The decline is accelerated by the breakup of the capitalist world order put together after World War II and the onset at the opening of the 1990s of an international economic depression. It is a crisis that the new-style Labour Party of Tony Blair has no more chance of resolving than the Tory (Conservative) Party.

On December 6 the government proposal to more than double the tax on electricity from 8 percent — imposed last year — to 17.5 percent was defeated in Parliament. Seven Tory members and the Ulster Unionist members voted with the opposition Labour Party against the increase. Eight others abstained.

Two days later the chancellor (finance minister), Kenneth Clarke, introduced increased "sin" taxes on alcohol and tobacco to plug the gap in government revenues.

Most of the Tory rebels are elected from middle-class neighborhoods, rural districts, or more affluent working-class communities. Under former Tory prime minister Margaret Thatcher, many in these areas had initially benefited from easier access to mortgages to buy their homes or flats or had bought shares in the sell-off of public utilities. These seats have long been regarded as "safe" for the Tories, but in a by-election following the tax vote, Conservatives lost one such "safe seat" with a 28 percent swing to Labour.

### Catalogue of scandals

These episodes were simply the latest in a catalogue of scandals for Major's government. These have included:

- a judicial inquiry into the government's continued sale of arms to Iraq in 1990 while preparing to send troops to fight there;
- revelations demonstrating the hypocrisy of government ministers preaching "back to basics" moral values, while themselves practicing something quite different;
- the resignations of two Tory ministers, Neil Hamilton and Jonathan Aiken, following disclosures they had taken lavish gifts from a businessman;
- the resignation of Angela Rumbold, the Tories' deputy chair, as director of a lobbying firm after revelations of payoffs to influence the choice of government construction sites; and
- the fining and disqualification from public office of Dame Shirley Porter, former head of the local government in Westminster, for selling municipal housing at a discount to certain middle-class families with the aim of decreasing the number of workers in the area and boosting the Tory vote.

More recently Margaret Thatcher herself has been implicated in using her position as prime minister to promote a £20 billion (£1=US\$1.50) arms deal with Saudi Arabia in which her son Mark Thatcher received a multimillion pound commission. This was followed by a court ruling against Tory ministers at the Foreign Office for linking £24 million in aid to Malaysia to clinching arms deals for British big business.

Underlying the interest in these revelations of how the ruling class lives and functions are the worsening economic and social conditions for workers and many in the



Prime Minister John Major (center), with U.S. commerce secretary Ron Brown and Patrick Mayhew (seated), Britain's secretary for Northern Ireland. London is running into stiff competition from Washington to exploit Ireland's low-wage labor and productive resources.

middle classes in the United Kingdom. This reality contrasts sharply with the high living of the members of the ruling elite.

As a leaked memorandum by Tory Party deputy chairman John Maples put it, many who formerly supported the Tory Party find the claims of an economic recovery "completely at odds with their own experience."

Just in the last year, in addition to the new tax on electricity, taxes have been increased on car owners. The price of running water has jumped 67 percent since the sell-off of public water authorities, and a huge salary increase for the head of newly privatized British Gas has been followed by layoffs and reductions in services.

Such steps are undermining the popularity of the privatization of state-owned industries.

In November the government backed off from privatizing the post office after fierce opposition from its own supporters. So high is the anxiety over cuts in the National Health Service that the memorandum by Tory leader Maples says the best the party can hope for is zero press coverage around the issue between now and a general election.

### Interneccine warfare

Rancor between Conservative Party politicians is an increasingly open and permanent part of politics here. The main public debate in bourgeois politics right now takes place within the Tory Party, not between Labour and the Tories.

Just a week before the cabinet's defeat on the electricity tax, seven Tory members of parliament had abstained on a vote of confidence that could have brought down the government. The party leadership responded by expelling them from the Tories' parliamentary caucus.

And it is now commonly known that Major refers to one section of his cabinet as "the bastards."

The disputes among Tories over taxes and the privatization of public utilities reflect a lack of confidence among some that these measures can be carried through without further weakening the party's electoral base. There are no deep-going politi-

cal differences.

Disagreements, however, are substantial over the question of Europe. Those who abstained on the no-confidence vote, for example, did so because they opposed increasing the amount paid by London into the budget of the European Union.

These disputes center on how best to defend the interests of the British capitalist class. Some are for turning the United Kingdom more squarely toward the European Union in order to take on their rivals in Germany and France and fight to be top dog in Europe. Others hope to achieve the

same goal but by attempting somehow to pursue a more independent world role harking back to the legacy of the British Empire.

Gaining greater access to new markets for each of the national capitalist classes of Europe is the driving force behind the European Union.

But mounting rivalry between the capitalists, in a world marked by growing deflationary conditions, is pulling Europe apart, not drawing it closer together.

Talk of a common European foreign and military policy, heard frequently in some bourgeois circles only a half decade ago, has already foundered on the failure to establish a common policy toward the war in the former Yugoslavia. Each of the imperialist powers in Europe is pragmatically pursuing its own economic and political interests in the Balkans, as is Washington. All have discovered that Russia, too, is still a factor that can't be ignored in that region.

Germany is clearly the economic strongman of Europe. Many in the British bourgeoisie were dismayed last year when, during an interview at the annual meeting of the world's seven leading capitalist powers, U.S. president Bill Clinton said that "the size of the German economy and the values that have been demonstrated by the German leadership guarantee that there will be a leadership role for Germany and

that it will be a positive thing for the rest of Europe and the world."

### 'Pro-Europeans' & 'Euro-sceptics'

Despite Germany's economic prowess, however, no single power in Europe yet has the strength to determine policy and compel the others to tow the line.

The so-called "pro-Europeans" such as Kenneth Clarke and Douglas Hurd speak for large sections of the City — Britain's financial district — and other big-business interests that operate on a large scale in Eu-

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## Spy for Canadian government led right-wing racist group

BY COLIN MCKAY

TORONTO — The Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) employed an informer, Grant Bristow, who founded and helped lead a white supremacist organization called the Heritage Front.

Among Bristow's activities, organized while he was under CSIS direction, was a 1993 campaign involving physical assaults on the homes of antiracist activists in Toronto and the leaving of death threats on their telephone answering machines.

A December 18 report by the Security Intelligence Review Committee (SIRC), a so-called civilian watchdog group, however, states the spy organization acted within the law. The informer and his handler in CSIS "believed that they were doing valuable work to protect Canadian society from a cancer growing within. They deserve our thanks," the report is quoted by the Toronto *Globe and Mail* as saying. "Had CSIS management been engaged in assessing the best possible options," the report adds in a gentle slap on the wrist, "less harassment and intimidation might have occurred."

The Canadian government claims its informer's actions were helping combat right-wing attacks. In fact, however, Bristow supplied fellow rightists with files on antiracist activists that included confiden-

tial documents such as criminal records, credit histories, workplace addresses, and FBI files. The SIRC report also admits Bristow was involved in drawing up a list of people targeted for assassination, most of them prominent Jews in the Toronto area. While CSIS informed the Toronto police about the hit-list, the marked individuals themselves were never informed.

Other right-wing attacks occurred around the same time as the actions cited in the report. The Toronto Native Center, some synagogues, the offices of the Black Action Defense Committee, and the Pathfinder bookstore were vandalized on several occasions. These assaults went unmentioned by the SIRC report.

The report denied charges the CSIS spied on the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW). In 1989 Bristow, claiming to be investigating parcel theft on behalf of a customs broker, spent three weeks at the mail-processing center near Toronto. Contract talks were going on at the time between the union and Canada Post. CUPW president Darrell Tingley has demanded an independent inquiry into CSIS activities.

Ward Elcock, CSIS director, expressed satisfaction with the findings. "We at CSIS have considered our investigation of the Heritage Front a success," Elcock said.