

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

100,000 join May Day
protest in Mexico City

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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Washington escalates assault on Iran

BY PAT SMITH

In a move aimed against the sovereignty of Iran, and hoping to deal blows to Moscow and imperialist rivals, particularly Tokyo, U.S. president Bill Clinton announced a trade ban against Tehran April 30. Under the guise of combating "international terrorism," the White House is pressing other governments to stop doing business with the Persian Gulf country.

The Clinton administration claims Iran is "a rogue state" that sponsors international terrorism and is trying to build an arsenal of weapons of mass destruction. Calling Iran "a nation that ranks at the top of the world's '10 Most Wanted' list," the president announced sanctions barring the purchase of all Iranian goods by U.S. companies, their overseas branches, and, in some cases, foreign subsidiaries. The order, to go into effect 30 days after the president signs it, would also block U.S. exports to Iran. The embargo would permit only those foreign subsidiaries of U.S. companies deemed to operate independently of their U.S. parent to purchase Iranian oil.

The *New York Times* was quick to endorse the White House action. "An embargo...should be used only against countries that threaten American security and principles," wrote the *Times* editors May 2. "Iran fits that description."

The Iranian Foreign Ministry issued a statement calling Clinton's decision "disgraceful," adding that, "Today's economic system is that of competition and Iran has various alternatives for its trade."

Imperialist allies in no hurry to follow

Washington's call for worldwide sanctions against Iran has so far met with a tepid response from its imperialist allies. The trade embargo coincides with the efforts of many capitalist powers to increase trade with Iran. "The State Department's yearly report on terrorism issued last week singled out Iran as the most active sponsor, but with a conspicuous lack of conclusion," wrote the *Washington Post*.

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Teams set to boost sales of the 'Militant'

BY LAURA GARZA

Coal miners in Kentucky, metal workers from Germany at a conference in Detroit, and students in a class discussion on Cuba at the University of California, Santa Barbara — these are some of the people who had bought subscriptions to the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* and copies of *New Internationalist* magazine by the midway point of the special target week April 29-May 6. After four weeks of an international campaign to gain new readers for these socialist publications, 29 percent of the overall goal has been met. However, the campaign is now 11 percent behind schedule.

While all the results of the target week are not in yet, supporters in many areas are

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Guantánamo detainees win release from camps



Cubans detained by Washington at the base it illegally holds on Cuban soil celebrate after hearing they will be allowed to leave

U.S. government fails in attack on Cuba sovereignty

BY NAOMI CRAINE

More than 20,000 Cubans detained in concentration camps at the U.S. naval base in Guantánamo, Cuba, will be allowed entry into the United States under an agreement recently signed between Washington and Havana. When the U.S. government began forcibly interning Cuban rafters last August, the Clinton administration declared that these Cubans would never be admitted directly into the country.

Besides setting up an explosive situation in the camps by imprisoning thousands of people indefinitely, the intern-

ment of the Cubans became increasingly unpopular among Cuban-Americans and others. Washington eventually had to back down.

Also under the new agreement, from now on Washington will intercept undocumented Cubans who leave by boat and return them directly to Cuba.

Announcing the accord at a May 2 news conference along with U.S. attorney general Janet Reno and Gen. John Sheehan, head of the U.S. Atlantic Command, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Peter Tarnoff said Washington decided to admit the Guantánamo detainees for "the safety of the 6,000 American servicemen" there. Tarnoff declared, "We were moving down a trail where there was distinct possibility of some of those servicemen and some of those Cubans being hurt." In addition, he said, the concentration camps were expensive to run and would have

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Celebrate release of Cubans held at U.S. prison camp

Working people around the world should celebrate the agreement to release the Cubans detained at Washington's naval base in Guantánamo, Cuba. The U.S. rulers failed in their attempts to pro-

EDITORIAL

voke Cuba and deal a blow to the revolution by locking up thousands of Cubans at the Yankee military installation on Cuban soil. They also failed in their attempt to keep this injustice quietly hidden from the

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Mark Curtis wins pamphlet on his case

BY JOHN COX

DES MOINES, Iowa — On Friday evening, April 28, when political activist Mark Curtis was given his mail, he found a dog-eared copy of the new Pathfinder pamphlet *Why Is Mark Curtis Still In Prison?* Accompanying the pamphlet was a prison "property slip" signed by Ron Welder, Iowa State Penitentiary spokesman, saying "Approved."

Two weeks earlier, authorities at the Iowa State Penitentiary had rejected delivery of the pamphlet to Curtis, insisting that it was not on the "list of approved publications" and demanding that he pay to send the pamphlet back to the bookstore that mailed it to him.

Curtis was framed up on charges of rape and burglary for his activities in defense of 17 co-workers from Mexico and El Salvador who were seized in an immigration raid at the Monfort packing plant. He has been imprisoned for six and a half years.

"This is an important victory for Curtis as well as for other prisoners and all opponents of censorship," John Studer, coordinator of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, said when informed of the reversal by officials.

"We had just begun working with supporters of Mark and advocates of democratic rights to press state officials when

we received word from Mark that we had succeeded. This was a little too raw, and the state had to backtrack."

The attempt to withhold the pamphlet was the latest in a long series of attacks on Curtis's democratic rights, measures aimed at undermining his ability to continue to be politically active and to maintain contact with the outside world. Curtis

and his supporters have responded to each one of these attacks.

Within days of the initial refusal to deliver the pamphlet, messages of protests began to arrive at the prison and the office of the Corrections Department. "This is obviously an attempt to intimidate a political fighter inside the prison walls and the

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S. Africa marks apartheid's fall

A multiracial crowd of 5,000 gathered on the lawn of the capital buildings in Pretoria to mark the anniversary of South Africa's first nonracial elections. "If any one day marked the crossing of the divide from a past of conflict and division to the possibility of unity and peace, from inequality to equality, from a history of oppression to a future of freedom, it is 27 April, 1994," President Nelson Mandela told the gathering.

Mandela announced the early release of prisoners convicted before Dec. 6, 1993, of politically related arms and explosives possession charges. All other inmates, except those convicted of child abuse, will have their sentences cut by 25 percent, or a maximum of six months.

More nuclear plants worldwide

Four new nuclear power plants began operating last year, bringing the total worldwide to 432. Forty-eight more are under construction in 15 countries.

Bonn opens nuke dump

Anti-nuclear demonstrators in Germany recently tried to stop a train carrying 10 metric tons of plutonium and uranium waste destined for the Gorleben dump in Lower Saxony. Bonn opened the disposal site in April after 10 years of protests and legal action had kept the gates closed. Previously, waste from the nuclear industry, which supplies 30 percent of Germany's energy, had been shipped to facilities in Britain and France.

Atomic waste docks in Japan

The governor of Aomori province, Japan, finally allowed a freighter carrying atomic waste to dock at Mutsu Ogawara after an emergency cabinet meeting determined Tokyo "cannot make Aomori the final destination for the waste without consent of the governor." The ship had been at sea since February when it left France with reprocessed nuclear waste. Gov. Morio Kimura had refused to allow the *Pacific Pintail* port entry because of growing dissatisfaction in Aomori province that Tokyo would permanently dump the 14 metric tons of dangerous nuclear material there.



Anti-nuclear activists protest the arrival of the *Pacific Pintail* carrying a shipment of reprocessed nuclear waste. The governor granted the ship permission to dock after Tokyo agreed that Aomori province would not become a permanent nuclear dump.

Tel Aviv to seize Arab land

Tel Aviv announced plans April 26 to confiscate 80 acres of Arab-owned land in northern Jerusalem and 60 more near the southern district of Beit Safafa. A Palestine Liberation Organization spokesman said the land seizures are "a severe threat to the whole peace process." The land theft, if carried out, would be the largest in Jerusalem in 15 years.

Palestinian killed in Israeli jail

"There is no doubt whatsoever about the cause of death," a Scottish pathologist said of a Palestinian who died in Israeli custody. "He died from torture." Two Israeli pathologists who took part in the autopsy agreed with the conclusion. Abdel-Samad Harizat, 29, was beaten during an interrogation by Israel's Shin Bet secret police. Tel Aviv tried to justify the murder claiming Harizat was a member of Hamas. Restrictions on Shin Bet agents being able to use only "moderate physical pressure" on Palestinian prisoners have been relaxed recently.

In a related development, Gen. Ilan Biran, senior Israeli army commander in the occupied West Bank, admitted that Tel Aviv's policy is to murder Palestinians wanted as "fugitives," rather than arresting them. Biran told *Haaretz* newspaper that, "there are still four or five squads that we have to kill." The Israeli regime has long denied that its police, soldiers, and specialized hit squads are under orders to assassinate Palestinians.

Canada court acquits rapist who was 'too drunk to know'

A Canadian court acquitted a man — for a second time — of a rape he has never denied committing. Henri Daviault admits to sexually assaulting a 65-year-old wheelchair-bound woman in 1989, but said he was too drunk at the time to know what he was doing.

After Daviault's initial acquittal in 1991, the Quebec Court of Appeals found him guilty and sentenced him to a year in jail. Daviault then took his case to the Supreme Court. The high court ruled last September that drunkenness can be used as a defense for rape and other crimes and ordered a new trial for Daviault. Outrage from defenders of women's rights forced legislators to propose a bill to limit the use of drunkenness as a defense in rape trials. Parliament is expected to debate the bill in the coming months.

N.Y.C. cops beat store clerk

Four or five New York police officers beat and threatened a grocery store clerk after being called to the store during an attempted robbery. One cop stuck his gun inside the mouth of Marcos Maldonado, a 26-year-old Guatemalan immigrant, while he lay on the floor handcuffed. The Queens College student reported the officer used profanity and said, "You're going

to die tonight."

"They were just beating the crap out of me, stomping on me, kicking me in the ribs, hitting me in the head with their guns and flashlights," said Maldonado, who repeatedly told the police he was a store employee.

Airlines turn first profit since '89

The world's airlines noted their first profitable year since 1989, with reported earnings totaling \$1.8 billion in 1994. But the International Air Transport Association said carriers must increase their profit margins if they plan to upgrade their fleets and meet government rules, such as flying quieter airplanes.

Moscow subsidizes coal 'profit'

Russia's state-owned coal industry reported first-quarter earnings of \$35.3 million, claiming the first "profits" since 1992. But the coal industry, which has been hard hit by strikes and decreased production, turned that "profit" through more than \$264 million in subsidies pumped in from Moscow.

— PAT SMITH

THE MILITANT

Defend Democratic Rights!

Washington is using the Oklahoma City bombing as a pretext to squeeze democratic rights and expand the use of the death penalty. The 'Militant' reports on workers' resistance to these attacks. Don't miss a single issue!



Anti-death penalty protest in Texas

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Balkan war expands with fight in Croatia

BY GREG ROSENBERG

War flared anew in the Balkans with the expansion of large-scale fighting into Croatia on May 1. The regime of Croatian president Franjo Tudjman unleashed 3,000 of its troops, backed by warplanes, tanks, and heavy artillery against forces commanded by rightist Serb leader Milan Martić in the Western Slavonia region of Croatia. In response, Martić's troops, allied with the Serbian regime in Belgrade, began shelling the Croatian capital of Zagreb, a city of 1 million people, with cluster bombs. The bombardment killed 5 and wounded 121 on the first day of shelling May 2.

These events shattered the "permanent cease-fire" reached between Zagreb and forces allied with Belgrade in March 1994. The 1991 war in Croatia left the rightist bands linked to Serbia in control of nearly one-third of Croatia. Ever since, Tudjman has agitated for retaking the ter-

ritory.

The fighting in Croatia threatens to widen the five-year-old war throughout the area that was once Yugoslavia. It began only hours after the expiration of a four-month cease-fire between the Bosnian government of Alija Izetbegovic and rightist forces in Bosnia headed by Radovan Karadzic. Diplomatic coercion by the imperialist powers failed to get an extension of the cease-fire, which was punctuated throughout by numerous shellings and battles.

With the shattering of the Stalinist apparatus represented by the League of Communists in the former Yugoslavia in 1990, rival gangs of would-be capitalists draped themselves in nationalist flags and launched a series of wars and massacres to grab more land and riches for themselves. In Bosnia alone, some 200,000 people have been left dead or missing. Millions of working people were forced to flee their homes, either to other parts of the former Yugoslavia or to elsewhere in Europe.

'Go all the way this time'

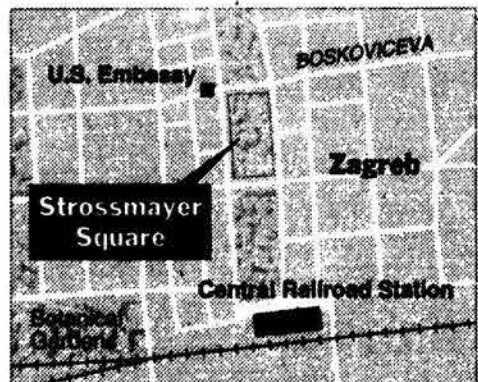
Tudjman announced the offensive was only a "limited policing action," but Croatian radio aired patriotic songs and messages urging the army to "go all the way this time."

Croatian troops rolled up the Zagreb-Belgrade highway, seizing control of the road and other points in Western Slavonia. A Serb commander agreed May 2 to surrender to the Croatian army and hand over weapons to troops deployed under the United Nations flag, and forces controlling the town of Okucani agreed to surrender to UN troops.

Tudjman declared victory on the second day of the offensive, stating that "The action of the Croatian police and army is closed." Few, however, subscribe to that view, noting that Zagreb's attack will have wider ramifications.

Tudjman added that "all Croatian citizens of Serbian descent" would be guaranteed respect of their "human and civil rights." But thousands began fleeing southwards into Bosnia to escape advancing Croatian troops. In 1993, the Croatian army carried out its own massacres of Serbs near the Adriatic coast.

Earlier this year, the Croatian govern-



Attack on Zagreb came one day after Croatian government forces stormed Western Slavonia.



Militant/Argiris Malapanis

A student cleaning rubble after house was bombed by Serb forces in Dubrovnik, Croatia. Croatian government vowed to retake territory lost to Serb forces in 1991.

ment had threatened to order the expulsion of all troops in Croatia under the UN flag. Zagreb came under heavy pressure from Washington, Paris, and Bonn to prevent this.

At a meeting with U.S. vice president Al Gore in Copenhagen, Denmark, March 12, Tudjman agreed to allow 8,500 of the 12,000 so-called peacekeepers to stay, provided their deployment would make it harder for the bands linked with Belgrade to receive arms from Serbia and parts of Bosnia. Gore hailed the announcement as "a major step away from war and towards peace."

Zagreb's offensive leaves it in control of one of the four "enclaves" taken by forces loyal to Belgrade during the 1991 war. The bands led by Martić are allied with those of Karadzic in neighboring Bosnia. These groups were originally organized and supplied by the Serbian regime, after efforts to use the Yugoslav army to block their rivals in different republics from breaking away failed in 1991. The goal of these forces was, and still is, to absorb areas in Croatia and

Bosnia where populations of Serbian origin predominate, into a "Greater Serbia."

Karadzic is threatening retaliation for the offensive. In anticipation of this, Croatian warplanes rocketed the sole bridge connecting Western Slavonia to territory controlled by Karadzic's forces in Bosnia May 1.

Fighting mushrooms in Bosnia

With the expiration of the Bosnian cease-fire, fighting has mushroomed there as well. UN officials reported more than 2,600 explosions at the front lines on May 2 alone. Repeated efforts by the governments of the United States, France, Britain, Germany, and Russia — known as the Contact Group — to force a settlement have failed. The Bosnian government rejected an indefinite extension of the cease-fire, saying this would consolidate Karadzic's claims on the 70 percent of Bosnian territory his forces control. The Bosnian government continues to make efforts to break the siege of Sarajevo, which still faces attacks from rightist snipers.

Confronting the threat of a war engulfing the Balkans and spilling into other parts of Europe, Paris, London, and Moscow have recently said they may withdraw troops deployed in Bosnia under the UN flag.

Paris, which has 4,200 troops in Bosnia, is under increased pressure to show results. Thirty-six French soldiers have been killed in Bosnia, two of them during the run-up to the first round in the French presidential elections.

An April 12 editorial in the London *Financial Times*, advancing a familiar theme in the big-business press, complained of "the lack of leadership from which NATO is now suffering," in regard to Bosnia.

The apparent inaction of the NATO powers, however, has little to do with their leadership capacity. As the war widens throughout Bosnia and Croatia, the conflicting interests of the imperialist powers, as well as Moscow, come to the fore. Each is maneuvering to gain economic, political, and strategic military advantages over its rivals in the Yugoslav war.

Moscow, for example, continues to fight the efforts by the other Contact Group members to maintain the embargo against the Serbian regime, its ally in the region. In April, Russian general Alexander Perelyakin was expelled from his position as UN commander of two battalions in Croatia. UN officials accused the general of allowing soldiers, weapons, and fuel to flow from Serbia into Serb-occupied Krajina.

While the Serbian regime has been the most aggressive in promoting the war, none of the gangs running any of the former Yugoslav republics speaks for the interests of working people. "Ideology has been dispensed with in favor of money," noted an article in the May 8 *New Yorker* magazine. "Small oligarchies masquerading as popular tribunals are busy stuffing their pockets... placing their relatives in diplomatic sinecures abroad, or creating private armies for a final showdown."

Banking crisis deepens in Argentina as 'dirty war' continues to haunt regime

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

As the Argentine national elections approach May 14, the government of president Carlos Menem is facing a serious banking crisis. Scores of financial institutions have closed and dozens are teetering on the verge of collapse. The Argentine central bank recently suspended five banks, allowing them 30 days to regain solvency or face bankruptcy. Argentine stocks have dropped almost 40 percent since the devaluation of the Mexican peso on Dec. 20, 1994.

Customers have withdrawn more than \$7 billion from Argentine banks since December. Argentine bankers have nearly stopped making commercial and personal loans. "Companies are afraid of giving credit to their buyers because you just don't know who's going to be around a month from now," remarked Guillermo D'Andrea, a professor at the Institute of Higher Business Studies.

The curb in lending has left many large enterprises without the capital for production or expansion. Many businesses are delaying paychecks, slashing wages, and laying off workers. Small and medium-sized companies have told workers they cannot afford to pay them because times are so hard.

"My boss tells me he can't pay because he needs more time, but it's been four weeks already," Raúl Manuel García told a *New York Times* reporter. "I need money to pay my rent and buy food."

'A measure of panic'

"There is uncertainty, even a measure of panic, in this country," said *Times* reporter Calvin Sims, May 1. Economists and financial analysts say Argentina is ap-

proaching a recession this year with zero economic growth. More than 30,000 businesses have gone belly up in the first three months of 1995. Unemployment has reached a record 13 percent.

"What we are starting to see are the long term effects of the Mexico crisis in Argentina," said Juan Luis Bour, chief economist at the Latin American Research Foundation in Buenos Aires. "It's not over yet."

To stem the crisis, Buenos Aires raised taxes, cut government spending, and pressed bosses to slash workers' wages in order to woo international investors frightened by the Mexican peso crisis.

Signaling the regime's intent to continue its drive against working people, an article in the *Wall Street Journal* stated, "The push for austerity and efficiency will intensify" should Menem remain in office after the national elections. Economy minister Domingo Cavallo says he will press to weaken the country's labor laws. "We also must tackle the lack of flexibility in the labor markets," he said.

Dirty war resurfaces

Meanwhile, ghosts from the Argentine military's "dirty war" against the working class and student activists during the 1970s continue to haunt the regime.

On a television talk show April 25, army commander, Gen. Martín Balza, acknowledged that the military tortured and murdered many political opponents two decades ago. The army "employed illegitimate methods, including the suppression of life, to obtain information," he said.

The statement came on the heels of confessions by two former officers who said almost 2,000 people, primarily political

prisoners, were thrown alive into the Atlantic Ocean from military aircraft. The "death flights" and other methods of repression took the lives of more than 30,000 people, according to human rights campaigners, after a military junta seized power in a 1976 coup.

Menem has urged former military torturers and killers to confess privately to priests and not "rub salt in old wounds" by publicly admitting to the atrocities. New evidence of church collaboration with the military regime has come forward from the dirty war confessions. An Argentine Catholic bishop said April 29 that his church was a cowardly accomplice of the military during that time.

Adolfo Scilingo, an ex-navy captain, said chaplains were on hand to comfort officers involved in the barbarities and the church was consulted on how to "dispose of detainees." Rights groups assert that chaplains were made available to help extract confessions from prisoners in the torture chambers.

Menem granted amnesty in December 1990 to military officials for their role in the dirty war, and has also praised the military for its conduct in that episode and urged the country not to look back.

But feeling the heat of the revelations, Menem now contends that he will study the possibility of rescinding laws proposed by his predecessor, Raúl Alfonsín, that pardoned military personnel and civilians. Menem's running mate, Carlos Ruckauf, concerned that the atrocities could become a big electoral issue, deepening the political crisis facing the regime, complained that "the assassins are only ready to confess 20 or 30 days before the elections."

'Mobilize for jobs!' say West Virginia socialist candidates

BY STEFANIE TRICE

"If elected, I'd use my office to mobilize young people and workers to defend ourselves against attacks on our standard of living, democratic rights, and our right to jobs, education, and social benefits," said Dennis Richter at an April campaign rally for Socialist Workers candidates running for Morgantown City Council.

Richter, a member of the United Transportation Union (UTU) and a brakeworker at Conrail, and Nancy Burroughs, a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 1141 at Allegheny Ludlum in Washington, Pennsylvania, ran for two of six city council seats in a recent election. Both candidates hit hard on the growing crisis of unemployment in this coal-mining region. "The 2,000 people in this county who will be losing their jobs in the coming months will join the ranks of 800 million jobless workers worldwide," Richter stated. Calling for an international, union-led struggle to shorten the workweek with no cut in pay, he explained, "Unemployment creates the deepest division in the working class. All the other ways the bosses seek to divide us and weaken the labor movement — by skin color, national origin, sex, and age — are reinforced and accelerated by this fundamental division."

Supporters of the socialist campaign made a special effort to reach out to workplaces in the area, including Consolidated

Coal's Arkwright mine and Sterling Faucet, both scheduled to shut down this summer. One Sterling worker who bought a copy of the campaign newspaper, the *Militant*, said he had been looking for an alternative way forward, outside of the divisive programs of the bosses. A miner at Arkwright who liked the socialist platform to fight for unity within the working class bought a copy of *An Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis*, which addresses how working people can organize to fight for these demands.

Burroughs told local reporters that the socialist campaign is really an international one. "When we go door to door, we talk about issues broader than just the city. The campaign doesn't stop with the elections — we campaign 365 days a year," she said.

At a campus meeting in opposition to proposed federal cuts in education funding, campaign supporters joined youth in demanding education as a right. Burroughs and Richter turned out with youth to attend Morgantown's Take Back the Night March, after which Burroughs spoke at a forum on "The Origins of Violence Against Women." Both socialist candidates also built the national women's rights rally held April 9 in Washington, D.C., which they attended along with busloads of young workers and students from throughout West Virginia.

Socialist campaigners joined the discus-



Militant/Steve Craine

Dennis Richter, left, campaigns with the *Militant* at April 9 women's rights march in Washington, D.C. "I'd use office to mobilize young people and workers," he said.

sion at a meeting convened by city council member Tom Bloom to address "random acts of violence." In a town where youth already face government-imposed curfews, Bloom projected several moves to further curb the democratic rights of "violent youth," whom he referred to as "a throwaway generation." Some participants in the meeting stayed behind to continue discussions with supporters of the Socialist Workers campaign on how to defend democratic rights and build a movement based on working-class solidarity that can get rid of capitalism and offer a real future for youth. Throughout the campaign, the candidates urged people to learn more about the socialist revolution in Cuba, and

encouraged them to be part of building nationwide actions October 14 to protest U.S. government policy against Cuba.

The socialist workers ran as official write-in candidates, so their names did not appear on the ballots. Despite this, Burroughs received 59 votes, and Richter got 47 votes, in an election where only 18 percent of those registered voted. Besides campaigning door-to-door, the two spoke at the National Organization for Women's "Candidates Night" and participated from the floor in a debate hosted by the League of Women Voters.

Stefanie Trice is a member of UTU Local 1006 and of the Young Socialists.

Illinois students demand Asian-American studies

BY CAPPY KIDD

CHICAGO — Seventeen students at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, began a hunger strike April 12 to protest the school administration's stonewalling of student demands for an Asian-American studies program. The hunger strike was announced at a rally of 300 students held to protest the administration's latest refusal to consider proposals submitted by the Asian-American Advisory Board.

The campaign for an Asian-American studies program began more than three years ago and has received widespread support from the general student body and faculty. Some 1,200 students signed a petition in support of the program. The Black and Latino student organizations have also endorsed the demands, along with the Student Government Association, faculty members of the Afro-American Studies and Women's Studies departments, and the chair of the History department.

Administration response

Asian-American students make up 18 percent of the total student enrollment at Northwestern and will comprise 25 percent of the incoming freshman class. In addition to Asian-American studies, the protesters are demanding increased recruitment of Latinos and an end to harass-

ment of Black students by campus police.

Despite the large number of Asian-Americans attending Northwestern, the administration has steadfastly refused to implement a permanent program that will present the history, cultural contributions, and issues of Asian-Americans. In response to student demands for a permanent program with qualified professors on a tenure track, the administration has countered with proposals for visiting lecturers and temporary programs.

Supporters of the hunger strikers set up an around-the-clock tent encampment and information center to help publicize their demands and to broaden the debate among the general student body. The discussions at the encampment continue all hours of the day and night.

By the 10th day of the hunger strike, the original 17 strikers were replaced by other students as the protesters adopted the tactic of a serial hunger strike with some students joining the action every few days. In addition to Asian-American students, the hunger strike has included two white students and one Black student.

Solidarity from other campuses

Messages of support have poured in from across the country by fax and E-mail. A banner at the information center lists some of the universities that have sent messages of solidarity or have in some

cases organized actions in support of the demands at Northwestern. The banner includes DePaul University, University of Illinois in Chicago, Notre Dame, University of Chicago, Columbia University, Brown University, Harvard, University of Pennsylvania, University of Maryland, Cornell, University of Wisconsin, and Stanford. Princeton students staged a sit-in for Latin and Asian-American studies that coincided with the action at Northwestern.

Noting that the Asian-American students have received support from white, Black, and Hispanic classmates and student organizations, Jennifer Taniguchi, one of the original hunger strikers, said, "The struggle is to make the administration responsive to the concerns of all students."

Students at the information table also pointed to the need to oppose racist and

anti-immigrant initiatives, such as California's Proposition 187.

Every day, students of various nationalities come up to the tables at the encampment to offer their support, buy buttons, and make financial contributions. Some volunteer to help staff the tables. While this reporter was at the site, an Asian woman volunteered to join the hunger strike. She told Gene Kim, one of the organizers of the protest, "I don't have any experience with this and I really like food, but I want to make a contribution."

When asked where the campaign goes from here, Kim responded, "This struggle has unfolded over the last three years; it's not something that will fizzle out after this semester. We plan to keep up the pressure to publicly press the administration. We are prepared to go into the next year — whatever it takes."

Workers donate \$22,000 to produce revolutionary books

BY ROBERT MILLER

In recent months 21 members of industrial unions contributed more than \$22,000 to the Capital Fund, which helps provide for the long-term capital needs of producing Pathfinder books, the *Militant*, and its Spanish-language sister publication *Perspectiva Mundial*.

Since 1930 Pathfinder and its predecessors have published Marxist books and pamphlets to reach out and educate workers and youth. Its latest publications include *Lenin's Final Fight — Writings and Speeches 1922-23*, *Why is Mark Curtis still in prison?* in both English and Spanish, and a newly designed and improved Spanish-language edition of *In Defense of Marxism* by Leon Trotsky.

"I'm giving my entire bribe to help produce socialist literature," I told Bud Haithcoath, a co-worker at the Ford Assembly plant in Edison, New Jersey. He smiled and agreed with that characterization of the Ford "bonus" payments this March, but cautioned about letting go of the bonus too soon, saying that work conditions, pay, and health coverage are certain to worsen at Ford. "That's why we need these political weapons," I replied. Bud has recently added *Lenin's Final Fight*

and the pamphlet on Mark Curtis to his collection of Pathfinder titles.

Sixteen members of the United Auto Workers (UAW) union at Ford plants in Atlanta, Cleveland, Detroit, New Jersey, and St. Paul, Minnesota, along with a Chrysler worker in St. Louis contributed \$18,018 to the Capital Fund. One of these auto workers wrote, "Don't fight money" on his check, referring to how the auto bosses and top UAW officialdom collaborate to substitute bonuses for improvements in wages and working conditions.

A member of the United Steelworkers of America in Birmingham, Alabama, contributed his \$390 settlement from Trinity Industries for a tear-gas attack the company launched on strikers during the walk-out there in 1992. Two rail workers, one in Los Angeles and the other in St. Paul, contributed a total of \$1,056. And two members of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union in Houston added another \$2,550.

These contributions brought the total for the Capital Fund to \$22,014.

Robert Miller is a member of UAW Local 980 at the Ford plant in Edison, New Jersey.

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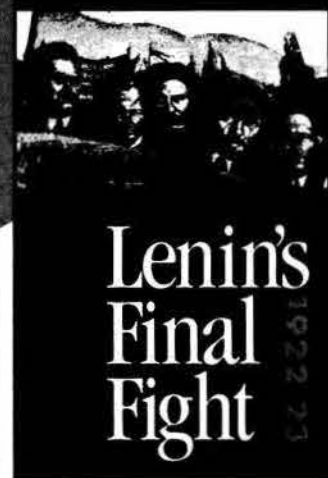
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international campaign to win new readers



Militant 2,950
Perspectiva Mundial 675
New International 1,200

sold 29%
should be 40%

Special measures planned to boost 'Militant' sales effort

Continued from front page

taking special measures to reach out to working people, students, and others, which will certainly pay off.

Supporters of the socialist press are scheduling more teams to help boost the effort. A visit to Ireland is planned by socialist workers from Britain who will be aided by a Young Socialist member in Belfast. They will attend a commemoration in Belfast for Bobby Sands and other Irish political prisoners who carried out a hunger strike that brought worldwide attention to the conditions of Irish political prisoners and the struggle for self determination by the people of Ireland.

Many supporters of the *Militant* in the United States will have the perfect opportunity to step up the pace of the sales campaign during the coast-to-coast visit by the president of Sinn Fein, Gerry Adams. People interested in hearing a well-known spokesperson for the Irish freedom struggle will also want to read a newspaper that is dedicated to reporting on and campaigning for the struggles of working people across the world.

Teams are also set to visit rail yards in Denver and Cheyenne and Alliance, Wyoming. Distributors of the *Militant* in Peoria, Illinois, are coordinating efforts to reach coal miners and other workers in the southern part of the state. An effort to reach textile and meatpacking workers in the South is being organized out of Atlanta and Greensboro, North Carolina.

Reports that have come in the last week provide a look at the interest working people and students have expressed in the socialist press. We hope supporters will keep the reports coming in on upcoming teams and the kinds of political discussions new readers of the *Militant* are interested in.

Over three days recently mine workers, rail workers, and others were introduced to the *Militant* in southern West Virginia and eastern Kentucky. At the Marrowbone mine 15 copies of the *Militant* were sold, and 3 subscriptions. *Militant* supporters from Pittsburgh and Atlanta were on the team and they reported some of the comments included, "You should have more domestic coverage." This was immediately followed by another miner who said, "I am really interested in what's going on in Ireland."

The team members also went door-to-door and met with two miners who subscribed previously and decided to do so again. Along with selling five subscriptions to the *Militant* and 24 single copies, the team talked to coal miners about the case of framed up union activist Mark Curtis, selling one pamphlet on his case. Several people agreed to write letters in support of Curtis's fight.

The visit was also the first time supporters of the *Militant* were able to meet and talk with workers at a big rail yard in the area.



Militant distributors display literature on campus in New Zealand

The campaign to win new readers got a boost during the Labor Notes conference in Detroit. Many union activists were among the 1,200 conference participants, including many from abroad. There were people from 15 countries in all. A group of metal workers from Germany were especially active during the conference trying to link workers struggles against the bosses worldwide with the demand for a shorter workweek. Three members of their delegation were among the 16 people who bought subscriptions to the *Militant*.

Others included two paperworkers, a professor from Japan, members of the Canadian Auto Workers and Canadian Union of Public employees, and members of U.S. unions in the rail, steel, auto, and oil and chemical industries, along with members of the public employees union and the Teamsters.

One of those attending the conference was a woman helping to organize *maquiladoras* along the U.S.-Mexico border. She bought a subscription to *Perspectiva Mundial*, as did a Mexican auto worker and a Dominican activist from New York. Conference participants also bought a total of 56 copies of the *Militant*, 3 copies of *Perspectiva Mundial*, and 10 copies of the pamphlet *Why Is Mark Curtis Still In Prison?*

In Los Angeles, visits to three campuses by *Militant* supporters in the first few days of the target week netted six subscriptions. Members of the Young Socialists were invited to speak at Cinco de Mayo activities at Citrus College, and participated in a discussion at the University of California at Santa Barbara on Cuba.

Their plans for the week also included attending a symposium at the University of California Los Angeles on affirmative action, the California convention of the National Organization for Women in San Diego, and a rally to oppose the Contract With America. They also made plans to join supporters of the *Militant* in Tucson, Arizona

for the weekend.

The extra effort produced results in discussions with co-workers as four subscriptions were sold to fellow union members.

A *Militant* supporter in Houston used her last day on the job at the Maxwell House coffee plant to sell two subscriptions and two more renewals before moving on to a new job at a chemical plant. Another member of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) union sold three subscriptions to fellow workers in an oil refinery bringing the total to seven OCAW members there who have recently become regular readers of the socialist press.

Houston distributors also organized to visit the Pan American campus of the University of Texas in the Rio Grande Valley. They joined members of the recently formed Young Socialists there in setting up a literature table at a protest sponsored by a Chicano student group and the student government against the proposed Welfare Reform Act.

In St. Paul, Minnesota, weekly Friday night presentations of Cuban films, sponsored by the La Raza Student Cultural Center at the University of Minnesota have provided an opportunity to introduce the socialist press to people. Three copies of *New International*, English and Spanish editions, have been sold along with subscriptions to the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* at these events.

On April 21 more than 40 people participated in a half-hour discussion on the efforts of Cuban revolutionaries today to defend their country after viewing the movie *Death of a Bureaucrat*.

Contributing to this article were Dick Geyer from Pittsburgh, Willie Mae Reid from Detroit, Craig Honts from Los Angeles, Robbie Scherr from Houston, and Jon Hillson from St. Paul.

	Militant			Perspectiva Mundial			New International		
	sold	goal	%	sold	goal	%	sold	goal	%
Sweden	20	40	50%	7	15	34	40		
Puerto Rico	1	2	50%	1	8	5			
Iceland	7	15	47%	1	1	3			
Australia	14	40	35%	2	6	5	15		
Canada									
Vancouver	32	70	46%	2	8	7	20		
Montreal	17	75	23%	2	25	9	45		
Toronto	25	85	29%	5	15	21	45		
Total	74	230	32%	9	48	37	110		
New Zealand									
Auckland	24	80	30%		6	2	20		
Wellington	4	10	40%			4			
Christchurch	9	40	23%	2	2	4	10		
Total	37	130	28%	2	8	6	34		
United States									
Houston	39	80	49%	3	15	10	20		
Greensboro	33	70	47%	2	8	4	20		
Atlanta	37	90	41%	11	20	7	25		
Los Angeles	68	180	38%	33	90	37	90		
Peoria	18	50	36%	2	2		20		
Washington, DC	28	80	35%	6	30	9	35		
Detroit	30	95	32%	2	10	3	28		
Salt Lake City	34	105	32%	8	20	7	35		
Boston	31	100	31%	6	30	14	35		
Pittsburgh	33	105	31%	2	12	8	30		
Miami	30	105	29%	12	45	19	60		
Seattle	25	90	28%	3	15	6	25		
Twin Cities	32	120	27%	7	17		35		
Morgantown	14	55	25%	1	2	3	20		
Des Moines	20	85	24%	7	36	4	30		
Philadelphia	28	115	24%	3	30	8	45		
Chicago	30	130	23%	6	30	1	20		
Cleveland	15	65	23%	5	12	4	50		
San Francisco	34	150	23%	6	45	14	75		
Brooklyn	28	130	22%	6	40	19	65		
Birmingham	13	70	19%	5	5	1	20		
Newark	21	130	16%	7	35	5	60		
New York	21	135	16%	3	30	11	75		
Tucson	1	10	10%	1	2		5		
Cincinnati		12	0%		2		3		
New Haven		15	0%		3		3		
Total U.S.	663	2357	28%	147	586	194	929		
Britain									
London	28	70	40%	3	5	15	30		
Sheffield	2	10	20%		1		10		
Manchester	6	60	10%	1	4	4	25		
Total	36	140	26%	4	10	19	65		
France	2	10	20%		5	11	20		
Greece	2	10	20%		1	4	4		
Belgium		3	0%		4		10		
Other	11			1					
International	867	2977	29%	173	692	311	1235		
Should be	1180	2950	40%	202	675	360	1200		

IN THE UNIONS									
AUSTRALIA									
AMWU (Food)									
AMWU (Metal)		1			1				
AWU-FIME		2		1	1				
Total		3			2				
CANADA									
CAW	1				1				
CEP	2								
IAM	1								
USWA	1								
Total	4				1				
NEW ZEALAND									
EU	2	5	40%		1		2		
MWU		4	0%				1		
Total	2	9	22%		1		3		
SWEDEN									
Foodworkers		2					3	4	
Metalworkers	1	2	50%				2	2	
Transport		1						3	
Total	1	5	20%				5	9	
U.S.									
UAW	32	100	32%	2	10	9	25		
UTU	23	85	27%		7	2	12		
USWA	9	40	23%	1	3	1	7		
IAM	15	75	20%	5	15	3	33		
OCAW	11	55	20%	0	6	3	25		
ACTWU/ILGWU	8	30	17%	4	24		18		
UMWA	4	23	17%				12		
UFCW	2	15	13%	3	25	12	40		
Total	104	423	25%	15	90	30	172		
UNION TOTALS									
	111	439	25%	17	93	35	184		

ACTWU-Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union; AEEU-Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Workers Union; AMWU(Food)-Australian Manufacturing Workers Union; AMWU(Metal) Australian Manufacturing Workers Union; AWU-FIME-Australian Workers Union; CAW-Canadian Auto Workers; EU-Engineers Union; IAM-International Association of Machinists; ILGWU-International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union; MWU-Meat Workers Union; NUM-National Union of Mineworkers; OCAW-Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; RMT-National Union of Rail, Maritime, and Transport Workers; TGWU-Transport and General Workers Union; UAW-United Auto Workers; UFBGWU-United Food, Beverage and General Workers Union; UFCW-United Food and Commercial Workers; UMWA-United Mine Workers of America; USWA-United Steelworkers of America; UTU-United Transportation Union.

100,000 join May Day protest in Mexico

BY LAURA GARZA

More than 100,000 workers turned out for a May Day demonstration in Mexico City to protest the devastating consequences of the government's austerity measures. The turnout was one of the largest in years. For the first time in 74 years the main labor federation, the Confederation of Mexican Workers (CTM), which is tied to the ruling party, canceled its plans for the annual march. But several smaller unions not affiliated to the CTM called for a rally. They were joined by tens of thousands of other workers, organized and unorganized, employed and unemployed.

CTM president Fidel Velázquez, 95, who has dominated the pro-government federation since the 1940s, had announced the cancellation of its May Day rally by saying there was not much to celebrate. At a meeting of the CTM-led Congress of Labor, however, he admitted "the rank and file could go beyond our control and that could lead to a serious situation." Instead, CTM officials held a ceremony to hear a speech by Mexican president Ernesto Zedillo.

As a result of the stunning impact of skyrocketing unemployment and inflation, along with the efforts by union officials to stem labor protests, the number of strikes in the period of January to April was the lowest since 1989. But social tensions are growing, and the mood at this year's May Day rally was visibly angry. "The government just shoves people to the ground and expects them to say, 'Yes, sir,'" exclaimed Antonio Flores, 54, an unemployed barber who took part in the march. "We will not accept that anymore."

Contingents of telephone workers, electrical workers, teachers, workers from the Mexican Social Security Institute, and a variety of political parties and organizations marched to the huge downtown Zócalo plaza, virtually filling it. The demonstration drew many who have suf-



More than 100,000 people marched on Reforma Avenue in Mexico City celebrating May Day in response to austerity measures that have left hundreds of thousands of workers without a job. AP/Douglas Engle

fered from the layoffs that have swept the country. Signs reading, "I am an unemployed worker" or "I am a laid-off worker" dotted the crowd.

The heroes of the march were the workers from the city's independent bus drivers union, Sataur-100. They have been in a fight to oppose the government's union-busting and privatization plan. On April 8, the government-run Route 100 was declared bankrupt. The government abruptly fired the company's 14,000 employees and offered to rehire some of them without their union. Several leaders of Sataur-100, which is a union unaffiliated to the CTM, were arrested and charged with fraud for misappropriating funds.

The government tried to run partial service for free with gun-toting cops as drivers or riders. Hundreds more police

and helicopters patrolled the route in an effort to prevent union protests from shutting down service. The government claimed the union and its members are linked to the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) in Chiapas.

"We did join activities in solidarity with poor people in Chiapas, and we even sent them food," fired bus driver José García told the daily *La Jornada*. The government attacked the drivers "because we are a union that doesn't get on its knees," he added.

May Day marchers carried banners demanding that the jailed leaders of the bus drivers be freed.

Irma Islas, general secretary of the union of social security workers, said the bankruptcy move against Route 100 "is a probe that may lead to other bankruptcies

of what little remains of the national patrimony." She pointed out that the social security institute plans to subcontract a range of its departments to private companies and eliminate the jobs of 10,000 union members.

The government's austerity measures, aimed at ensuring uninterrupted payments to wealthy international holders of bonds and debts, have taken a devastating toll on workers and peasants. Inflation is expected to exceed the predicted annual rate of 42 percent. In January and February, following the December 20 devaluation of the peso, 750,000 people lost their jobs, according to government figures.

Mexico has no system of unemployment benefits. Workers often receive severance pay amounting to three months' wages, but this is quickly drying up for growing numbers of workers and their families.

Today, one out of five workers in Mexico is unemployed or underemployed, and according to government figures 14 million of the country's 92 million people live in poverty.

Middle-class layers that were better off in the last few years, racking up credit card and bank loan debts, are now being hit by interest rates of between 80 and 120 percent. A woman cited in Miami's *El Nuevo Herald* April 27 bought a car at 39,000 pesos in 1992 but will end up having to pay a total of 83,000 pesos to clear up the debt.

Among the May Day demonstrators were members of El Barzón, an organization of farmers and small businessmen. It has called for a moratorium on debt payments to protest the astronomical interest rates and the banks' foreclosure of debtors' property.

Growers in Veracruz and ranchers in the north are being forced to let fruit rot and cattle die because the cost of transportation and fodder is beyond their reach.

The stability of the banking system remains shaky. The rate of loan defaults by businesses and individuals rose 45 percent, or nearly \$1 billion, in the first three months of the year.

Capitalist investors and government spokespeople are pleased with Zedillo's economic policies. They point to the fact that in the past few weeks the peso's precipitous fall has been stemmed and the stock market is coming back as proof that the government's plans are working.

The regime's stepped-up plans to privatize industries and open them up to greater foreign control has been a key part of its effort to regain the confidence of international investors. One example was the Mexican Senate's approval April 26 of a law ending the telecommunications monopoly of the Mexican Telephone Co. Concessions to operate telecommunications companies can now be granted for 30-year periods with up to 49 percent foreign investment.

The managing director of the International Monetary Fund, Michel Camdessus, said he viewed the initial results of the government's measures as "very encouraging."

Eager to declare the patient on the road to recovery, capitalist newspapers have praised the recent performance of the country's economy. "Mexico has already begun to recover, at least in the purely financial sense," said a May 1 editorial in the *Washington Post*. A *Barron's* columnist opined, "The average Mexican worker is taking a beating as unemployment and inflation exceed forecasts, but from a macroeconomic perspective the country's prospects have brightened considerably."

Juana Solís, 52, a laid-off waitress who joined the May Day rally, had a different perspective. She had never been to a demonstration because she saw them as a waste of time, she told the *Dallas Morning News*. But the restaurant she worked at closed in March because of rising interest rates and she has not found work since then. "Today," she said, "I thought I'd show up and at least vent my anger."

Pointing to the swelling crowd at the Zócalo, Solís said, "They're all people like me, unemployed. But I tell you, we'd rather die fighting proud than to die of hunger or on our knees."

Presidential elections in France defy polls; rightist candidates make gains

BY JEAN-LOUIS SALFATI

PARIS — In a presidential election marked by the economic crisis in France and the beginnings of working-class resistance, Socialist Party candidate Lionel Jospin came out ahead in the first round with 23.3 percent of the vote. Paris mayor Jacques Chirac, one of the two candidates of the Gaullist Rally for the Republic (RPR), the principal capitalist party, came in second with 20.8 percent. Prime Minister Edouard Balladur of the RPR trailed with 18.6 percent. The two front-runners will confront each other May 7 in a second round.

The results were at sharp variance with predictions from opinion polls in the weeks leading up to the first round.

The election saw a large increase in the vote for the rightist candidates, who received a total of 20 percent of the vote.

Jean-Marie Le Pen, the candidate of the fascist National Front, won 15 percent of the vote, his highest ever in a national election. Emphasizing France's 12.3 percent unemployment, Le Pen's campaign centered on scapegoating immigrants for widespread joblessness, re-establishing the death penalty, and fighting against corruption and the Maastricht Treaty. He proposed deporting 3 million immigrants over the next seven years and giving French-born workers priority in jobs.

Le Pen said he would preserve social benefits and retirement rights — for French citizens. He also proposed increasing the minimum wage to 7,000 francs a month from its present level of just over 5,000 francs.

A second far-right candidate, Philippe De Villiers, organized his campaign in defense of "traditional French values," against corruption, and against the European Union. He received 4.8 percent.

In the Paris region, Le Pen received his highest totals in two working-class towns,

Goussainville (24.5 percent) and Mantes-la-Jolie (22.5 percent). These were the two towns where a number of young women were expelled from high school in January following a government decree banning Islamic headscarves in the schools. A violent campaign by right-wing forces against the "Islamic menace" accompanied the government's action.

Le Pen also received significant votes in the north, the east, and in the Marseilles region, three areas hard hit by unemployment. In Marseilles, as well as in most surrounding towns, Le Pen placed first, sometimes receiving more than 30 percent of the vote. He also topped 30 percent in a number of cities in Eastern France where large steel mills have been closed. In the wealthy resorts on the French Riviera, Le Pen won 23.8 percent in Nice and 24.7 percent in Menton.

Elections occur as workers strike

The election campaign took place as thousands of workers were taking strike action. For more than two months workers have shut down one company after another. Auto workers, postal workers, and railworkers all staged walkouts, as did workers at Air Inter, the tire producer Michelin, and museums in Paris. In most cases, strikers' central demands have been for higher wages, as a number of French companies began announcing hefty profits after years of layoffs and cutbacks.

During the campaign, both Chirac and Jospin promised to raise wages and take measures against unemployment. Jospin proposed reducing the workweek in two years from 39 to 37 hours.

Chirac launched his campaign in December by criticizing Balladur for having given in to strikers at Air France in 1993 and to the student demonstrations against the sub-minimum wage for youth in the spring of 1994. In response to the recent

labor resistance, however, Chirac began pitching his campaign around the struggle against "social exclusions" — poverty and unemployment.

Chirac's campaign showed the problems that the capitalists in France have in putting forward a program to cut social gains, such as the minimum wage and the system of social security.

In February, former prime minister Raymond Barre withdrew from the race. He had urged the government to resist strikers' wage demands and called for deep cuts in social benefits. Barre quit after complaining of insufficient support for the radical measures he deemed necessary to restore the ailing French economy.

Among the other candidates in the election, the Communist Party's candidate, Robert Hue, received 8.6 percent, up from the party's 6.7 percent in the last presidential election. Hue called for a general wage increase of 1,000 francs a month.

Arlette Laguiller, candidate of the Trotskyist organization Lutte Ouvrière (Workers Struggle), received 5.3 percent, a sharp increase from the 1.9 percent she received seven years ago.

Her campaign proposed an "emergency plan for workers," including a 1,500 franc monthly wage increase, a state-run public works project, massive hiring by government-run agencies, and a demand that the state seize any company that fires workers while they are making profits. No mention was made of the need to reduce the workweek.

The Green Party candidate, Dominique Voynet, received 3.3 percent of the vote.

Jean-Louis Salfati is a member of the General Confederation of Workers (CGT) at Citroën. Nat London, a CGT member at Renault, and Jacques Salfati, a CGT member at Peugeot, contributed to this article.

Houston students welcome Cuban youth

BY KEN KNUDSEN

HOUSTON — Cuban youth leader Kenia Serrano spoke here April 19 at three events organized by students, professors, and others at the University of Houston (UH). Serrano, 21, is a student at the University of Havana, and a member of the Union of Young Communists in Cuba.

Serrano and fellow Cuban youth leader Rogelio Polanco were in Texas in March and had spoken at several meetings in Houston and in the Rio Grande valley. The second visit responded to a February invitation by the UH Student Association to establish a sister relationship with the Federation of University Students at the University of Havana. Opponents of the Cuban revolution here sharply attacked the proposal.

In a letter to a right-wing Cuban-American group that was printed in the daily *Houston Chronicle*, UH chancellor Alexander Schilts wrote that a sister campus relationship was not, or would it be, sanctioned by the UH administration. Schilts acknowledged, however, that students and professors have a right to free association. "Protected by the guarantees provided by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and our commitment to academic freedom, individuals and organizations within our four universities are free to associate themselves with whom they wish, even without the official sanction of the administration," he wrote.

At a ceremony in the University Center



Kenia Serrano, left, talks with students after University of Houston event.

Militant/David Creed

atrium, Giovanni Garibay, president of the UH Student Association, welcomed Serrano to the campus. The two exchanged T-shirts with logos of their respective campuses and spoke in favor of further exchange of culture and ideas between students in Cuba and the United States. A number of groups and individuals also welcomed Serrano to the campus, including Marvin Sparks, faculty head of the Afro-Cuban Ensemble; Russell Contreras, president of the Hispanic Students Associ-

ation; Henry Bell, president of the Pan African People's Association; Mindy Terrence, president of the Asian Student's Association; and Michael Chamberlain, president of the UH Cuba Friendship Committee. Houston City Councilman Felix Fraga sent written greetings.

Two students from the University of Texas Pan-American campus in the Rio Grande valley, members of the Chicano student organization MEChA, were at the event. They had heard Serrano and

Polanco speak at their school in March, and made the eight-hour drive to Houston to be part of the second leg of the tour.

Also present at this event were about a dozen opponents of the Cuban revolution. They arrived well before the starting time of the event. Supporters of Serrano's right to speak at UH came early as well to assure that the event came off without disruption. One of the right-wingers wore a T-shirt that said: "Cuba Si" on the front, and "Castro No" on the back; he walked around like a human picket sign.

Following the ceremony, Serrano spoke to some 90 people in an open class hosted by UH professor Larry Gonzalez. After a presentation outlining the history of Cuba and the challenges confronting the Cuban revolution today, Serrano answered questions. The meeting quickly turned into a debate.

"Why were Cuban troops in Angola from 1975 to 1988?" was a hot topic. One person in the audience claimed that "Castro sold Cuban troops for Russian oil" in Angola. Fighting apartheid had nothing to do with it because "South Africa is not even close to Angola," said one student.

Another participant pointed out that the South African regime militarily occupied Angola's southern neighbor, Namibia, for decades and had invaded Angola when Cuban volunteers went there at the request of the Angolan government. The defeat of the South African army at the hands of Angolan and Cuban troops played an important role in overturning apartheid. Serrano remarked that Cuba has deep roots in Africa, culturally and because many Cubans are of African descent.

That evening, Serrano spoke at a meeting of about 70 people, sponsored by the Women's Studies department, the UH National Organization for Women (NOW) chapter, and the Latina Coalition. The meeting was chaired by Tom Kleven, a law professor at Texas Southern University, and Merlin Pulikkathara, president of the campus NOW chapter.

Serrano gave a brief talk on the gains made in the fight for women's rights in Cuba and then answered questions. One person asked about the status of abortion rights in Cuba.

Serrano explained that in Cuba women have a right to choose abortion. The procedure is available on request without a waiting period or parental consent, but current shortages in medical supplies, such as anesthesia, make access more difficult, as these supplies must be prioritized for life threatening situations.

Serrano invited all participants to come to Cuba August 1-7 for an international solidarity festival sponsored by the Union of Young Communists and other youth groups in Cuba.

The day's events received prominent coverage in the *Houston Chronicle*.

'Cuban Reality' is topic of Boston meeting

BY KAREN RAY

BOSTON — Some 70 people attended an April 26 panel discussion here on "Life in Cuba After the Collapse of the Soviet Union." This was the last of eight public panels organized as part of the Cuban Reality course at Roxbury Community College, which was co-sponsored by the July 26 Coalition on Cuba.

"Cuba remains a socialist country after the Soviet Union disappeared," said Miguel Nuñez, first secretary of the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, D.C., as he opened the event. He said with the collapse in trade with the Soviet Union, Cuba "needed to find solutions to very serious and very painful problems."

Before 1991, about 85 percent of Cuba's trade was with the Soviet Union. After that year all trade had to be carried out using hard currency at world market prices, instead of the more equitable exchange that had been established between the two countries. This created extreme shortages of basic goods such as oil and food items. Cubans refer to this period as the "special period."

Mary-Alice Waters, editor of *New Internationalist* magazine and of the Pathfinder edition of *The Bolivian Diary of Ernesto Che Guevara*, and Richard Levins, a biologist at the Harvard School of Public Health and advisor to Cuba on

sustainable agriculture, joined Nuñez on the panel.

"Cuba is living through the most difficult years since the beginning of the revolution," Waters reported. But "Cuba is less alone today than at anytime since the opening of the revolution," she said. The "source of Cuba's problems is capitalism not socialism."

Waters expanded on this by pointing to the world capitalist crisis and the devastating impact this has had on the working class and farmers of underdeveloped countries. What is happening in Mexico is increasingly the norm, she explained. The difference in Cuba is that there workers and farmers have their own government, which is a powerful tool for organizing to resolve the problems in the interest of working people.

Waters gave some graphic comparisons of the special period in Cuba today with the Great Depression of the 1930s in the United States. She noted that the gross national product fell 35 percent during the 1930s depression, while in Cuba over the last five years it has fallen 50 percent. Trade on the world market in the 1930s dropped by two-thirds; in Cuba it has fallen 75 percent in the special period.

Levins, who has been an agriculture advisor to Cuba for more than 30 years, noted that the special period is creating

"ecologists not only out of conviction but ecologists out of necessity" in Cuba.

"In this country agribusiness thinks about how to sell products that use oil to farmers and make a profit." In Cuba, Levins explained, the question is "what is the best use of the land when you take away the real-estate speculators." He said that for a long time there has been debate among farmers on how to best organize agricultural production.

Many methods used in Cuba were those mimicked from the Soviet Union and influenced by capitalist agriculture, including a heavy reliance on chemical fertilizers and pesticides and overuse of the land for cash crops. "The revolution doesn't guarantee against stupidity, only that no one will profit from stupidity," said Levins.

Today, with the shortages of oil and pesticides, new agricultural methods are being used, including more crop rotation, mixing of crops, and organic pest control.

Participants raised questions and comments following the main presentations.

Students in the Cuban Reality course are planning a trip to Cuba later this year to see the revolution first hand.

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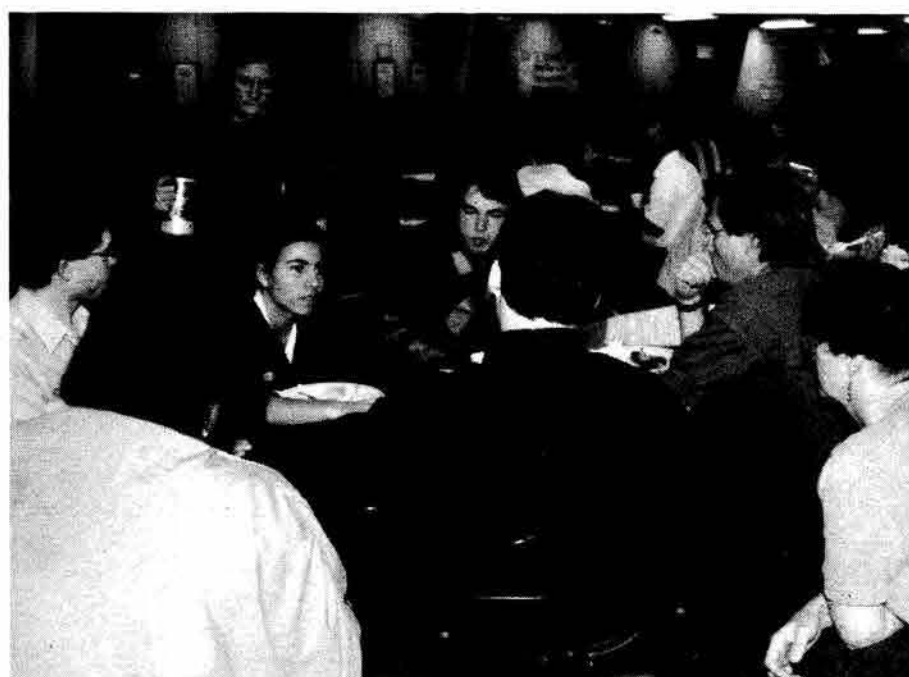


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New International no. 8

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Militant/Sukul Baul

Cuban youth leader Kenia Serrano talks with unionists after addressing United Paperworkers International Union Local 7837-sponsored meeting in Decatur, Illinois. "Now, in this room, we're breaking through the blockade," she told more than 125 people at the union hall. Serrano also visited area campuses.

Activities planned in defense of Cuba

BY SAM MANUEL

NEW YORK — Participants in the April 30 northeast regional conference hosted by the National Network on Cuba (NNOC) set plans for an October 14 march and rally in opposition to the U.S. government's aggressive policies against Cuba. The demonstration in New York City will be one of four regional actions to take place across the country. Protests are also scheduled in San Francisco, Chicago, and Atlanta.

The demonstrations are being organized by the NNOC as part of an international day of action that was called by the 3,000 participants in the World Meeting in Solidarity with Cuba, held last November in Havana.

The 50 activists attending the meeting represented coalitions working to change U.S. policy towards Cuba from Maine; Boston; Syracuse, Manhattan, and Brooklyn; New York; northern New Jersey; New Haven and Hartford, Connecticut; Philadelphia; Baltimore; and Washington, D.C. Participants also included representatives of the Committees of Correspondence, Communist Party, International Peace for Cuba Appeal, International Youth Brigade to Cuba, Socialist Workers Party, and Young Socialists.

Mario Medina, a representative of the Cuban Mission to the United Nations, spoke at the opening of the event. He condemned efforts by Washington to tighten the U.S. economic embargo under a bill introduced in Congress by Republican senator Jesse Helms. He also said Cuba's economy showed signs of stabilization for the first time in five years.

Many of those participating in the regional conference have been active organizing educational and solidarity work brigades or cultural exchanges to Cuba, collecting medical supplies, and organiz-

ing campus speaking tours for Cuban youth in the United States. Several participants noted the increased interest in Cuba and potential to organize in opposition to U.S. policy against Cuba.

Leslie Cagan, one of the four national coordinators of the NNOC, said organizing the four regional actions in a coordinated manner, including working on a common leaflet for all of them, would be the best way to tap this growing interest and maximize the effectiveness of the protests.

During the main discussion at the conference, participants grappled with what would be the most effective demands to put forward to build the actions. A similar regional NNOC conference in Chicago April 8 decided that demands of the October 14 action there would be ending the economic blockade of Cuba, normalizing U.S.-Cuba relations, lifting the U.S. travel ban, and respecting Cuba's national sovereignty.

Several activists at the New York meeting proposed that the October 14 protest should be organized around a single demand, to end the economic blockade against Cuba. They argued that this approach would allow for organizing the broadest protest against the central aspect of U.S. policy against Cuba. They expressed concern in particular that the demand to respect Cuba's right to national sovereignty might be interpreted as support for the Cuban revolution.

After considerable discussion and debate the meeting agreed that the demand to end the economic blockade against Cuba would be the central focus of the protest action, and the other demands would also be included. The exact wording of the demand on Cuba's sovereignty will be worked out later in collaboration with organizers of the other three regional



Militant/Charles Ostrofsky

Thousands protest U.S. government's policy against Cuba in Washington, D.C., on Nov. 12, 1994. Activists are already building the October 14 national actions.

actions. The meeting set up a coordinating committee to organize the protest and called for a follow-up regional meeting in New York City June 11.

Activists in New York City announced plans for a teach-in on Cuba in September as part of the efforts to build the October 14 action. The regional meeting also agreed to organize participation from the United States in the "Cuba Lives" international youth festival in Havana and other Cuban provinces August 1-7.

Several young participants were attending their first political meeting on Cuba. One young woman from Long Island, New York, encouraged the participants to step up efforts to reach students on the campuses. She explained that while many students like herself are just beginning to learn about Cuba, world events and the assaults on education and other social programs in this country have deepened

young peoples' distrust of U.S. policies on a broad range of issues.

Several young people met briefly following the meeting to exchange phone numbers and discuss how they could work with the NNOC in organizing for the youth festival.

The meeting also heard reports on plans for a June 17 demonstration that will coincide with the arrival in Washington, D.C., of the fifth Friendship caravan to Cuba; activities for the 26th contingent of the Venceremos Brigade to Cuba; and lobbying efforts by NNOC affiliates to oppose the Helms/Burton bill that would tighten the economic embargo of Cuba.

For more information on plans for the October 14 protests and for the U.S. delegation to the "Cuba Lives" festival, contact the Cuba Information Project, 198 Broadway, Suite 800, New York, N.Y. 10038, or call: (212) 227-3422.

Cuban detainees to be freed from Guantánamo

Continued from front page
needed \$100 million in work to make them more permanent.

Asked by reporters "how explosive" the situation at Guantánamo was, Tarnoff and the others would not give a detailed answer. In fact, since the detention camps were set up last August there and in Panama, the Cuban prisoners have held hunger strikes and protests, and organized mass escapes.

From the beginning, the camps were a powder keg. Reporters visiting at the end of August were greeted with chants of,

"It's bad! It's bad!" Less than three weeks after the internments began, 650 Cubans began throwing rocks at U.S. soldiers after a dispute during a soccer game. These protests overlapped with those of 15,000 Haitian refugees also detained at Guantánamo.

A column in the August 31 issue of the Cuban newspaper *Granma Internacional* noted that Washington had a special problem with the Cuban prisoners because they "are fully aware of what their lives have been like up until now and why; they know what social justice and dignity are,

and they are not going to tolerate abuses that they haven't experienced in Cuba during the last 35 years." Nearly 1,000 of the prisoners returned to Cuba, some by swimming across Guantánamo Bay or crossing the minefields that separate the U.S. base from the rest of the island.

With anger simmering among Cuban-Americans whose relatives and friends were being held indefinitely in the camps, Washington decided in December to admit several thousand of the 32,000 detainees then in Guantánamo and Panama on various "humanitarian" grounds. The Panamanian government refused to intern Cubans held in its camps for more than six months, so the detainees held there were sent to Guantánamo in February. Of the 21,000 Cuban prisoners remaining at the beginning of May, 6,000 women, children, and elderly were already projected to be allowed into the United States at a rate of about 500 per week.

Provocation by U.S. government

The prison camps were set up during the "rafters crisis," which was provoked by U.S. government policy toward Cuba last summer.

Following a series of boat hijackings by people wishing to emigrate to the United States, the Cuban government announced last August that it would not attempt to stop anyone from leaving. Cuban officials pointed out at the time that Washington had encouraged such illegal and dangerous actions by denying visas to those wishing to emigrate while offering automatic asylum to those who left illegally and claimed political repression.

Washington used the situation as a pretext to bar Cuban-Americans from sending money to relatives in Cuba and to tighten restrictions on travel to and from the island. The imprisonment of thousands of Cubans at the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo was a direct provocation against Cuba.

In September 1994, the Clinton administration signed an agreement with Havana that Washington would issue at least

20,000 visas a year to Cubans wishing to emigrate; those being held at Guantánamo would not be eligible. So far 6,000 Cubans have been approved for refugee status by the U.S. government, but only 800 of them have actually been admitted into the country. At the May 2 news conference, U.S. attorney general Janet Reno said those admitted from Guantánamo will now be counted toward the quotas for this year and next year.

Overall U.S. policy toward Cuba, including the trade embargo, travel restrictions, and ban on family remittances "remains the same," Reno said. She stressed the Clinton administration's support for the so-called Cuban Democracy Act, initiated by Rep. Robert Torricelli and passed by Congress in 1992. The law tightened the U.S. embargo against Cuba.

Ricardo Alarcón, who was the chief Cuban negotiator and is the president of Cuba's National Assembly, told reporters in Havana May 2, "It is a fair accord that is in the interests of both the United States and Cuba.

"If this agreement is applied fully, then we can practically speak of the full normalization of bilateral relations in regard to immigration," said Alarcón.

Debate over immigration agreement

The decision to return any Cuban picked up at sea directly to Cuba has sparked debate among U.S. politicians and others. Dennis Hays, director of the U.S. State Department's Cuba desk, asked for a job transfer in protest, as did his deputy Nancy Mason.

Complaining that he hadn't been consulted, Jorge Mas Canosa, chairman of the right-wing Cuban American National Foundation, said, "We feel as if the rug has been pulled from under us."

Sen. Jesse Helms chimed in, attacking the agreement. "For over 35 years the United States has been a safe haven for Cubans fleeing Castro's communist dictatorship," he said. Helms, the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee,

Continued on Page 14

Accord sparks debate in Miami

BY SETH GALINSKY

MIAMI—The U.S.-Cuba immigration accord is being hotly debated here.

As soon as the agreement was announced, phone lines at several Spanish-language radio stations began ringing off the hook with calls from angry Cuban exiles. "They've sold us to the enemy," said one woman who called Radio Mambi, the main right-wing station.

Diario Las Américas, a rabidly anti-Cuba daily published in Miami, ran an editorial titled, "Castro Seems to Have Gotten his Way in the Cuban Exodus Situation."

Tomás García Fusté, a talk show host on WCMQ, claimed, "The whole exile leadership is disgusted." But, Fusté added, "50 percent of the population is content because their family members at Guantánamo Naval Base are going to be able to come to the United States."

Some refugees at Guantánamo called WCMQ. "Today is a holiday for us," said one. "Today everyone is dancing and partying."

Aida Martínez Romanyk from West Palm Beach, who has cousins at Guantánamo, said, "They're coming? That's the best news I've ever heard in my life."

The pact is also a hot topic in the Haitian and Black communities here. Before the agreement, Cuban children with

no parents at the military base were brought into Florida, as were pregnant women and those over 70. But not the Haitians imprisoned at the base in similar conditions.

"We think this is a double standard and very hypocritical from the Clinton government," stated Guy Victor, executive director of the Haitian Refugee Center. "It is unfair, and it is a racist policy. The Haitian community is very upset."

U.S. Congresswoman Carrie Meek, who is Black, passed a note to Attorney General Janet Reno just before the agreement was officially announced asking, "Will you please release the Haitian children who are unaccompanied? It's only fair."

The agreement allowing Cubans at Guantánamo to come to the United States was denounced by the main anti-immigrant groups in Florida, who are beginning to collect signatures to put a Proposition 187-type law on the ballot in the 1996 elections.

One supporter of the anti-immigrant initiative said the pact "will be fuel to the fire."

The *Miami Herald* backed the agreement. "On the whole," an editorial in the *Herald* said, "the policy shift adopts the 'least worst' of a set of options containing no wholly satisfying choices."

The FBI's secret war on political freedom

As President Bill Clinton presses for broader powers for the FBI, working people will find it worthwhile to examine the real history of this secret police outfit. Below are excerpts from *Cointelpro: The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom*, a book that documents one of the most notorious programs of FBI spying and harassment. Much of the material for the book was pruned out of the government as a result of a successful suit filed by the Socialist Workers Party against the FBI and other spy agencies that had engaged in decades of illegal disruption activities against the party. The excerpts are reprinted with the permission of Pathfinder. Subheads are provided by the *Militant*.

BY NOAM CHOMSKY

From the evidence now available, it appears that the first FBI disruption program (apart from the Communist Party) was launched in August 1960 against groups advocating independence for Puerto Rico. In October 1961, the "SWP Disruption Program" was put into operation against the Socialist Workers Party. The grounds offered, in a secret FBI memorandum, were the following: the party had been "openly espousing its line on a local and national basis through running candidates for public office and strongly directing and/or supporting such causes as Castro's Cuba and integration problems...in the South."

The SWP Disruption Program, put into operation during the Kennedy administration, reveals very clearly the FBI's understanding of its function: to block legal political activity that departs from orthodoxy, to disrupt opposition to state policy, to undermine the civil rights movement.

BY NELSON BLACKSTOCK

The Cointelpro plot to disrupt socialist election campaigns was concocted not because of any illegal activities by the SWP, but because, as J. Edgar Hoover said, socialist candidates were "openly" talking to people about their ideas....

One Cointelpro operation that has come to light through the socialists' suit concerns the 1966 campaign of Judy White for governor of New York. This was during the period when the antiwar movement was beginning to have a major impact on the thinking of the American people. White was a leader of the antiwar movement. A broad layer of opponents of the war—including many radicals who were not particularly close to the SWP—had endorsed White as the only antiwar candidate in the race.

Campaign supporters worked hard to get the signatures necessary to obtain ballot status, which brought significant amount of attention from the media.

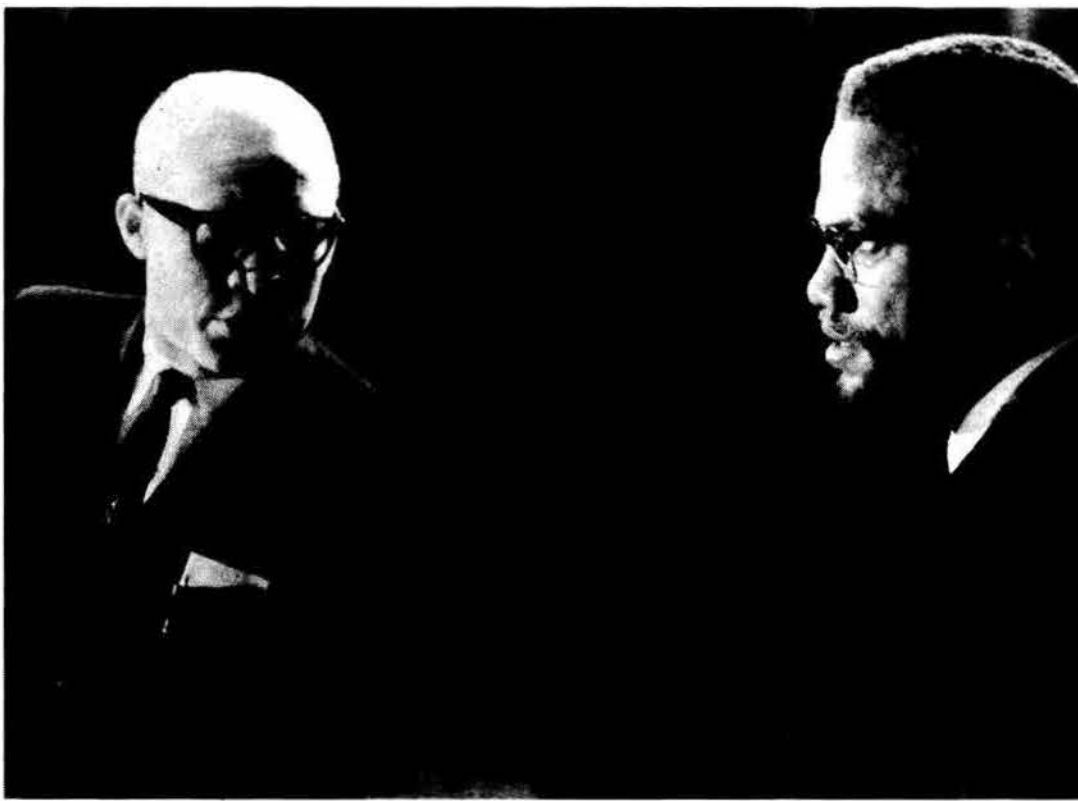
The FBI looked for a way to sabotage this campaign. They noticed that according to New York law, White was formally not old enough to hold the office of governor. The FBI tried to get this fact reported in the media in an attempt to discredit the campaign.

According to the documents, the FBI decided to rely on the *Daily News* to do the job for them, but the New York City CBS television affiliate did it instead....

As the documents show the state legislature soon passed a law altering the election code to require that a candidate be old enough to assume an office in order to run for it....

FBI murder of Fred Hampton

Perhaps the most shocking story concerns the assassination of Fred Hampton and Mark Clark by Chicago police directed by the state's attorney's office in December 1969, in a predawn raid on a Chicago apartment. Hampton, one of the most promising leaders of the Black Panther party—particularly dangerous because of his opposition to violent acts or rhetoric and his success in community organizing—was killed in bed, perhaps drugged. Depositions in a civil suit in Chicago reveal that the chief of Panther security and Hampton's personal bodyguard, William O'Neal, was an FBI infiltrator. O'Neal gave his FBI "contacting



Clifton DeBerry, Socialist Workers candidate for president in 1964, left, with Malcolm X at Militant Labor Forum, Palm Gardens, New York, January 1965. FBI targeted DeBerry as part of SWP Disruption Program. Malcolm X was also target of government spying campaign.

agent," Roy Mitchell, a detailed floor plan of the apartment, which Mitchell turned over to the state's attorney's office shortly before the attack, along with "information"—of dubious veracity—that there were two illegal shotguns in the apartment. For his services, O'Neal was paid over \$10,000 from January 1969 through July 1970, according to Mitchell's affidavit....

O'Neal, incidentally, continued to report to Mitchell after the raid. He was taking part in meetings with the Hampton family and discussions between lawyers and clients, one of many such examples of violation of the lawyer-client relation.

The Starsky Case

Prominent in the ranks of teachers victimized by the FBI is Morris Starsky. In 1970 the FBI encouraged Starsky's dismissal from his job as a professor of philosophy at Arizona State University. The Phoenix office of the FBI sent an anonymous letter slandering him to a faculty committee reviewing his teaching contract.

In a memo dated May 31, 1968, the Phoenix FBI noted that local targets for Cointelpro were "pretty obvious.... It is apparent that New Left organizations and activities in the Phoenix metropolitan area have received their inspiration and leadership almost exclusively from the members of the faculty in the Department of Philosophy at Arizona State University (ASU), chiefly Assistant Professor MORRIS J. STARKSKY."

To that description of himself, Starsky adds that he helped organize the first antiwar teach-in at ASU; he led a campus free-speech fight; he helped lead a successful campaign to win campus recognition for SDS; he participated in campus activities to support striking Tucson sanitation workers and a union organizing drive by Chicano laundry workers; he served as a presidential elector for the Socialist Workers party in 1968; he helped to reestablish the ASU chapter of the American Federation of Teachers; and he was the faculty adviser of the Young Socialist Alliance and the Student Mobilization Committee.

All that provoked quite a furor among right-wing state legislators and university regents. The Faculty Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure (whose members received the FBI's slanderous letters) held a hundred hours of public hearings on whether Starsky was entitled to teach at ASU. Three thousand students and over 250 professors signed petitions supporting Starsky's right to academic freedom.

The committee's members were not duped by the FBI's anonymous slanders, although they expressed surprise five years later when they learned that "A Concerned Alumnus" was really J. Edgar Hoover. The committee voted unani-

mously against dismissing Starsky. But the regents refused to renew his contract and he lost his job in June 1970. Starsky says that "it's sort of like being found innocent and executed anyway." Since ASU he has lost two teaching jobs in California for political reasons....

Targeting a Black candidate

"A review is being conducted of Clifton DeBerry's file to determine if there is anything derogatory in his background which might cause embarrassment to the SWP if publicly exposed."

Those words appear in a secret FBI memorandum dated October 17, 1963. Of the nearly 1,000 pages of Cointelpro files released in response to the SWP suit, more concern Clifton DeBerry than any other single individual. In 1964 DeBerry became the first Black person ever to run for president of the United States, when he was nominated by the SWP....

In the early 1960s a Black nationalist mood was becoming visible in the ghettos of the North, and no one better articulated this new consciousness than Malcolm X.

"We began to make contact with Malcolm when he was still the main spokesman for the Nation of Islam," DeBerry said. "In late 1963 I went on a speaking tour. Malcolm was touring at the same time, and I would go to see him

whenever I could."

It was during a tour stop in Chicago that the FBI arranged to have DeBerry arrested in order to create a scandal they hoped to use to discredit him. Just as DeBerry was about to address a socialist meeting, the Chicago police stormed into the building, hauled him to the station, and booked him on charges of nonsupport of his ex-wife....

The FBI followed up this arrest by devoting enormous attention to trying to get the news media to report both this incident and DeBerry's earlier arrests for "labor trouble...."

'Send troops to South not Vietnam'

"We of the Socialist Workers party say get all the U.S. troops, planes, and warships out of Vietnam—North and South," DeBerry demanded. "If as Johnson claims their purpose is to 'protect democracy,' then send them to Mississippi and let them do some protecting of Black Americans there."

While the FBI was secretly plotting against the Black presidential candidate, he was publicly blasting the FBI. After the disappearance of three civil rights workers slain by racists in Mississippi, DeBerry exposed the bureau's complicity.

Local cops, who were involved in the murders, had held the three in jail before they were killed. "While the three kidnapped youths were in jail in Philadelphia, Mississippi, their co-workers became fearful for their safety, and telephoned the FBI in Jackson. The FBI agent...refused to help and told the rights fighters that he wouldn't have any more dealings with them," DeBerry said.

During this period DeBerry's relationship with Malcolm continued to develop. "After his break with the Nation of Islam, I used to meet with him almost every Saturday when he was in the country. We would have discussions about politics—often comparing notes and checking up on what each other had been hearing about the developing nationalist response among Blacks," DeBerry recalled.

At the suggestion of Malcolm and his collaborator, James Shabazz, DeBerry spoke at a couple of classes at the Muslim Mosque, Inc., which Malcolm headed.

"We were again touring at the same time, and our paths would often crisscross. Whenever I could I would attend his speeches. While he was too busy to make it to mine, he would send someone over," DeBerry remembered. "We had that kind of relationship."

A few months later Malcolm would be assassinated. The FBI's role in that event is a story that is yet to be told.

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By Fred Halstead

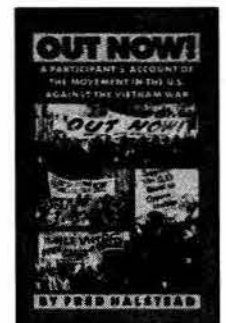
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Cointelpro: The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom

By Nelson Blackstock

The FBI's spying and disruption against socialists and activists in the Black and antiwar movements. Includes FBI documents. \$15.95

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Farmers hold Iowa 'Journey for Justice'

BY NORTON SANDLER

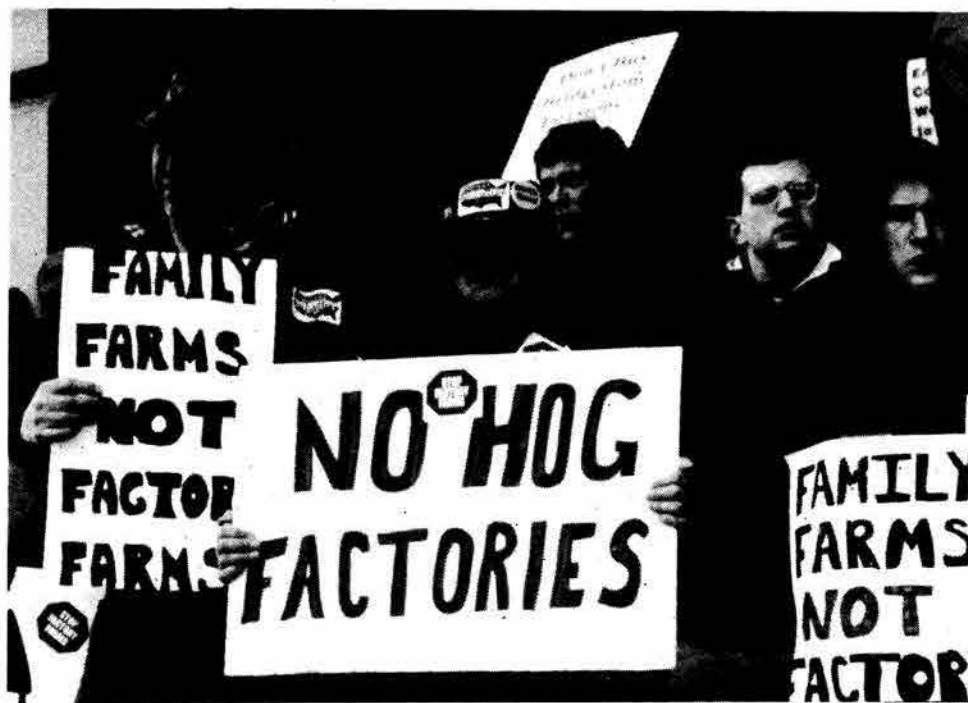
AMES, Iowa — Several days of farm protest activities culminated with a march and rally here April 25. The event coincided with the White House-organized National Rural Summit at Iowa State University in Ames, attended by U.S. president Bill Clinton, Vice President Al Gore, and Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman.

Beginning in Lincoln Township in northern Missouri April 19, farm activists began a "Journey for Justice" that wound up here. The Missouri Rural Crisis Center, PrairieFire Rural Action, Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement, and other farm advocacy groups organized the march.

Missouri farmers have been fighting the environmental dangers posed by Premium Standard Farm's hog waste lagoons. The company raises some 80,000 hogs in recently constructed factory-like confinement buildings and then slaughters the animals in an on-site packing plant.

Some 30 farmers and supporters set out from Lincoln Township just below the Iowa state line, making several stops for protest meetings along the 125-mile trip to Ames. These included a 50-person rally at the farm of Iowa activist Larry Ginter. Some 150 packed into a Story City, Iowa, restaurant for a protest and 50 rallied at the State Capitol in Des Moines.

The spread of these factories is posing economic ruin for many small producers, who have difficulty competing with megafacilities that can house up to 100,000 hogs at a time and send the pigs to market with a nearly uniform weight and fat content. The large packinghouses are encour-



Rally in Iowa of farmers and their supporters to save family farmers

aging the growth of the factory farms as a way of driving down their costs of production.

To get started in farming, or to stay on the land, many farmers are signing contracts with these large enterprises. Farmers under contract take out loans to build the confinement facilities, while the large companies agree to buy the hogs from the farmer. The farmer under contract continues to take all the risk, going deeply in

debt.

After rallying on the Capitol steps in Des Moines April 21, the farmers and their supporters, including striking members of the rubber workers union, crowded into Gov. Terry Branstad's office. The governor was not present at the time but his chief of staff met briefly with the group.

"We are committed to fighting for a family farm system of agriculture that is

economically and environmentally sound, socially just and humane," said Roger Allison, a Missouri farmer and a leader of the protests.

Ginter urged action by trade unions and farmers to fight the packing bosses and other corporations that are assaulting both workers and farmers.

At the Ginter family's farm in Rhodes the next day, farmers and their backers gathered in a barn that was cleared for the protest meeting. "We may not have the money, but we have the people," said Allison. "This fight is about capital and control." He noted that 50 percent of the hog producers in North Carolina were forced out of farming after the spread of hog confinements in that state. Other speakers included farmers Gary Hoske and Carroll Nearmyer; Ginter and his mother Alice Ginter; Bob Schubert from United Auto Workers Local 893 in nearby Marshalltown, Iowa; John Laughlin from the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees; and Cleve Andrew Pulley, a shop steward at the IBP meatpacking plant in Perry, Iowa.

One of the largest meetings took place in Story City. This part of the state has seen the most rapid growth of the confinements and has been a center of protest activities.

The final leg of the "Journey for Justice" kicked-off at 7:00 a.m. in Ames with a brisk march from downtown to the Iowa State campus. The crowd was prevented by the police from getting near the building where the conference was taking place. Farmers were present from Missouri, Iowa, South Dakota, and Minnesota. Several dozen students joined the rally on the campus. A group of Teamsters union members were also present. "This is just the beginning," said Allison. "We are going to build a movement to save the family farmers."

Joanne Murphy and Maurice Peret also contributed to this article.

Caterpillar strikers rally in Peoria

BY STEPHEN BLOODWORTH

PEORIA, Illinois — Four hundred members of United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 974 on strike against Caterpillar Inc., along with fellow strikers from other UAW locals, demonstrated outside the company's corporate headquarters here April 27.

Strikers from Pontiac, Michigan, and Aurora and Decatur, Illinois, joined the action. These lunch-hour rallies have become a weekly event since 9,500 UAW members walked out over unfair labor practices at eight plants in three states last June. Strikers, their families, and supporters picket the front entrance of Caterpillar's headquarters for two hours and then gather to hear updates on strike developments and negotiations. The last round of contract talks broke off March 17 with no resumption date scheduled.

The rally took place one day prior to the official observance of Workers Memorial Day, and commemorated Caterpillar workers who had been killed or seriously injured on the job. UAW Local 974 president Jerry Brown reminded those in attendance that, "It was a strong union that made Caterpillar a safer workplace."

To drive this point home, a health and safety representative from the local union reported on Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) records on Caterpillar's performance during the last 10 months of production using primarily management and temporary employees. OSHA reports indicate that "several hundred" managers and at least as many temporary workers — whose injuries the company does not have to report — were hurt on the job in that period. Injuries included broken ribs, amputated fingers, and a fractured back.

These statistics did not find their way into a recent Caterpillar release on its first quarter earnings for 1995. The heavy equipment maker announced earnings of \$300 million, up 15 percent from the same period in 1994.

UAW officials point to double-digit growth in the construction-equipment market and the cyclical nature of the industry as factors contributing to the high earnings. While the company has reported record profits for five quarters in a row, it lost money in seven out of eight quarters prior to that.

The falling dollar has also boosted exports and given Caterpillar an added edge in its sales war with competitors based in Japan and Germany. This helps explain why the company made more money by

selling less equipment. The union sighted *Stark's Off-Highway Ledger*, an industry production newsletter, which shows production fell 27 percent, particularly at struck Caterpillar assembly plants in East

Peoria, Decatur, and Aurora.

In spite of the latest profit announcement, workers on the picket line say they will continue the fight until the union wins a contract with the company.

Ontario unionists end six-week walkout

BY ROGER ANNIS

MONTREAL — "They didn't walk over us like they thought they would. We're going back to work with our heads up." That's how Ernest Raposso summed up the six-week strike at the MacMillan Bathurst Inc. (MBI) cardboard packaging factory in Rexdale, a suburb of Toronto.

The strike ended April 4. Seven days earlier, the company said it would close the factory if the strike wasn't over by April 2.

One hundred forty-eight members of Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada (CEP) Local 1497 struck February 21 against MBI's demand for a seven-day, 12-hour shift operation. Workers are refusing the schedule in negotiations at three other plants in Ontario organized by the International Woodworkers of America (IWA), and at two CEP-organized plants in Mount Royal and St. Laurent, Quebec. Contracts at all six plants have expired. An independent union at the MBI plant in Guelph, Ontario, accepted the schedule in 1994.

Several weeks after the strike at Rexdale, the company withdrew the demand from the negotiating table at the Mount Royal and St. Laurent plants. Both cities are located in metropolitan Montreal.

"The plant manager was telling his higher-ups that we were pushovers, that we would accept the shift," said one worker at Rexdale. "He was shocked when we went out."

Several votes by the workers against the shift demand and to mandate strike action sent a clear message to the company. Workers walked out after it became clear the company was preparing a lockout.

The union members gave the company another shock six weeks later on April 2 when they voted 70 to 55 to refuse a company ultimatum to end the strike. MBI said it would close the plant that day if workers didn't end the strike.

"The bosses are going to kill us with this 12-hour shift," said striker Gerry Ford while going into the April 2 union meeting. "It's no good for our health."

"I don't care if they close the plant,"

said Linda Hartmann, who has 20 years' seniority. "The company wants to take us back to the days of slavery. We won't stand for it."

There was growing solidarity with the strike from workers at the five other CEP- and IWA-organized plants. Soon after the Rexdale walkout, unionists at the other factories launched a ban on all overtime work. The strike and the overtime ban created a huge backlog of orders. Factory operations of several customers in Toronto were disrupted for lack of boxes.

On March 26, workers at the St. Laurent factory voted 130 to 12 to strike if the company didn't withdraw the shift demand. Several weeks earlier, the union launched a campaign to wear T-shirts at work bearing the slogan, "We Say No To 7 Days." The vast majority of workers took part. Workers at the Mount Royal plant joined the T-shirt wearing campaign the next day.

In the end, however, more solidarity was needed to win the strike. The new contract at Rexdale gives MBI the right to impose the new schedule Jan. 1, 1997.

"We were counting on the other factories to join the strike, especially after the threat to close our plant," explained Local 1497 member Denis Gauthier. "When we heard about the vote in St. Laurent, we thought for sure it would happen. We were very disappointed that it didn't."

Union officials at the other plants actively discouraged the idea of joining the Rexdale strike.

"When it was clear that the other plants wouldn't join the strike," said Ernest Raposso, "we decided we had gone as far as we could by ourselves. That's the only reason we returned to work."

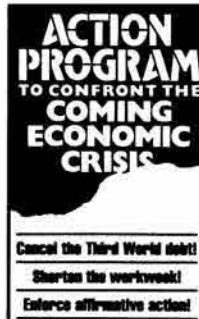
The company's withdrawal of the shift demand at the Quebec factories is seen as a victory by most workers at the Mount Royal plant. Many credit the strike in Rexdale as well as the total opposition to the shift demand by the workers at the St. Laurent plant throughout negotiations.

Roger Annis is a member of CEP Local 841 at the MBI factory in Mount Royal, Quebec. Sedigheh Menach in Toronto also contributed to this article.

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Available at bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Irish activist fights against deportation

BY FRANK FORRESTAL

CHICAGO — Matt Morrison, an ex-Irish Republican Army volunteer now fighting deportation from the United States, spoke about his defense case April 30 before 50 people here at the Irish American Heritage Center. Irish Northern Aid and the Irish American Student Organization sponsored the event.

Morrison has recently spoken before 60 people at Illinois State University in Normal, 25 people at Loyola University in Chicago, and to students at the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee.

For the past 10 years, Morrison has been living in St. Louis. He is married to a U.S. citizen and has two children. Although his marriage makes Morrison eligible to stay in the United States he has been singled out for deportation under the Terrorism Exclusion Act. This piece of legislation was drawn up in 1990 and used against Irish political activist Joe Doherty, who Washington deported in 1992.

Morrison appealed the deportation order, but was denied, and is now fighting to win political asylum in the United States. He told the meeting that the most important aspect of his case is to view it in the broader context of the "Peace Process" and the recently launched Saoirse (Searsha), an international campaign calling for the unconditional release of all Irish political prisoners held in the jails of Britain, Ireland, Europe and the United States. Saoirse is the Irish word for freedom.

Part of fight against British rule

Morrison was born in Derry, Northern Ireland. From an early age, he was swept up in the ongoing resistance to British rule, particularly the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Movement.

In a recent issue of the *Irish People*, Morrison described some of his experiences. "Hundreds of explosions, gun battles, deaths, house searches, and internment without trial, became a 'normal' part of my growing up....

"My house was raided on several occasions...Troops actually took over part of my secondary school so that they could have an observation post from which to watch over 'free Derry.'"

In 1975, Morrison was arrested and framed up on charges of attempted murder of a Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) officer. Morrison spent 10 years behind bars in the "cages" of Long Kesh, also known as Maze prison. In the early 1980s, Long Kesh was a focal point of resistance by republican prisoners, who after being deprived of political status in 1975, refused to don prison uniforms and clad themselves in blankets. The blanket protests led to hunger strikes in 1980-81. Ten republican prisoners died during that protest, including Bobby Sands.

Free all political prisoners

"Freeing all the political prisoners," said Morrison, "is vital to the peace process." Imprisonment of the Irish is a central component of British policy, he said. "They have elevated prisons to the highest level of their policy." This is so because British policy is rooted in the denial of the Irish people's right to national self-determination and sovereignty.

Morrison encouraged participants to actively build the May 17 meeting of Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams. Adams's re-



Militant/Marc Lichtman

June 1990, New York protest demanding political asylum for Joe Doherty. U.S. officials deported Irish activist in February 1992 under Terrorism Exclusion Act.

cent high-level visit to the United States, including meeting with President Bill Clinton, was important, Morrison said. "We now have our foot in the door." However, Morrison noted, to date there had been no change in the status of his case or of other Irish prisoners held in the United States. "I have a low opinion of the State Department," he said. "They have always been anti-Irish and pro-British, to the point

that they are like an extension of the British foreign ministry."

In addition to Adams's tour, a "Rally for Peace in Ireland" is planned in front of the British Consulate in Chicago from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. May 5. The rally is sponsored by Irish Northern Aid and the Irish American Student Organization. There will be a "Bobby Sands Anniversary" celebration May 7, at the Hot House here.

Saoirse demands London free prisoners

BY PAMELA HOLMES

LONDON — Some 150 people attended a social evening organized by Saoirse here April 28. Saoirse campaigns for the release of all Irish political prisoners. An interim demand of the campaign is the repatriation of Irish prisoners held in jails in Britain.

Some 30 Irish republican prisoners are currently held in four prisons in England.

Another seven are in Her Majesty's Prison (HMP) Maghaberry in Northern Ireland, but are only on temporary transfer and could be returned to jails in Britain.

One of the campaign organizers, Peter Middleton, explained that conditions for the prisoners have become worse since the cease-fire in Northern Ireland. Nevertheless, he reported two small victories. One is the permanent transfer of Robert Fryer

from HMP Full Sutton in the north of England to a prison in Northern Ireland. The other was that Feilim O hAdhmaill has finally won the right to speak with family members in Gaelic during visits. Previously, any conversation in Gaelic meant the visit was summarily ended.

Andy Somers, a retired judge and human rights director of the Irish Unity Conference in the United States, was the guest of honor at the event. He spoke of the "humiliation and horrible conditions" the prisoners have to endure in British jails, and described Belmarsh as a place where "every guard seemed to have a very healthy dog but it's a terrible place for human beings." Somers went on to say that the prisoners are held as hostages and are being used as "bargaining chips" by the British government.

Participants were invited to get more involved in the campaign, including a picket of Downing Street, home of Prime Minister John Major, on May 7. The Saoirse campaigners are also distributing symbolic green ribbons to be worn until all the prisoners are released. Saoirse can be contacted in London at P.O. Box 3923, London NW5 1RA.

Pamela Holmes is a member of Transport and General Workers' Union branch 11688 in London.

Campaign demands clemency for Peltier

BY JOHN STUDER

DES MOINES, Iowa — "I know how critical it is that the Clemency Campaign continues and grows," Lisa Faruolo, editor of the *Spirit of Crazy Horse*, the publication of the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee, writes in the March-April issue.

Peltier, a Native American political activist, is a prisoner in the federal penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas. His supporters are campaigning to win his release on executive clemency.

In 1976 Peltier was indicted, along with other members of the American Indian Movement (AIM), on U.S. government charges that he participated in the killing of two FBI agents. The agents had attacked a group of Native Americans camped in Oglala, South Dakota.

The other AIM members were tried in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and acquitted on grounds of self defense. Peltier was tried separately in 1977, after being extradited from Canada on a falsified affidavit from the FBI. His trial was moved to Fargo, North Dakota, and, in a lynch-mob atmosphere, he was convicted. The day after the conviction, Peltier told his supporters "the government lied and we will prove it."

Federal appeals courts have ruled that the government withheld critical evidence from Peltier and that the FBI agents who conducted the investigation engaged in "improper conduct." Peltier was convicted of firing the shots that killed the two agents, even though government lawyers admitted at the appeals hearings that they do not know who fired the shots. Nonetheless, all Peltier's legal appeals have been rejected.

In 1993, the U.S. Parole Commission denied Peltier parole, and told him that he must serve an additional 15 years — until 2008 — before they will consider him again for release.

In November 1993, former U.S. attorney general Ramsey Clark filed a request with President Bill Clinton to grant Peltier

executive clemency.

Since then, hundreds of thousands have signed petitions urging clemency and participated in marches and other activities pressing for Peltier's release. Many have telephoned the White House in support of the clemency drive. The European Parliament passed a resolution in 1994 stating, "Mr. Peltier has exhausted all the appeal procedures under U.S. law and urges presidential clemency or commutation of Mr. Peltier's sentence."

Last June, hundreds gathered in Lafayette Park across from the White House in Washington, D.C., to support the call for his freedom.

The FBI continues to use every means at its disposal to derail Peltier's fight for freedom. On July 15, 1994, the FBI Agents Association and the Society of Former Agents of the FBI ran an ad in the *Washington Post* headlined, "Dear Mr. President: Leonard Peltier murdered two FBI agents. He deserves no clemency." Its publication was timed to coincide with the arrival in Washington of the Walk for Justice, a group led by Native American rights activist Dennis Banks, which had marched across the country to the capitol to advance Peltier's fight.

"We are making waves in Washington, D.C.," Faruolo said. "We've gotten calls by members of Congress for additional information. We have a lobbyist following up with meeting after meeting."

The defense committee, along with Amnesty International, has called a Peltier Weekend in Washington, D.C., June 25-26. This marks the 20th anniversary of the "incident at Oglala," the FBI attack that led to the victimization of Peltier. The two-day protest includes a rally in Lafayette Park June 25 and an educational forum at the Ward Building at American University to discuss how to advance the fight to win clemency for Peltier.

Committee staff member Bill May told *The Militant* that confirmed speakers for the weekend include David Dellinger of

the War Resisters League, a victim of a government frame-up attempt for his opposition to the war in Vietnam, and Suzy Baer, producer of PBS documentary "Warrior — The Life of Leonard Peltier." Robert Redford, producer of the widely known film on Peltier's case *Incident at Oglala*, has tentatively agreed to speak.

The committee urges supporters of justice to write to President Bill Clinton, The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington, D.C. 20500, and urge him to grant clemency to Peltier.

For more information on the 20th anniversary rally and the clemency campaign, contact the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee, P.O. Box 583, Lawrence, Kansas 66044.

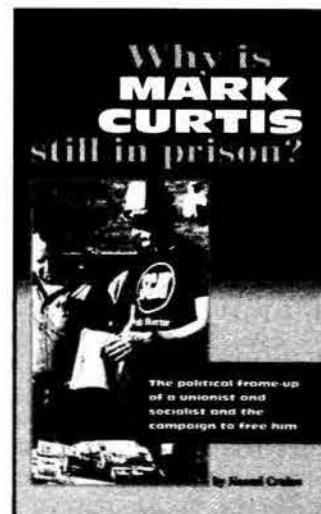
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Why is Mark Curtis Still in Prison?

The Political Frame-Up of a Unionist and Socialist and the Campaign to Free Him
by Naomi Craine

Mark Curtis is a union activist and socialist who was framed up by police on false charges of rape and burglary in March 1988. At the time he was involved in a struggle to defend 17 Mexican and Salvadoran co-workers arrested in an immigration raid at the packinghouse where he worked in Des Moines, Iowa.

This new pamphlet explains what happened to Curtis, and the stakes for workers, farmers, youth, and other democratic-minded people in demanding his release. Pamphlet, \$6



Available at bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Fax (212) 727-0150. Or contact the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, P.O. Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa, 50311. Tel: (515) 246-1695.

U.S.-Iran

Continued from front page

sive evidence," noted the London *Financial Times* in a May 2 editorial titled "Iran sanctions won't work."

Tokyo is particularly reluctant to accede to U.S. embargo demands. Nearly 10 percent of Japan's crude oil imports came from Iran last year. Japanese capitalists also shipped \$641 million worth of goods to Iran during that time. If trade is curtailed Tokyo would have substantial difficulty in obtaining secure oil supplies.

German economics minister Gunter Rexrodt said, "We do not believe that a trade embargo is the appropriate instrument for influencing opinion in Iran." Germany is Iran's largest single trading partner, exporting nearly \$2 billion worth of goods there last year.

The White House is pushing Moscow particularly hard to cancel the sale of two nuclear reactors and other equipment to Iran. The Russian government, seeking to strengthen its hand in Central Asia and hard up for the cash, is not inclined to back down from the \$1 billion deal.

Washington plans to press forward

Even before the announcement of the trade embargo, fierce U.S. pressure had tightened the screws on the Iranian economy.

In March, Clinton forced Conoco Inc. to scrap a \$1 billion deal with Tehran to develop two offshore oil fields in the Persian Gulf. Washington pressured the government of Azerbaijan to exclude Tehran from a \$7.4 billion Caspian Sea oil deal in April. And Tokyo has held up a \$450 million installment on a \$1.4 billion loan to finance a hydroelectric power dam in Iran because of threats from Washington.

One small indication of the obstacles Washington will face in its attempts to isolate Tehran was the elaborate state welcome accorded Iranian president Hashemi Rafsanjani during a visit to India April 16-18.

The Clinton administration's "extremely strong concern" did not prevent the two nations from strengthening business and political ties. "No one told [U.S. treasury secretary Robert Rubin] he would have to stay one limousine behind the state visitor whom India is really out to impress: President Hashemi Rafsanjani of Iran, a country the Clinton Administration calls an 'outlaw nation' that must be economically isolated," the *New York Times* reported.

U.S. companies, mostly through subsidiaries, purchase \$4 billion of oil yearly from Iran, or 30 percent of that country's annual output. In addition to the billions of dollars in oil procurements, U.S. capitalists ship more than \$300 million a year worth of goods to Iran, ranging from frozen poultry to oilfield equipment.

A spokesman for Exxon Corp., one of the largest purchasers of Iranian oil, said, "Should the government change the laws regarding trade with Iran, we will comply." The oil companies contend they will easily find ways to acquire their product.

Tehran Book Fair

Clinton's trade embargo was announced on the eve of the Tehran Book Fair. Hundreds of foreign publishers plan to display and sell books at the event, scheduled for May. Several U.S. publishers are among those who have been planning to attend, including McGraw-Hill, John Wiley & Sons, and Pathfinder Press. It had not been made clear at press time whether publishing would be covered by the embargo.

"We are ascertaining whether, in fact, we will be permitted to exhibit our educational and professional materials at the Tehran Book Fair in light of the Clinton Administration's recent weekend announcement," said Mark Harrop, director of public relations for McGraw-Hill.

"As a publishing house, we look forward to a large book fair in which publishers from all over the world, including the United States, are part of the exchange of books and views," said David Prince, business manager of Pathfinder Press. "Pathfinder has participated in the Tehran Book Fair for the past several years and looks forward to being able to do so this year. We stand opposed to any and all restrictions imposed by the U.S. government that would hinder or limit trade in any way."

-MILITANT LABOR FORUMS-

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20th Anniversary of the Fall of Saigon: How The Victory of Workers and Peasants in Vietnam Changed the Face of U.S. Politics. Fri., May 12, 7:30 p.m. 111 21 St. So. Donation: \$3. Tel: (205) 323-3079.

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

The Struggle for Self-Determination in Ireland. Speakers: Monica Keogh, president, Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians; Joe Harvey, Irish Northern Aid; representatives of the Irish American Unity Coalition and Socialist Workers Party. Sat., May 20, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W. Pico. (1 1/2 blocks west of Vermont). Tel: (213) 380-9460.

FLORIDA

Miami

New Openings in the Irish Freedom Struggle. Speaker Maureen Coletta, Socialist Workers Party, member, International Association of Machinists Local 1126. Sat., May 13, 7:30 p.m. 137 N.E. 54th Street. Donation: \$4. Translation into Spanish and French. Tel: (305) 756-1020.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

Why Boston Needs a Socialist Alternative. Speakers: Maceo Dixon and Valerie Johnson, Socialist Workers candidates for Boston City Council. Sat., May 13, 7:30 p.m. 780 Tremont St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

MINNESOTA

St. Paul

A United Ireland: The Advance of the Irish Freedom Struggle. Sat., May 13, 7:30 p.m. 2490 University Av. (east side of Hwy. 280, on 16A bus line). Donation: \$4. Tel: (612) 644-6325.

PENNSYLVANIA

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Twenty Years After the Fall of Saigon: The U.S. War Against Vietnam and the Movement That Ended It. Sat., May 13, 7 p.m. 1103 E. Carson St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (412) 381-9785.

TEXAS

Houston

The Counterterrorism Bill...A Threat to Democratic Rights. Speakers: Debby Perkey, Regional Director, American Civil Liberties Union; Jasmina Samahi, Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee; Marilyn White, Latin America Committee, Persbytery of the New Covenant; and Aaron Ruby, Socialist Workers Party. Thurs. May 11, 7 p.m. University of Houston University Center, Embassy Room (Central Campus, entrance #1 off Calhoun). Co-Sponsored by the Cuba Friendship Committee at UH. Tel: (713) 644-9066.

UTAH

Salt Lake City

Wilderness Areas, The Spotted Owl, and The Environment. Speakers: Dan Marsh, Earth Jam Productions; Parker Blackman, Pub-

lic Interest Research Group; Tom Price, Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance; Steve Iverson, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., May 12, 7:30 p.m. 147 E. 900 S. Donation: \$3. Tel: (801) 355-1124.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

In the Aftermath of Oklahoma City Bombing: Why Working People Should Oppose Government Attacks on Civil Liberties and the Anti-Arab Campaign. Speaker: Brian Taylor, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., May 12, 7:30 p.m. 1802 Belmont Road, N.W. Donation: \$4. Tel: (202) 387-2185.

BRITAIN

London

New Zealand and the Fight for Maori Land Rights. Speaker: Edward Ripley, New Zealand Communist League. Fri., May 12, 7:30 p.m. 47 The Cut. Donation: £2. Tel: 0171-928 7993.

Manchester

After the Oklahoma Bomb - Attacks on Democratic Rights. Speaker: Hugh Robertson, Communist League. Sat., May 13, 6 p.m. 60, Shudehill. Donation: £2. Tel: 061-839-1766.

CANADA

Vancouver

Aftermath of the Oklahoma Bombing: Canadian and U.S. Governments Move To Curb Democratic Rights. Panel discussion. Fri., May 12, 7:30 p.m. 3967 Main St. Tel: (604) 872-8343.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

From Turkey to Algeria - The Crisis of Capitalist Regimes in the Middle East. Speaker: James Robb, Communist League. Sat., May 13, 7 p.m. La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Road. Donation: \$3. Tel: (9) 379-3075.

Curtis wins right to see pamphlet

Continued from front page

supporters of his fight for freedom," Andrew Haley, president of the East High Human Rights Club in Salt Lake City, Utah, wrote. "I demand that Curtis be able to receive the new pamphlet about his own fight for justice and that the attacks against him end."

Harold Ruggless, president of United Auto Workers Local 270 in Des Moines, faxed the authorities, calling the rejection "another blatant example of your ongoing war against Mark."

"I, for one, take this as a challenge and will increase my efforts on Mark's behalf," Ruggless concluded.

Taking off from the recent victory, supporters of Curtis will be continuing an aggressive campaign to distribute the once-

banned pamphlet widely.

John Cox is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 431 in Des Moines.



Curtis Appeals Denial of Time Off

Since Mark Curtis was sentenced to serve a year in lockup on trumped-up charges of assaulting another inmate last September, prison officials have refused to grant him any time off his lockup term for good behavior.

The classification committee assigned to meet with Curtis each month and review his situation has recommended that more than four months be cut from his lockup sentence. The prison's acting war-

den, Paul Hedgepath, has refused each recommendation.

In April, Curtis appealed these denials. Under prison regulations, the appeal is to the warden — the official who has made the rejections.

Last week, Curtis received a reply from Hedgepath. Instead of rejecting the appeal out of hand, the acting warden wrote: "The Classification Committee will be getting back to you on this."

Curtis will meet with the classification committee the second week of May.

In addition to appealing the decision within the prison, Curtis has written to the Iowa ombudsman, a state official responsible for hearing complaints from inmates, protesting the refusal to grant him any reduction in his sentence.

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Paris: MBE 201, 208 rue de la Convention. Postal code: 75015. Tel: (1) 47-26-58-21.

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Reykjavik: Klapparstíg 26. Mailing address: P. Box 233, 121 Reykjavik. Tel: 552 5502.

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

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

Bet they get it too — The Exxon Valdez, since renamed the SeaRiver Mediterranean, was barred from sailing to Alaska after the huge 1989 oil spill. It's now in overseas shipping and would like



Harry Ring

a federal subsidy to compensate for alleged losses.

Big-hearted Uncle — Congress is considering making several tiny Pacific islands part of the state of Hawaii. One is the John-

ston Atoll, site of the world's biggest chemical weapons incinerator. Visitors are handed a gas mask, a nerve gas antidote, and a syringe to inject the antidote in case of a leak.

An exception to every rule — Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan recently hailed the continuing world deflationary process.

Meanwhile, in Mexico, the price of tortillas jumped 26.6 percent and the government predicted that by year's end inflation would hit 42 percent. Independent forecasters said it would be 60 percent or more.

Swept up the extra parts? — Tampa's University Community Hospital hit the headlines by am-

putating the wrong foot of one patient and killing another by mistakenly removing him from a ventilator. April 13, the feds stripped the hospital of accreditation. A week later they said deficiencies had been cleared up and the hospital could continue receiving millions in health-care money.

And who can trust Congress? — A headline: "Congress wonders if it can trust CIA." It was a *Congressional Quarterly* report on the confirmation of the murders by a CIA hireling in the Guatemalan army. The report also noted: "At the same time the Guatemalan flap [!] has placed a spotlight on Congressional support for the Guatemalan military..."

Fired up — One of the owners of Campanile's, a plush L.A. restaurant, was so outraged at paying \$2.50 a head for lettuce that she banned it from staff meals.

Samples at your cardiologist's office — A one-pound hunk of chocolate shaped like a human heart. Made with, "fresh butter, pure vanilla and gobs of whipping cream." In the gift catalog of the American Medical Association.

The enforcers — OSHA may do little about health and safety on the job. But a Chicago girl, six, learned they do have some rules. When a dentist removed two of her teeth, she wanted them to put under her pillow for the tooth fairy. Nope. OSHA requires they

be put in a container for immediate disposal.

No respect — Prince and Princess Michael of Kent said no when the check-in at a D.C. airport wanted some \$350 for nine extra pieces of luggage on a flight to New York.

Their highnesses argued that with only seven people on a 20-seat plane they should not, and would not, pay extra. A British embassy rep put it on her credit card.

Thought for the week — "If you can't trust the government, who can you trust?" — Robert Friel, a Secret Service official defending a plan to give the feds the key to coded computer technology for banks.

New Zealand battered wife trial stirs controversy

BY JOAN SHIELDS

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand — Gay Oakes, who was sentenced to life imprisonment last September for murdering her husband, Doug Gardner, lost her appeal against the conviction in April.

The Gay Oakes case attracted national media attention as "the body in the garden case" — so-called because Oakes, with the help of several staff members at a local shelter for battered women, buried Gardner's body in her back garden. It was discovered more than a year after his death.

AS I SEE IT

Oakes admitted lacing Gardner's coffee with sleeping pills. There has been considerable controversy about the case.

Oakes's lawyers argued that the trial judge had understated the defense case as it related to battered women's syndrome and the history of violence in the relationship. This had led the jury to reject a finding of self-defense in favor of murder.

Announcing the Court of Appeal's decision April 12, the judge declared, "It hardly needs to be said that a battered woman has no more right to kill or injure than any other person, man or woman, and so the fact that a woman suffers from the syndrome is not in itself a defense; the syndrome in itself is not a justification for the commission of a crime."

About a dozen women picketed the Christchurch High Court April 13 to protest the ruling. A spokesperson described it as a blow against all battered women. "It's saying the law is not prepared to consider or accommodate a battered woman's reality," she said.

During her trial, Oakes described a horrific catalogue of physical abuse by Gardner, spanning the majority of their 11-year relationship. The court also heard that Gardner had sexually assaulted his stepdaughter, the oldest of Oakes's six children.

Defense lawyers argued that Oakes was a victim of "battered women's syndrome" and had therefore acted with diminished responsibility. They also said that she acted in self-defense, fearing for her life.

The prosecution contended that Gard-

ner's death was premeditated murder, pointing to forensic evidence that Gardner had 45-70 sleeping pills in his system—more than could have been slipped into one cup of coffee.

During the trial, Oakes's eldest daughter and the family doctor testified that Oakes was frequently beaten. A police witness said the police had records of this.

The publicity surrounding this case has put a spotlight on the fact that brutality toward women remains an all-too-common occurrence. For the year ended June 1993, the police responded to 19,080 domestic disputes. In 1992, women's refuges around New Zealand provided help to 7,221 women and 8,963 children. New Zealand's population is approximately 3.4 million.

But fewer women are willing to accept this violence today. And growing numbers of working people — both male and female — reject any notion that a man has a "right" to beat his wife or any other woman.

Violence against women is a product of the workings of capitalism. The oppression of women is one of the main tools the employing class uses to keep working people divided and push down wages and working conditions for all. Wife-beating is just one manifestation of women's second-class status under capitalism. The fight for women's equality is intertwined with, and an essential component of, the struggle of the working class internationally to get rid of the capitalist system.

This changed consciousness is a product of the fight for women's equality that has been waged in the last few decades. Most of all, it reflects the growing incorporation of women into the workforce. This gives women new confidence and, most importantly, economic independence to leave men who abuse them.

Supporters of Gay Oakes have rightly pointed to the double standard that still persists in the application of the law in cases where one person kills their spouse. There have been a number of cases in New Zealand in recent years where a man has killed his wife or girlfriend — often with extreme violence — and been convicted only of manslaughter on the grounds that he had been "provoked" by his partner leaving him or becoming in-

involved with another man.

They also point to the way the police and legal system failed to protect Oakes and her children from Gardner's violence.

During a television interview last year following her trial, Oakes said that she had taken out several non-molestation orders against Gardner through the family court. But a protection order isn't much good if the police don't respond, she noted.

"I believe I wouldn't be in the situation I am today if I'd received help when I asked for it," she told the television reporter.

However, some arguments used to defend Oakes are reactionary and do damage to the fight against women's oppression.

Some backers of Oakes imply that her actions should be supported because they sent a warning to men who abuse women. One of the placards at the April 13 picket declared, "I support Lorena Bobbitt." In June 1993, in the United States, Bobbitt severed her husband's penis with a kitchen knife while he was sleeping. She alleged he had repeatedly raped and beat her. Women for Justice for Women, a group set up in the wake of the Oakes trial, is calling for changes in the law to allow a "self-preservation" defense on murder charges.

Doris Church, described in the April 7 *Christchurch Press* as a spokeswoman for victims and a battered women's advocate, has called for widening the definition of "self-defense." Women are physically weaker than men, she says. If the law took that into account, "self-defense" wouldn't just cover actions taken to protect yourself while actually under attack. A "pre-emptive strike" is a legitimate self-defense for women held in life-threatening situations, she argues. Oakes's lawyers ex-

pressed a similar view.

The working class cannot consider killing or mutilating someone as retribution for abuse to be acceptable or sending a positive message. To do so would drag us down to the moral level the bosses try to impose on us every day.

As capitalist society decays, the big-business media, politicians, and other ruling-class spokespeople constantly push toward the coarsening of human relations. They don't want working people to think we can stand on the moral high ground, and fight for solidarity. But it is only through working-class unity and common struggle that we can combat women's oppression and the other horrors that capitalism imposes on us.

It is true that many women remain in violent relationships for long periods, as Oakes did for years, and sometimes women blame themselves for the violence. But it is also true that many women do leave, and demand that their legal rights be upheld. The very real gains that women have made in the fight for equality have come about because women stood up, not as victims, but as fighters.

The entire working class and labor movement have a huge stake in campaigning against every manifestation of women's oppression and the economic and social conditions that give rise to it. We need to insist that the government end its double standard toward men who commit acts of violence against women. And we should insist that the police uphold the legal right of women to claim full protection from violence by their partners at any time.

Joan Shields is a member of the Meat Workers Union in Christchurch.

— 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —

THE MILITANT
Published in the Interest of the Working People
May 15, 1970 Price 10¢

WASHINGTON — At a press conference here today plans were announced for a national day of mourning Friday, May 8, for the four Kent State University student victims. The announcement was made by Carol Lipman, national executive secretary of the Student Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam (SMC), and Charles Palmer, president of the National Student Association.

The slated action had been endorsed by the Washington Federation of Teachers. The national day of mourning was backed this afternoon by a Boston rally of 25,000. Called by the Boston SMC, the rally at the State House was addressed by speakers from the entire antiwar coalition.

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

May 19, 1945

After the conquest of France, the Nazis

imposed a regime of terror on the French people. Thousands of French workers were sent to slave labor in Germany. Hitler hurled vituperative broadsides at the Anglo-American imperialists for daring to challenge his right to dominate France and all of Europe. But for the British and American banks in France, the Nazis had only kind words and more important kind deeds. Each proved helpful to each other.

The well known newspaper columnist Drew Pearson recently disclosed some of the facts. When the American Army swept into Germany, they captured a Dr. H.J. Caesar, the Nazis' Alien Property Custodian who had charge of American banks and alien property which the Germans seized in France. Dr. Caesar was questioned by his captors and furnished, among other things, information showing how American banks collaborated with the Nazi conquerors.

The Chase Bank (J.P. Morgan and Co.) was especially favored and "protected" by the Nazis because "it had been active on behalf of Germany before the war in such matters as the German 'standstill' credit negotiations."

The Nazis were grateful for this aid and furnished the Paris branch of the Chase Bank with profitable business throughout the period of the occupation of France, Dr. Caesar disclosed.

For Further Reading...

Communist Continuity and the Fight for Women's Liberation

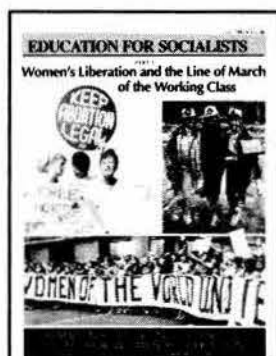
Documents of the Socialist Workers Party 1971-86
Edited with an introduction by Mary-Alice Waters

How did the oppression of women begin? Who benefits? What social forces have the power to end the second-class status of women? This three-part series helps politically equip the generation of women and men joining battles in defense of women's rights today. 3 vols., set. \$30.00

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Celebrate release of the detainees

Continued from front page
rest of the world.

Washington couldn't politically afford to keep holding more than 20,000 people prisoner in a stolen corner of their own country. In negotiating the accord, the U.S. government had to take a small step toward treating Cuba as the sovereign nation that it is.

Washington's policies for more than three decades have been responsible for forcing Cubans who wish to go to the United States to take to the seas under dangerous conditions. Successive U.S. administrations have tightly limited visas to migrate legally, while offering a hero's welcome to those who leave illegally. Just two weeks before the May 2 immigration accord, Washington granted political asylum to Leonel Macías González, who had hijacked a government boat and killed a Cuban naval officer. A 1984 immigration agreement with Havana was never fulfilled, and since last September's agreement to issue 20,000 visas a year to Cubans wishing to emigrate to the United States, only 800 people have actually been allowed in to the country.

The hatred of the U.S. capitalists toward the Cuban revolution remains unabated. They cannot forgive the workers and farmers of Cuba for ending in 1959 the "normal" relations of subservience and exploitation that Washington demands from governments throughout Latin America, Africa, and Asia. That's why nine U.S. presidents over the last 36 years have used any weapon they thought they could get away with — from mercenary forces to a criminal embargo, to travel bans and immigration policy — to try to break the resolve of the Cuban people to maintain their dignity and sovereignty.

All these attempts have failed. A statement issued by the Socialist Workers Party National Committee when Washington stepped up its campaign against the Cuban revolution last summer pointed to the massive demonstrations in early August of up to half a million workers and youth in Cuba in response to a series of hijackings, the killings of a navy lieutenant and a police officer, and other provocations by people encouraged by U.S. government policies. "Above all, revolutionary-

minded workers and youth in Cuba are determined not to return to the dog-eat-dog individualism of capitalism," the statement said. U.S. imperialism wants to crush the example this determination sets for the rest of the world.

But they couldn't even crush the spirits of the thousands who decided to leave Cuba under the economic pressures brought on by the crisis of the world capitalist system and the U.S. embargo. The U.S. government was sitting on a powder keg in Guantánamo; the prisoners wouldn't quietly submit to the indignities and abuse that they were not accustomed to. The internment policy divided Cuban-Americans as well. Many of those who don't support the Cuban revolution were outraged at the glimpse they got of how Washington treats most immigrants as a matter of course.

Working people should oppose Washington having the authority or the right to simply throw refugees attempting to enter the United States back to their country of origin, be it China, Cuba, Haiti, Ireland, Mexico, or anywhere else. For the capitalists, borders are becoming increasingly important in maintaining and protecting their economic interests. At the same time the frontiers are becoming more porous, as workers travel from one country to another looking for jobs or to escape repression. The working class internationally should demand that every migrant be given medical attention, fair and dignified treatment, and their due rights based on humane international standards.

There is a real political change in the United States and elsewhere, with a small but growing layer of young people becoming attracted to the Cuban revolution and the fight to defend it. Demonstrations in Atlanta, Chicago, New York, and San Francisco October 14 against U.S. government policy toward Cuba; the August 1-7 youth festival in Cuba; and speaking tours by Cuban youth leaders around the world all provide important opportunities for workers and youth to throw as much weight as possible into the scales on the side of Cuban working people fighting to defend their sovereignty, their dignity, and their socialist revolution.

End attack on Iran sovereignty

President Bill Clinton's decision to slap a trade embargo on Iran is an outrageous assault on the national sovereignty of that Persian Gulf country. The labor movement should demand that Washington withdraw the trade ban immediately.

Washington can never forgive the workers and peasants of Iran for the revolution they made in 1979 that overthrew the U.S.-backed regime of the Shah and tore down a pillar of imperialist domination in the Middle East. The economic embargo aims to brutalize the toiling majority of that country.

In addition, the U.S. ruling families see Iran's growing economic and political clout in the region as a menace to their interests.

The hypocrisy of the bipartisan gang in Washington on the question of nuclear weapons and "terrorism" can't even be read on the scale. The U.S. government — the only one ever to drop atomic bombs on human beings, and the largest stockpiler of nuclear warheads — is trying to maintain the nuclear status quo in the current talks on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons treaty. Washington prefers that its friends and clients holding the bomb — such as Tel Aviv — be allowed to do the same. At the same time it demands that the rest of the world never build nuclear weapons, it insists on its right to both stockpile and use them.

Surely, the government that waged a war in which 3 million Vietnamese were killed, is the chief backer of the genocidal Guatemalan military, organized the war against the Nicaraguan revolution and the slaughter of tens of thousands of Iraqis, and incinerated scores of men, women, and children at the Branch Davidian com-

plex in Waco, Texas, has no right to pretend it is an opponent of "terrorism."

The concern in the big-business press for how the embargo will affect large U.S. oil companies is largely a smokescreen. The tentacles of Big Oil reach far and wide, and the oil barons are not overly concerned; they know they'll be able to get plenty of crude to satisfy their profit hunger. Who can say where oil that Exxon refines really comes from?

The White House and its applauding counterparts in the legislative branch also have other targets in mind: the U.S. ruling families' rivals in Japan, and the Russian government.

Japan imports about 600,000 barrels of oil per day from Iran. With little oil resources of its own, the island is extremely vulnerable to threats to its supply. Choking off a portion of Tokyo's oil supply is a dagger aimed at the heart of its economy. Washington is sending a warning to its imperialist rivals in Japan.

It is worth recalling that it was Washington's imposition of an oil embargo against Japan prior to World War II that led to the attack on Pearl Harbor.

The White House is also using the opportunity to pounce on the Russian government. Washington is furious over Moscow's repeated refusal to kowtow to U.S. economic and diplomatic dictates. The Yeltsin regime's opposition to the expansion of NATO and its trade initiatives have irritated the U.S. government, which expects Moscow to yield like an obedient dog for a few dollars of loans from the International Monetary Fund.

Hands off Iran!
Cancel the trade embargo!

U.S. get out of Guantánamo!

The new Cuba-U.S. immigration agreement again focuses attention on the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay — Cuban soil occupied against the will of that sovereign nation. Nine U.S. administrations, Democratic and Republican alike, have maintained the military base, which Cuban revolutionary leader Ernesto Che Guevara rightly called a "nest of thieves," as a permanent source of aggression against Cuba. U.S. forces have launched a multitude of provocations from Guantánamo since 1959. The base, bristling with thousands of U.S. troops and weaponry, and surrounded by 60,000 land mines, remains the most dangerous border in the world.

After Washington stole the Guantánamo base from Cuba almost a century ago, it signed an agreement with the local subservient exploiters whom it had installed, giving U.S. forces a claim to this Cuban territory "in perpetuity." The U.S. government still asserts it has a right to "lease" Guantánamo with the same arrogance of an employer arguing the legality of a contract for bonded

servitude.

But the lords of Wall Street have a big problem. In 1959, Cuba for the first time became sovereign. Millions of workers and farmers there made a socialist revolution and established their own government, one that — in contrast to all others in Latin America — defends their independence and social gains. Every year, when the U.S. government cynically sends a "rent check" for the Guantánamo base, the Cuban government promptly stuffs it in a drawer, reminding the empire, and the world, that Cubans are a free people.

That is why the billionaire families in the United States and elsewhere hate the Cuban revolution. They hold onto the Guantánamo military base as part of their unceasing, though unsuccessful, efforts to overthrow the workers and farmers government. One of the demands many will justly be raising at upcoming protests against the U.S. embargo of Cuba is: "Washington, get out of Guantánamo now."

Bosses' negligence kills four in N.J. chemical blast

BY MIKE GALATI

LODI, New Jersey — A thunderous explosion and fire ripped through the Napp Technologies Inc. chemical plant here on the morning of April 21. Four employees were killed — three supervisors and a production worker — and eight were injured, one critically.

Napp Technologies maintained a production facility in the heart of this small town in northern New Jersey. It manufactured preservatives and chemicals for use in pharmaceuticals and cosmetics. The company employed 110 workers.

The explosion destroyed the main production building, sending glass and concrete flying for blocks. Toxic fumes and chemicals spewed from the burning facility, causing state authorities to evacuate scores of people from their homes in the working class community surrounding the plant. The explosion and fire also caused a river of bright green toxic chemicals to flow down a main street and into the Saddle River, killing thousands of fish.

State and local officials initially downplayed the significance of the disaster and defended the company's environmental and safety record.

But an investigation revealed that the chemical explosion occurred because of a mishap in the blending of toxic chemicals that was virtually ignored by the company for nearly 12 hours, allowing a volatile reaction to spin out of control. State investigators also revealed that all workers had been evacuated from the building prior to the explosion, but that the four employees who were killed went back in shortly before the blast. Some in Lodi believe that they were ordered to return in case something ignited. All of them were members of the company's in-plant fire brigade.

Acting Bergen County Prosecutor Charles Buckley immediately announced that no criminal charges would be filed against the company.

Town officials, however, denounced the actions of the company in relation to the explosion. Lodi Fire Chief Sam Garofalo told the press that the fire department was not notified of any problem at the plant until shortly before the explosion, almost twelve hours after company officials knew that a potentially dangerous problem existed. He also revealed that his department had no information on what chemicals were stored in the building where the explosion occurred.

At a press conference Garofalo denounced Napp Technologies' safety record. "They never notified us when there was a fire; they always tried to put it out before they notified us," he said. "They don't belong in our town. They never tell us what they have in the building".

"All they cared about was making money — people were always getting hurt in there," said Wayne Woods, a chemical worker who used to work in the Napp plant. He told the *Militant* that it was common for company foremen to push workers to compromise safety. "They would just keep pressing you to get production up no matter what."

Cubans to be freed

Continued from Page 8

is the sponsor of a bill pending in Congress that would tighten the trade embargo against Cuba, dubbed the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act.

Among other things, the Helms bill would bar countries that buy Cuban sugar from selling it in the United States. That proposal drew criticism from the White House in April. Administration officials said the measure would antagonize other governments and be difficult to enforce. "We want to work with them [the bill's supporters] to make it better," one State Department official told reporters April 28.

Some politicians who voiced support for the agreement took the opportunity to push their anti-immigrant campaigns. Florida governor Lawton Chiles, for instance, hailed the provisions that give Washington the right to send Cubans caught at sea directly back to Cuba, saying his state "couldn't afford...another boatlift."

Sen. Bob Graham, another Florida Democrat, said it "makes it clear that the United States is in control of our borders."

"Cubans who reach the United States through irregular means will be placed in exclusion proceedings and treated as are all illegal migrants from other countries, including giving them the opportunity to apply for asylum," said Reno at the May 2 press conference.

The new accord is a "positive step," said a statement issued by the Antonio Maceo Brigade, an organization of Cuban-Americans who support the Cuban revolution. "We have opposed this cruel and unjustified confinement from the very beginning," the statement said. "We consider the U.S. government to be morally and politically responsible for the illegal entry of any Cuban into U.S. territory, since for 35 years...the United States encouraged illegal departures by Cubans on the island as part of a policy of subversion against Cuba." The Antonio Maceo Brigade called for the Clinton administration to reverse the travel ban, allow families to send money to relatives in Cuba, and end the embargo.

Paperworkers in N.Y. rally against concessions

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

forcements and soon 20 cop cars from other local and New York State police departments rushed to the scene. However, by that time the shift change had occurred and the mass picket was winding down. The cops still managed to arrest three unionists who were on the line.

Clearly encouraged by the large and determined turnout from other unions and by the general public support the strike has received,

ON THE PICKET LINE

other workplaces in your area, including interesting political discussions.

Led by United Paperworkers International Union (UPIU) Local 1478, more than 350 workers from nearly every union in the Glens Falls/Southern Adirondack, New York, area turned out for a spirited mass picket that confronted replacement workers as they left the Encore Paper mill here April 26.

Paperworkers from the nearby Finch-Pruyn mill and from International Paper at Corinth were prominent on the line. Bricklayers, carpenters, millwrights, communication workers, letter carriers, garment workers, and many others came out to support the embattled strikers at Encore.

The situation became tense when two lines of pickets shifted from locations in front of the 125-year-old mill and challenged scabs as they left a production gate at the 7:00 p.m. shift change. Some 100 replacement workers have been in the mill since the beginning of the strike four weeks earlier.

Saratoga County sheriff's deputies issued a call for rein-

forcements and soon 20 cop cars from other local and New York State police departments rushed to the scene. However, by that time the shift change had occurred and the mass picket was winding down. The cops still managed to arrest three unionists who were on the line.

Clearly encouraged by the large and determined turnout from other unions and by the general public support the strike has received,

UPIU Local 1478 president Keith Baker announced that there would be another mass picket May 3, at 5:00 p.m. at Encore's main gate. This latest confrontation is just one in a series of skirmishes that has pitted the owners of Encore Paper Co. against members of UPIU Local 1478 and working people in this upper Hudson Valley city, long a center of paper manufacturing.

The 206-member local walked out April 2, after an overwhelming vote of the membership to reject concessions demanded by Encore. The company is demanding pay cuts in some classifications as high as 30 percent. Under the company's proposal, some workers would see a pay cut from \$11.41 to \$8.00 per hour.

Jeepney drivers strike over fines in Philippines

Passenger jeep operators in Manila belonging to the Movement of Transportation Organizations for Reform went on strike April 27, stranding thousands of commuters. The operators and drivers struck against a plan to increase traffic fines and to protest confiscation of drivers' licenses



Some 20,000 people recently marched in Mexico demanding that thousands of bus drivers who were fired from their jobs be reinstated. The Mexico City government declared the Ruta 100 bus company, which is a major source of public transportation, bankrupt.

for minor violations.

The strikers' organization is demanding the creation of special courts for traffic violators, non-confiscation of drivers' licenses for minor infractions, and representation in Congress. The strikers said the planned increase in fines from \$6 to \$20 is "exorbitant" and promotes corruption by traffic officers.

One of the strike leaders, Medardo Roda, explained that the rates were unjust because an ordinary driver's daily earning is less than half the amount. "Where will he get the money to feed his family if he is forced to pay the excessive fine?" Roda asked.

The strikers paralyzed several major routes in metropolitan Manila, while the Department of

Transportation and Communication said 80 percent of passenger jeeps in the four northern suburbs were off the streets by noon. Passenger jeeps, known as jeepneys, are the main means of transportation in the Philippines.

Meat workers in New Zealand walk out

Two thousand members of the Meat Workers Union began a week-long strike April 26, at 10 plants owned by the Affco meat company. The walkout, which was supported by 78 percent of the workers in a national ballot, follows a two-day strike earlier in the month.

Union spokesperson Roger Middlemass explained that the

union was trying to give all Affco workers uniform protection by restoring conditions "ripped out" of five of the company's plants in the past two years. These include special rates for working overtime and shift allowances.

The strike marks the first significant attempt by meat workers in New Zealand to win back benefits lost in a decade-and-a-half-long employer offensive. Middlemass told the April 27 *New Zealand Herald* that if the company did not meet the workers' demands "then we will just have to have another go."

Contributors to this week's column include: Larry Lane in Albany, New York; and Terry Coggin in Auckland, New Zealand.

LETTERS

Earth Day

Some 125,000 people participated in the 25th anniversary of Earth Day here on April 22. A largely youthful crowd gathered in the Mall in front of the Capitol Building under a huge banner saying, "Earth Day 1995 - Don't Turn Back the Clock."

The main event was organized by a Minneapolis-based group called Concerts for the Environment, a coalition of several national environmental groups. Participants heard speeches and popular musical groups. Many of the speakers talked about how the progress that has been made on environmental issues is being threatened by legislation in Congress.

Prior to the start of the concert, about 3,000 people organized by the National Parks and Conservation Association marched from Malcolm X Park to join the crowd at the mall.

An "Environmental Petition to Newt Gingrich" was circulated at the event. The petition, entitled "An Environmental Bill of Rights and an Earth Day 1995 Action Agenda," calls for protecting the Safe Drinking Water Act, Clean Air Act, the Endangered Species Act, and phasing out nuclear power.

"You can't put economics over environment and the people," said Gill Green, a student at American University, who was one of many circulators. "The contract is ripping social institutions apart and is full of hypocrisy. They talk about family values, but won't help poor women get off welfare."

Thirty students from Rutgers University attended. They belong

to New Jersey Public Interest Action Group. Some of them have also been participating in protests on campus against the racist comments by the university president. Alyson Kennedy
Brian Williams
Washington, D.C.

Protest hits cop brutality

Chanting "No justice-no peace!" over 100 people participated in a spirited march to the Boston Police Department headquarters demanding justice for the Rev. Accelyne Williams who died in a police raid on his apartment one year ago. "The death of Rev. Williams represents a chain of events that this racist society perpetrated on the oppressed," said one marcher, Earl Brown, a student at Northeastern University.

The march was preceded by a rally held in the Union United Methodist Church where activists from the community as well as religious and elected officials demanded a just compensation for the family of the 75-year-old Methodist minister who died of heart failure at the hands of Boston police.

The cops had burst into Williams's Dorchester apartment in a drug raid based on a tip provided by an informant. After breaking down the front door, police chased Williams to his bedroom, breaking down that door as well. They then flipped him on his stomach and handcuffed him as one cop thrust his knee in Williams's back.

At the rally, James Dilday, one of the attorneys for the Williams family, pointed to other victimiza-



tions by the police and described the protest as being "in defense of all those who have been victimized by the Boston Police Department." He said "Williams death was another example of the systematic and callous disregard that the police have for rights, safety, and welfare of the residents of the minority community."

No criminal charges have been brought against any of the police involved in the death of Williams. One officer received a 30-day suspension with pay while two others were reprimanded. John Harris
Boston, Massachusetts

More on Eastern Europe

I would like to hear more on the crisis of leadership in Eastern Europe and the political situation there. Thank you for the only

working-class perspective being presented today.

Adam Wolfe
Evansville, Indiana

Keep me up on Curtis

Please keep me abreast of the Mark Curtis situation. The turning right in this state may keep Mark framed-up for a long time. I can't believe it.

Love the Iowa connection to international (Cuba) stories!

Thanks.
John Roethig
Dubuque, Iowa

Contract with America

I am writing to request a subscription to your weekly newspaper. Unfortunately, I am unable to pay for it — as is the case for most captives.

However, if a subscription is provided it will be circulated among many interested parties here. There is much concern among the brothers here about the so-called Contract with America and I am convinced the *Militant* will be an invaluable aid in my attempts to analyze it and keep informed of the latest developments, among other things. Thank you.

A prisoner
Adrian, Michigan

Control Units

We are all aware of the proliferation of the growing cancer called control units. National focus has been on Pelican Bay; Marion, Illinois; Florence, Colorado; and Westernville, Indiana. But it's important to realize that almost all gulags have control units — usually titled "administration control," "administration segregation," and "local control." All are isolation blocks, labeled as "administrative" for the sake of litigation — but are definitely punitive segregation.

My activism got me placed back in the control unit. Ohio is breeding a hate factory in their control units, and it's time for a change.

A prisoner
Lucasville, Ohio

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged.

Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

Rallies mark Irish hunger strike

BY JOHN SMITH

SHEFFIELD, England — Supporters of the fight for Irish self-determination are planning rallies and public meetings calling for the release of Irish political prisoners the first weekend in May. In Belfast, London, New York, and many other cities and towns, activities will be commemorating one important chapter in the decades-long struggle of the Irish people against British imperialist occupation and division of their country.

May 5 marks the 14th anniversary of the death of Bobby Sands. Sands was a hunger striker in the H-Block of Long Kesh, now Maze Prison, in Northern Ireland, when he died at 27. Between May and August 1981, nine other young Irishmen — Francis Hughes, Raymond McCreech, Patsy O'Hara, Joe McDonnell, Martin Hurson, Kevin Lynch, Kieran Doherty, Tom McElwee, and Micky Devine — fasted to death, culminating five years of resistance to the London government's decision to withdraw political status from Irish republican prisoners.

The hunger strike inspired a mass, all-Ireland protest movement and solidarity actions around the world in support of the prisoners' fight for dignity. The protesters demanded the restoration of their rights to:

- wear civilian clothing;
- refrain from prison work;
- associate freely among themselves;
- receive more mail and more visits;
- and for time off their sentences for good behavior, which was canceled by the authorities because of their protest.

One hundred thousand people attended Sands's funeral in Belfast — the population of Northern Ireland is 1.5 million — and 150,000 joined demonstrations in towns and cities across southern Ireland. Tens of thousands more marched in cities across Europe, North America, and Australia. Political prisoners in El Salvador, South Africa, and elsewhere commemorated the death of this freedom fighter. The Iranian government renamed the



More than 500 people marching in Sydney, Australia, to support H-Block hunger strikers July 11, 1981. Irish fighters have won respect of workers around the world.

street running past the British Embassy in Tehran after him.

Irish republican prisoners had won political status following a hunger strike in 1972. This occurred in the context of ongoing resistance in working-class neighborhoods across Northern Ireland to anti-Catholic discrimination and repression by the British forces that occupied Northern Ireland beginning in 1969.

In 1976, the United Kingdom's Labour Party government announced that Irish republican prisoners convicted after March of that year would henceforth be treated as common criminals. They would lose the

right to wear civilian clothes and refuse prison work, while their rights to receive letters and visits would be sharply curtailed.

London's aim was to criminalize the republican struggle. To this end the authorities set up the non-jury "Diplock" courts, where the identity of accusers is kept secret and where evidence is often disclosed only to the judge. Thousands of republican activists, along with working-class youth victimized simply for being Irish, were convicted on the basis of evidence presented in secret, or confessions beaten out of them in torture sessions. The courts were denounced by the European Court of Human Rights and Amnesty International.

Republican prisoners refused to wear the prison uniforms, so they were left completely naked save for a blanket. By 1980, around 400 young men and women were "on the blanket."

London responds with brutality

The British state responded with a campaign of brutality and provocation carried out by the prison wardens.

Seven prisoners went on the first hunger strike, which lasted 53 days from Oct. 27, 1980, to Dec. 18, 1980. It was halted when the recently elected Conservative government of Margaret Thatcher promised major concessions. As soon as the prisoners ended the hunger strike, the Thatcher government backtracked. It was clear London hoped to demobilize the fast-growing protest movement in solidarity with the protesters.

Prison wardens continued to brutalize and humiliate the prisoners. As a January 1980 statement smuggled out of H-Block concluded, "No matter what the British administration is saying publicly, a major attempt to finally break us, to break our spirit and resolve is now being made. We have come this far and there is no going back."

On March 1, 1981, the hunger strike resumed with Sands the first to refuse food. Five weeks into his hunger strike, Sands was elected as a member of the British Parliament for Fermanagh/South Tyrone, receiving 30,492 votes. The depth of support among working people in the Irish Republic was indicated by the large votes received by republican prisoners standing in the June 1981 elections to the Dail, the Irish parliament. Two were elected.

During the blanket protest, family members of the prisoners took the initiative to set up Relatives Action Committees

(RACs) in communities across the North of Ireland. On Feb. 16, 1978, the Coalisland RAC organized a 10,000-strong demonstration and later that year convened a national conference, out of which emerged the National H-Block/Armagh Committee. (H-Block and Armagh are the names of the men's and women's prisons.) This became a highly effective movement comprising more than 400 local groups and uniting a broad range of anti-imperialist organizations and individuals around the prisoners' demands.

Throughout the period of the hunger strike meetings, marches, and other protest activities dominated politics in Northern Ireland.

Labour-Conservative agreement

During this struggle, the leadership of both the Labour Party and the Trade Union Congress remained solidly behind the Thatcher government. Four days before Sands's death, Labour Party spokesman on Northern Ireland Don Concanon visited the young prisoner to personally inform him of Labour's support for the government on the whole issue.

The Irish fighters won the respect and solidarity of many workers in Britain, however, and sparked real debate on Ireland within the labor movement. The 1981 Labour Party conference was compelled to come out in support of eventual unification of Ireland.

The hunger strike lasted until October 1981, and continued to receive international solidarity, including a 10,000-strong demonstration outside the British Embassy in Paris August 27.

Cuban president Fidel Castro voiced the appreciation of revolutionary fighters around the world for the prisoners' struggle in a September 1981 speech. "In my opinion, Irish patriots are writing one of the most heroic chapters in human history," Castro said. "They have earned the respect and admiration of the world, and likewise they deserve its support. Ten of them have already died in the most moving gesture of sacrifice, selflessness, and courage one could ever imagine. Humanity should feel ashamed that this terrible crime is committed before its very eyes.... It is high time for the world community to put an end to this repulsive atrocity through denunciation and pressure!"

The same can be said today, as another generation demands "Free all the political prisoners," and "Self-determination for Ireland."

New Zealand Maoris occupy land in coal-mining district

BY JAMES ROBB

HUNTLY, New Zealand — Laid-off coal miners are among 150 Maoris and supporters who began a land occupation April 26 in this coal mining town south of Auckland. The block of land sits atop a hill overlooking the town, in full view of the mine entrance with its coal conveyor leading to a power station.

Protesters told *Militant* reporters who visited the occupation April 29 that the land is part of 1.2 million acres confiscated by the government 132 years ago from the Tainui tribe. It is now owned by Coalcorp, a private coal company that was previously state-owned. Most coal miners in New Zealand lost their jobs when the government-run coal industry was transformed into a state-owned corporation in 1987, prior to its privatization.

Those occupying the land are demanding its return to Ngati Whawhakia, the local Maori sub-tribe. The claim includes coal and mineral rights.

Robert Tukiri, chairman of Ngati Whawhakia Trust and spokesperson for the occupation said, "We have got our backs to the wall. There is a housing shortage. We need to have houses."

Tukiri opposes a NZ\$170 million (NZ\$1=US\$0.67) deal between the government and the Tainui Maori Trust Board due to be signed May 22 as final settlement for the government's land seizures last century. The agreement will turn over 86,000 acres of state-owned land to the trust board and NZ\$65 million for further purchases of private land.

"The Tainui Maori Trust Board stands to become the biggest landlord around, while 80 percent of our tribe rents their homes," Tukiri commented.

Participants in the occupation gave examples of recent rent increases faced by tenants in houses owned by Housing New Zealand, a state-owned corporation. Previously, state houses were available at low-cost rentals. Over recent years, rents have been progressively jacked up to "market rates," preparing the way for Housing New Zealand to be privatized.

The Maori land occupation in Huntly is one of more than half a dozen in the North Island of New Zealand since Maoris and their supporters occupied Moutoa Gardens in Wanganui February 28.

In Wanganui, 500 people took part in a march organized by supporters of the right-wing One New Zealand Foundation April 25 to oppose the Maori land occupation. It was held to coincide with Anzac Day ceremonies, a national holiday in New Zealand and Australia to commemorate war dead.

The marchers, overwhelmingly white, carried New Zealand flags and sang the national anthem, "God Defend New Zealand."

In Auckland May 1, a delegation of Maori land protesters from Wanganui led a trade union-sponsored march of several hundred through the city to mark May Day, international workers' day.

James Robb is a member of the Meat Workers Union in Auckland.

U.S. tour by Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams

May 9, Maine

May 10, New York

May 11-13, California

May 15, Kansas City

May 16, Cleveland

May 17, Chicago

May 19, Pennsylvania

May 20-21, Florida

May 22-25, Washington, D.C.

For more information call the

Friends of Sinn Fein at

(212) 290-2353.