

# THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 59/NO. 33 SEPTEMBER 11, 1995

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## NATO bombing widens conflict in the Balkans

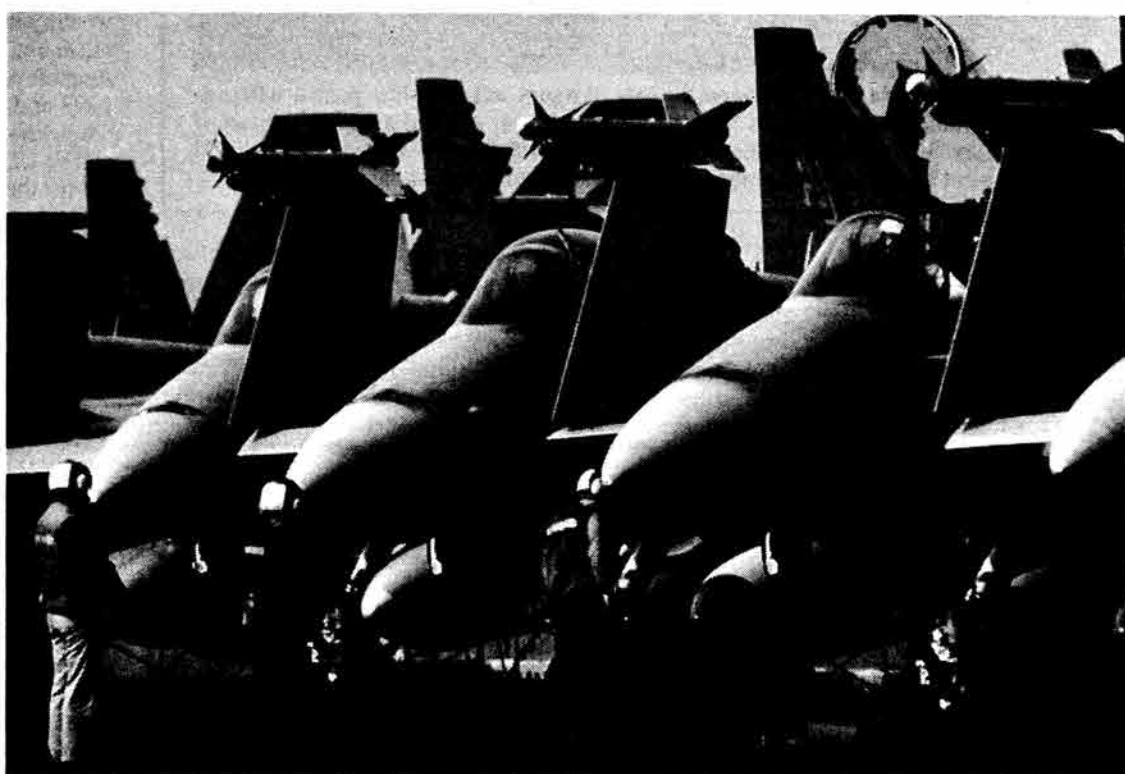
### Washington seeks to impose partition of Bosnia

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

Some 60 combat aircraft, 48 of them from the United States, launched widespread bombing raids against positions held by Serb troops loyal to Belgrade around Sarajevo and elsewhere in Bosnia August 29. The NATO air strikes, spearheaded by Washington, deepen military intervention by the imperialist powers in the former Yugoslav republic, escalate the bloody war, and threaten a broader Balkan conflict.

The military action began the day after Serb gunners shelled a crowded market in central Sarajevo, killing 37 people and wounding 80 others. U.S. officials claim the NATO bombing campaign is in retaliation for the murderous assault on civilians in the Bosnian capital and is designed to protect Bosnians from continued Serb aggression. It is clear, however, that Washington has latched onto the marketplace slaughter as a pretext to use military might to impose the partition of Bosnia and widen its influence in the region.

U.S., French, and other aircraft flew more than 200 sorties the first day of their attacks, in the largest bombing in Europe



U.S. jet fighters on the aircraft carrier *USS Theodore Roosevelt* off the coast of Bosnia

since the end of World War II. The planes took off from NATO bases in Italy and from the aircraft carrier *USS Theodore Roosevelt* steaming in the Adriatic Sea just off the Bosnian coast. Bombs hit the Bosnian Serb army barracks in Pale, east of Sarajevo, and a thick plume of smoke

hung over the town. Large fires burned in Vogosca, a Serb-held suburb of Sarajevo, and Lukavica, south of the Bosnian capital.

British, French, and Dutch artillery recently installed on Mt. Igman near Sarajevo.

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## Workers back news strikers in Detroit

BY JOHN SARGE

STERLING HEIGHTS, Michigan — Two hundred unionists — auto workers, steelworkers, teachers, and others — joined the picket line in front of the Detroit Newspapers printing plant here August 26. They turned out to show their solidarity with the 2,500 striking newspaper workers at Detroit's two daily papers, the *News* and *Free Press*, and to protest the attack by this Detroit suburb's police force on the picket line a week earlier.

Police in riot gear attacked 150 strikers on the line August 19, arresting four and breaking one striker's arm. It was the second police assault on the striking newspaper workers here. The cops also waded into the picket line July 13, the first night of the strike, arresting seven.

Besides the usual picket signs from the six striking local unions, some protesters made signs with pictures of the Sterling Heights cops beating and kicking workers with slogans like "Jack Severance gets his kicks." Severance, a local off-duty cop, had joined in the assault wearing shorts.

Many workers on the line were in

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## Tens of thousands travel to China for largest-ever forum on women's rights

BY LAURA GARZA  
AND MAGGIE TROWE

BEIJING — Clapping and cheering breaks out periodically among the crowd of women who are milling about the Beijing Workers Center, as new groups arrive for the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) Forum on Women in Huairou, about 35 miles from here. The forum runs from August 30-September 8.

"Where are you from?" people ask each other as they find common languages to communicate in and exchange looks at the names and organizations listed on their badges. As this *Militant* reporting team arrives on the scene there is already a group from Japan, a busload of women from the United States who were on tour in other parts of China, and women from France, several African countries, and elsewhere.

Most are middle-aged, but some young women have made their way to the conference. The Chinese volunteers and workers greeting guests and staffing registration tables are overwhelmingly young.

The NGO Forum is being held in conjunction with the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, which takes place September 4-15 in Beijing. Official government delegations are scheduled to participate along with observers from the NGOs. The two gatherings are expected to be the largest ever UN-sponsored conferences, with tens of thousands of women traveling to China to take



Delegates from India chant, "Women's rights" upon their arrival for UN conference.

part in discussions on the fight for women's rights.

Christiane Gaspard of the Center for Information on Women and the family in Guadeloupe is among those who have arrived. "Many women in Guadeloupe are unemployed single mothers," she said.

"We are interested in the fight against unemployment. The unemployment rate has gone from 35 percent 10 years ago to 55 percent today."

Catherine Muuthali, from Malawi, said she is concerned with "the rights of the

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## Iowa parole board will hear Curtis supporters

BY NORTON SANDLER

DES MOINES, Iowa — On September 7 officials of the Iowa State Board of Parole will meet with Mark Curtis's attorney William Kutmus and several supporters of the imprisoned union and political activist. Curtis's backers will urge the board to grant Curtis a 1995 hearing and release him on parole.

Supporters planning to attend the meeting in addition to Kutmus are farm activist Larry Ginter; Frankie Travis, a unionist who has been locked out at A.E. Staley in Decatur, Illinois, for the last two years; Jake Edwards, a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers union in Cherokee, Iowa; Max Exner, a retired Iowa State University professor; longtime defense committee activists Hazel Zimmerman, John Studer, and Julia Terrell; Curtis's wife, Kate Kaku; and Harold Ruggless, president of United Auto Workers Local 270 in Des Moines.

Curtis was framed up on rape and burglary charges in 1988 while he was involved in a struggle to defend 17 Latino co-workers who were dragged out of a meatpacking plant in Des Moines in handcuffs during an immigration raid.

Prisoners don't always get a hearing

In 1993 the Iowa legislature gave the parole board the authority to use its own discretion on whether or not to grant inmates a parole hearing. Before that law was enacted, the board met annually with each inmate. Curtis was denied hearings in 1993 and 1994. He has served seven

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Cuba Lives! reportback meetings get under way — page 6-7





## Strike looms at VW in Germany

Union officials in Germany walked out of negotiations August 22 and threatened "warning strikes" against Volkswagen over what the bosses call "working time flexibility." According to the London *Financial Times*, the employer is seeking to turn Saturday into a normal working day and end overtime pay on Saturday and other agreed periods. Volkswagen wants to force workers to put in up to 48 hours a week, depending on production needs.

Union leaders say the employers will try to end overtime pay for Sundays and night work next if they get these concessions. "It is not our idea that employees should be available for work seven days a week," said Walter Rister, vice president of the metalworkers union, IG Metall.

## Paris: more deportations ahead

French interior minister Jean-Louis Debre declared August 23 that the government will jack up deportations of undocumented workers and could expel up to 20,000 each year. The announcement came after a border cop shot and killed an 8-year-old boy August 20. The child was in a convoy of Bosnian refugees.

Some 43 people from Zaire and 51 Romanians were deported on charter flights in July as anti-immigrant attacks from the government continue. The fascist National Front, which won 15 percent of the vote during presidential elections in the spring, pledged to deport 3 million immigrant workers as part of its campaign.

## Gov't tied to Spain death squad

Spanish prime minister Felipe González knew about death squads that killed 27 people allegedly connected with the Basque separatist movement in the 1980s. This accusation was made by Ricardo García Damborenea, former general secretary of González's Socialist Party in the Basque region. He and González discussed strategy of the groups "not once, but several times," said García Damborenea, who himself admitted to involvement in a 1983 kidnapping by the death squads.

The judge in charge of investigating the death squads termed the charge "credible." Media reports say that González, who denied the accusation, had decided he



At least 11 people were injured in late August after 3,400 police officers attacked 2,000 street vendors who attempted to set up stalls in the center of Mexico City. Vendors were allowed at the site until 1993. Some 500,000 people in the capital have lost jobs since the devaluation of the peso last December.

will not seek reelection.

## Russian army demands pay

Moscow's austerity budget, imposed in an agreement with the International Monetary Fund last spring, has resulted in pay delays for workers, troops and pensioners. Russian Maj. Gen. Alexander Artemov said the army had unpaid bills of more than \$160 million and had received only enough money to pay for soldiers' breakfasts. "A hungry army is no army at all," he told the Russian daily *Trud*.

Meanwhile, trade union leaders in the province of Sakhalin said August 23 that coal miners would strike if back wages are not paid within the next 10 days. The miners say they have not been paid since April. The head of the national pension fund said pensions payments are delayed six weeks because the government's debt to the pension fund exceeds \$813 million.

## Banking crisis in Russia

Russia's central bank pumped \$360 million into the currency market August

24-25 to avert a severe banking crisis, according to acting central bank chairwoman Tatyana Paramonova. Several of Russia's 3,000 banks stopped lending to one another, following media reports that some fairly large banks may be on the verge of collapse.

Paramonova pointed out that nearly 100 mostly small banks were on the edge of bankruptcy. Interest rates offered by larger banks shot up to as much as 500 percent, from 120 percent earlier in the week. While Paramonova and first deputy prime minister Anatoly Chubais tried to downplay the banking crisis, Denis Kisiliev, head of the investment company North-East Alliance, remarked, "We already have a banking crisis — the interbank market collapsed."

## Auto sales slump in Mexico

Mexico's vehicle market has been devastated by the country's financial crisis, according to the Mexican Auto Dealers Association. Overall sales through July were down 61 percent from a year ago and the 11,991 cars and trucks sold in July alone dropped 75 percent from the 47,998 vehicles sold in July last year. Eighteen Mexican Chrysler dealers traveled to Detroit to demand a meeting with the company's chief executive officer, Robert Eaton. The dealers, who have been sitting in the lobby of the company headquarters, complained about being forced to pay the costs of financing their unsold vehicles.

## Cyanide spilled in Guyana rivers

Omai Gold Mines Ltd. said more than 800 million gallons of cyanide-laced water gushed into two major rivers when a retaining wall broke August 20. It was the second spill in three months at the mine, located in Guyana's jungle. The company estimated up to 2,000 pounds of the

deadly poison went into the Omai River, a tributary of the Essequibo, the largest river in Guyana.

Guyana president Cheddi Jagan declared the area an environmental disaster and asked for international aid. Rupert Roopnarine, opposition Working People's Alliance member of parliament, called for an investigation with "a view to prosecutions" and for "closure of this ill-conceived fiasco." The gold mine, which employs about 900 workers, is jointly owned by U.S. and Canadian-based companies. The Guyana government holds a 5 percent stake in the enterprise.

## Thug cop sentenced in Haiti

Gerard Gustave, former member of the Haitian paramilitary group FRAPH, was given a life sentence August 25 for his part in the murder of Antoine Izmerly. The wealthy businessman and campaign fundraiser for Haitian president Jean-Bertrand Aristide was dragged out of a church in 1993 and shot in the head by paramilitary thugs known as attaches.

The CIA-backed FRAPH was responsible for the slaughter of 4,000 supporters of Aristide during the military regime that ruled from September 1991 to October 1994. FRAPH founder Emmanuel Constant attended deportation hearings August 25 in Baltimore. Constant fled to the United States in December to avoid murder charges.

## Job cuts hit Blacks hardest

The U.S. labor department reported that between January and July, 144,000 government jobs and 142,000 jobs in the service sector held by Blacks were eliminated. The unemployment rate for Blacks increased to 11.1 percent in July, while the unemployment rate for whites stayed at 4.8 percent during the same period.

Edmund Phelps, professor of economics at Columbia University, asserts that it wouldn't be unusual to see the unemployment rate for Black workers increase twice as fast as the rate for whites during an economic downturn.

## Chain gang breaking rocks

The Limestone Correctional Facility in Alabama will shackle together 160 inmates in leg irons to break limestone with sledgehammers, according to prison commissioner Ron Jones. Armed guards will supervise the prisoners, who will wear white uniforms with the words "Chain Gang" inscribed on them. Chain gangs were reintroduced in Alabama in May after being abolished in the 1960's during the struggle of Blacks to defeat the Jim Crow system of segregation in the South.

Some inmates have filed lawsuits against Jones and Alabama Gov. Fob James, saying the chain gangs violate their civil rights and the leg irons make them feel like animals. The prisoners are also concerned about having to break rocks in temperatures that had climbed up to 100 degrees for six consecutive days.

— MAURICE WILLIAMS

## THE MILITANT

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## The Militant

Vol. 59/No. 33

Closing news date: August 31, 1995

Editor: STEVE CLARK

Business Manager: NAOMI CRAINE

Editorial Staff: Naomi Craine, Hilda Cuzco, Laura Garza, Martin Koppel, Paul Mailhot, and Maurice Williams.

Published weekly except for one week in December and three weeks in July by the Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Telephone: (212) 243-6392; Fax (212) 924-6040.

The Militant can be reached via CompuServe at: 73311.2720 or via Peacenet at: themilitant Internet: 73311.2720@compuserve.com or: themilitant@igc.apc.org

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

Second-class postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

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# Washington steps up threats against Iraq

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

The U.S. government stepped up military pressure on Iraq August 22, sending 1,000 army troops to Kuwait for military exercises. Originally scheduled for October, the troop deployment was moved up and will reach 1,400. In addition the Pentagon has sent 13 ships with materiel, including tanks, trucks, and ammunition, to equip up to 22,000 soldiers. About 20,000 soldiers, 19 warships, and 200 aircraft are already in the Persian Gulf region.

The U.S. troops will join with Kuwaiti forces for three weeks of live-fire training in the desert. Conducted twice annually, the exercises are being staged now as a warning to Baghdad. Meanwhile, 2,000 U.S. Marines participated in a two-week training exercise that began August 14 with Jordanian military forces in the Red Sea near Aqaba.

## Effort to topple regime fizzles

For a brief moment the U.S. imperialists thought they had a "unique opportunity" to try to bring down Iraqi president Saddam Hussein, when top military aides fled to Jordan August 8. The defectors included Lieut. Gen. Hussein Kamel, his brother Col. Saddam Kamel, and their wives, who are both daughters of Saddam Hussein. Jordanian officials say a number of other senior Iraqi army officers also came with the group.

"We're trying to speed the downfall of Saddam Hussein," said Phebe Marr, an official at the National Defense University, acknowledging Washington's objective.

Washington's hopes for toppling the Hussein government in the immediate future receded rapidly. Having to back off from the earlier pretext of "some unusual deployments of Iraqi military forces," U.S. defense secretary William Perry admitted to the *Washington Post*, there was "nothing that leads us to believe that any invasion is under way or planned."

The Clinton administration sought to portray Hussein Kamel as an alternative to Saddam Hussein and gave public assurances of support to Jordan's King Hussein for granting political asylum to the defectors. "It should be clear that the United States considers Jordan our ally and entitled to our protection if their security is threatened as a result of this incident," Clinton declared at a White House news conference August 10.

Kamel announced at an August 12 press conference in Amman, "We will work inside Iraq and in the whole Arab world to topple the regime of Saddam." Kamel, however, is considered as much a butcher as Saddam Hussein by many Iraqis. He was one of the main architects of the operations to crush the Kurdish people's fight for self-determination in northern Iraq. Kamel also led brutal campaigns against Shiites in southern Iraq in 1991, after the U.S. slaughter of Iraqis in the Gulf War.

## U.S. embargo increases misery in Iraq

Washington's campaign to isolate the regime in Baghdad is seen "as throwing its weight around the Middle East to the detriment of Arab interests," according to



Devastation of U.S. bombing along road from Kuwait to Basra, Iraq, against those trying to flee at end of Gulf War in 1991. 20,000 U.S. troops remain in the region.

the *New York Times*. The United Nations Children's Fund reported last year that, as a result of the embargo, 3.3 million Iraqis were at risk of malnutrition and disease, including 625,000 infants and children under five.

U.S. diplomats have pressured the regime in Jordan to stop buying Iraqi oil, which provides Baghdad with hard currency. Some 75,000 barrels of oil a day are shipped to Jordan at reduced prices in repayment for debts, an arrangement authorized by UN officials. Jordanian merchants are owed almost \$1 billion in unpaid bills from Baghdad.

Reacting to these pressures, King Hussein asserted that he would not consider closing the country's borders with Iraq, saying it would cut off essential supplies

of food and medicine to the Iraqi people. "As far as closing the borders with Iraq, this is unthinkable," he declared in a nationally televised speech on August 23.

The rulers in Saudi Arabia have also expressed their hesitation about moves to topple the Saddam Hussein regime. At the same time they are not anxious for the anti-Iraq embargo to be lifted. Saudi oil barons are raking in handsome profits from Iraq's share of the world oil market, raising their output to eight million barrels a day. The Iraqi regime exported three million barrels of crude oil a day before 1991. "Nobody is interested right now in any serious change in Iraq," a senior Saudi official told the *Times*. "It means we will have to sell less oil or sell it at lower prices."

# NATO bombing widens war in former Yugoslavia

Continued from front page

jevo joined the assault, firing at least 600 rounds.

NATO and UN officials said their attacks were limited to military targets, but Bosnian Serb officials claimed there were civilian casualties.

On August 30, a French Mirage jet fighter was shot down near Pale. Its two crew members parachuted from the burning plane. The pilots' fate was unknown at press time. Five Spaniards — two military observers, a diplomat, a driver, and an interpreter who were monitors for the European Union — were killed near Sarajevo, the government of Spain announced. Bosnian Serb radio said they died in the air attacks, but other media reports claimed they may have been killed in retaliation by forces loyal to chauvinist Bosnian Serb leaders Radovan Karadzic and Gen. Ratko Mladic.

Lt. Gen. Bernard Janvier, the UN commander in the former Yugoslavia, told Mladic that the NATO air strikes will continue until his forces withdraw heavy weapons from around Sarajevo and other so-called safe areas in Bosnia and accept a cease-fire.

But Mladic told Bosnian Serb television he rejected the demand that heavy weapons be withdrawn. Some shelling of Sarajevo by Mladic's troops continued during the initial NATO air strikes.

Karadzic, the most well-known leader of the Bosnian Serbs allied with Belgrade, also sounded a defiant tone, accusing NATO of declaring war. "This is a precedent which could jeopardize world peace and trigger the Third World War," he said, according to Associated Press.

The Bosnian government, headed by president Alija Izetbegovic, on the other hand, hailed the bombing raids as the "beginning of peace."

## Clinton-Dole: one voice

The U.S. government and the big-business media sounded a unified voice in support of the decision by president Bill Clinton to order the air strikes. Robert Dole, the Senate majority leader who is the Republican front-runner for the presidential nomination in next year's election, has recently criticized the administration's Bosnia policy. This time, however, Dole wholeheartedly applauded the military action. "This long overdue demonstration of resolve could signal an important shift in

the war in Bosnia," he said.

"It was about time NATO got serious with the Serbs, who have spent years making the UN and NATO look weak and foolish," said an editorial in the August 31 *Wall Street Journal*.

Other big-business newspapers sounded alarm bells at the same time as they joined in supporting Clinton's move. "Yesterday's Western military intervention in the Balkan war may lead to wider fighting and Bosnian Serb reprisals," wrote the editors of the *New York Times*, stating nonetheless that "it was a risk worth taking."

"It is conceivable that a show of U.S. support for the Bosnian government will provoke Serbia, and possibly Croatia, as well, to intervene in an attempt to crush their neighbor," warned the *Financial Times* of London, whose editors urged even firmer action by Washington.

British prime minister John Major also rallied behind the U.S. action. "The UN and NATO commanders have taken the right action and have my full support," he said.

Russian president Boris Yeltsin, whose government has consistently backed Belgrade, denounced the NATO assault, calling it a "cruel bombardment" and urging a rapid UN Security Council meeting. Russia is the only country that has maintained 450 troops, as part of the UN forces in Bosnia, in territory occupied by Karadzic's forces. The UN removed all other troops from vulnerable positions after Serbian troops took hundreds of UN soldiers as hostages in May, following earlier NATO air strikes.

The regime of Slobodan Milosevic in the republic of Serbia is the main culprit in the drive to carve up Bosnia's territory and resources and trample on the Bosnian people's right to self-determination. Milosevic is attempting to assert himself as the main spokesperson for Bosnian Serbs and broker a deal with the imperialist powers.

Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke, the chief U.S. negotiator, met twice with Milosevic in Belgrade as the NATO raids were under way. Following these talks, the Serbian president announced he would now make final decisions for the Bosnian Serbs in the talks. Milosevic spoke favorably of the U.S.-proposed "peace plan," which would give the Belgrade-backed forces control of 49 percent of Bosnian territory and 51 per-

cent to what is projected as a Muslim-Croat federation. "It creates a genuine perspective for peace, and is a good design of a political solution to the crisis," he said. The self-declared Bosnian Serb parliament, meeting in Pale August 29, also endorsed the U.S. proposal as a starting point in negotiations.

## Objective of NATO bombings

An article in the August 31 *New York Times* pointed to the real aim of the NATO air strikes.

"The true objective of the ongoing NATO assault clearly went further than an attempt to silence the Serbian guns," it stated. "It is a big stick wielded to press weakened Serbian leaders to accept a peace deal."

Washington is seeking to bolster its leverage in the former Yugoslavia, using its recent closer relations with the Croatian regime of Franjo Tudjman based in Zagreb. Tudjman's army dealt a major military blow to the Belgrade-backed forces by routing Serbs from the Krajina region in Croatia in early August. Washington and Bonn gave the green light to Zagreb to launch that offensive. The U.S. govern-

ment is now taking advantage of its support for Zagreb to push through the partition of Bosnia and increase its influence on the different regimes dominated by would-be capitalists in the former republics of the Yugoslav workers state.

Both Belgrade and Zagreb are vying for control of mineral resources, land, factories, and other infrastructure in Bosnia. Their campaigns for "ethnic cleansing," with Milosevic and his Bosnian allies in the lead, are nothing but a crude justification and cover toward this goal. And Washington is intervening to cut a deal in order to expand its military and political influence to the detriment of Bonn, Paris, London, and other imperialist rivals.

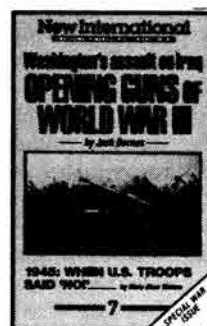
"It is the Bosnians, however, who may have the most to lose in the American initiative," says Warren Zimmerman, a former U.S. ambassador to Yugoslavia, in an article to appear in the September 21 *New York Review of Books*. Zagreb still wants Eastern Slavonia — a piece of Croatia occupied by Belgrade's army — back, as well as parts of Bosnia, Zimmerman says, while troops loyal to Karadzic and Milosevic aim to hold onto territory they have seized.

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# Youth discuss atomic bombings and fight against nuke testing

This column is written and edited by the Young Socialists, an international organization of young workers, students, and other youth fighting for socialism. For more information or to join, write: Young Socialists, P.O. Box 2396, New York, NY 10009. Tel: (212) 475-6482. Fax: (212) 388-1659.

BY JEANNE TUOMEY

HIROSHIMA, Japan — Youth from France, Germany, Japan, Russia, and the United States participated in anti-nuclear conferences here to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. They discussed what youth around the world can do to fight nuclear testing.

"When I was 13 or 14, I saw a film on the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki," said Ulrike Dammers, 23, of Duisburg, Germany. "My interest grew and I read books and started to exchange letters with a Nagasaki hibakusha (survivor)."

"Just reading of his struggles convinced me to start a networking organization called Folded Cranes-Messengers of Peace," Dammers explained. "We help to exchange letters of hibakusha and peace organizations with youth and other organizations around the world." Dammers organized hibakusha to tour German schools and organizations in 1991. The group also traveled to Poland to visit Auschwitz, the infamous Nazi concentration camp of World War II.

Anthony Lecshenko, 19, a Russian delegate representing the Union of Nuclear Test Victims — Altai Region said in an interview that he became active in the anti-nuclear fight in response to the Soviet government carrying out atmospheric tests.

"Last year I attended the World Conference in Hiroshima and was able to bring awareness to my country about the peace movement by writing articles and giving reports of the conference at my university," Leschenko said. He returned to Japan in May to march in the "Peace Wave," a three-month long walk from Tokyo to Hiroshima.

The youth delegates held a special meeting to discuss what they could do to protest French president Jacques Chirac's decision to resume nuclear testing in the Pacific. Representing six countries, they released a youth declaration against nuclear weapons and the French testing.

French delegates representing Le Mouvement De La Paix and the French Communist Youth said that uniting youth internationally at this time was impossible and that the call for actions should be left up to activists in each country. At the end of the meeting, participants agreed to release a statement protesting French nuclear testing, suggesting that youth help organize actions targeting Chirac's decision to continue testing and urging youth to work with hibakusha to publicize their struggle.

The delegates were invited to speak at several local youth activities commemorating the anniversary of the bombings, including a Japanese Youth Council event attended by more than 100 youth.

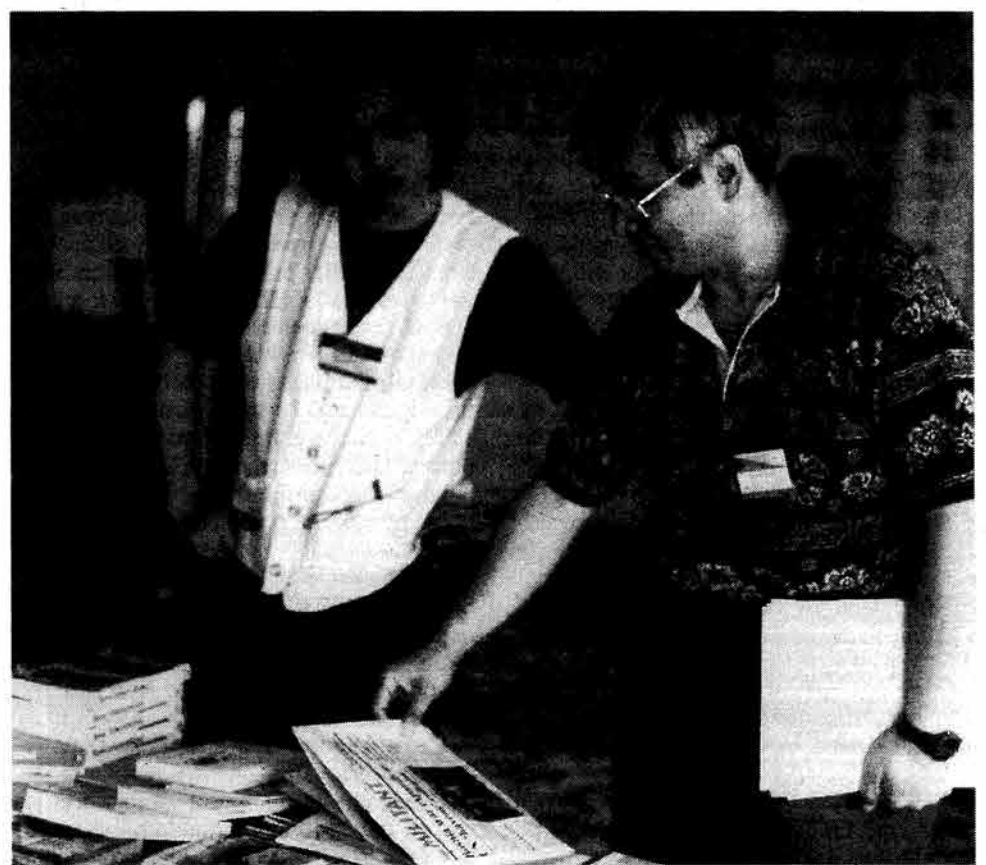
Representatives from the Democratic Youth League and Youth Socialist Party of Japan told about their efforts to bring the experiences of the hibakusha to university students and to workers and of their work with Korean organizations fighting for compensation for Koreans who were forced to work in Japan during World War II.

Many of the youth visited the Pathfinder table, buying the *Militant* and various books and pamphlets on women's rights, socialism, and Cuba.

"I think it's important that young people in Japan realize that nuclear damage did not just occur in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but also in Russia, Nevada, and on the Marshall Islands," Hiromi Susaki, a 19-year-old student at Tsukuba University in Japan, said as he bought a copy of the *Militant*. "We should see nuclear weapons as a world-wide issue."

Dammers was interested in the case of Mark Curtis, a framed-up union activist. She took a leaflet and is considering sending a letter urging Curtis's release.

Some French youth delegates were interested in the *Militant's* coverage of the fight to save Mumia Abu-Jamal, a framed-



Many young people participated in activities commemorating the 50th anniversary of the atom bombing of Japan. Socialist literature was popular with youth delegates.

up journalist on Pennsylvania's death row. They reported on the French effort to save Jamal, which included several large rallies.

Leschenko, Dammers, and Karima Yamani, 15, a French high school student, participated in several discussions about socialism and the views of the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialists.

Yamani was interested in the differences between socialism and capitalism and if youth in the United States are open to socialism. Delegates from the French Communist Youth asked what it was like to be a communist in the United States.

Jeanne Tuomey is a member of the Young Socialists in San Francisco.

## Police in Manchester raid 'Frontline' bookshop

BY TIM RIGBY

MANCHESTER, England — Frontline Books, one of the main outlets for socialist and anarchist literature here, was recently raided by the cops. The attack was carried out by four detectives, one from Manchester and three from Southampton, 300 miles away in the south of England. The search warrant had been drawn up in Southampton two days before the raid.

The warrant stated the police had powers to search for articles and records connected with two anarchist periodicals — *Scumbusters* and *Green Anarchist* — and also "any other material inciting acts of arson/criminal damage." *Green Anarchist* is a periodical carried by many radical book shops around Britain.

Frontline is described by Neil Swannick, one of the members of the co-operative which runs the shop, as stocking "20,000 books, with subjects ranging from children's books through to alternative health, with a wide spectrum of political books in between." The shop is one of the main carriers of Pathfinder books in the Manchester area.

Swannick informed the *Guardian* that not only did the police take issues of newspapers and the *Scum Directory*, thought to contain the names and addresses of directors of companies involved in road building and animal experiments, but also details of people who had written

to the *Green Anarchist* post office box, held by Frontline Books.

The shop stocks several dozen left-wing periodicals. Swannick informed this reporter that the shop also provides a box number service for 70 organizations and campaigns, including the Cuba Solidarity Campaign in Manchester and groups involved in Irish solidarity.

"They went through our anarchist books section, looking at books on the Angry Brigade and the Red Army Faction, groups which haven't functioned since the 60s or 70s," Swannick told the *Guardian*. "They said they were investigating anything to do with direct action."

Two book shops in Oxford had previously been raided by the police in March 1995 supposedly to investigate firebombing attacks attributed to animal rights activists.

Frontline Books supporters have publicized and condemned the attack as widely as possible, "which limits the ability of police forces to walk into book shops and seize whatever they want," said Swannick.

Reports of the police action at Frontline Books were carried on local television and radio, in the *Manchester Evening News*, and in the *Guardian* and the *Observer*, two national newspapers. An editorial protesting the raid, written by Swannick, appeared in *City Life*, a widely circulated Manchester periodical.



## PATHFINDER AROUND THE WORLD

By Dave Prince

Pathfinder Press, located in New York with distributors in Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom, publishes books and pamphlets by revolutionary leaders whose writings on the struggle against capitalism, racism, and all forms of exploitation and oppression point the way forward for humanity. Pathfinder bookstores are listed in the directory on page 12.

Pathfinder sales representatives in the United Kingdom and in New Zealand report good results from recent sales trips and visits.

Bill Loxton sold 80 books and 67 pamphlets on a June sales trip to Ireland that included visits to shops in Dublin, Belfast, and Derry. Sales included four copies of *New Internationalist* no. 10, which features "Imperialism's March Toward Fascism and War," several copies of *The Truth About Yugoslavia*, and *Art and Revolution* by Leon Trotsky. Top sellers among the pamphlets were *On the Irish Freedom Struggle* by Bernadette Devlin McAliskey and *Genocide against the Indians* by George Novack, which was recently reviewed in *Republican News*.

This August sales representative Bob Buchan, a car plant worker in London, spent a week of his vacation on a sales trip to Scotland. As a result of 16 visits to stores in Dundee, Perth, Sterling, Glasgow and Edinburgh, he sold 244 books, including 65 different titles with a retail value of £2,619 (US \$4,037).

"The second highest sale of the trip was to a student bookshop in Glasgow, which had a very small politics section," Buchan reports. "The manager at first seemed rather disinterested but ended up ordering 37 books. I think it shows that buyers appreciate that our books are useful to their customers who want to understand what's happening in the world." More than 20 copies of *The Truth About Yugoslavia* and 12 copies of *Lenin's Final Fight* were sold.

Buchan also reports that a number of international participants at a conference in London protesting economic

sanctions against Third World countries were introduced to Pathfinder books recently. Among those buying Pathfinder books were participants from the Sudan, Germany, Cuba, Spain, Turkey, Kurdistan, the United States, and Britain. A total of £80 (US \$123) of literature was sold.

Felicity Coggan from Auckland, New Zealand, writes that Pathfinder representatives have recently done some work to increase sales to libraries and for classroom use. She writes: "Return visits to libraries allows us to catch up with orders placed as a result of previous visits. Manukau Libraries, which covers the large working-class areas of South Auckland, recently acquired a copy of *Nelson Mandela Speaks* and *The Bolivian Diary of Ernesto Che Guevara* — the latter following a phone call and a request for some promotional material by mail."

"A number of visits have been made to academics in the history and political studies departments at the University of Auckland who recommend books for acquisition by the university library. The lecturer who teaches a course on the Russian revolution decided to order *The History of the Russian Revolution* and *Problems of Everyday Life*, both by Leon Trotsky. Another professor, who teaches courses on 19th and 20th century U.S. history, was interested in the four volume series on the Teamsters union by Farrell Dobbs, Malcolm X titles, and *America's Revolutionary Heritage* by George Novack."

A literature table at the recent annual meeting of the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Funds attracted lively interest from participants. A total of \$90 worth of Pathfinder titles were sold. A farmer from south Georgia, when asked what was best to read on the situation facing farmers, said, "Well, really, the best thing I've read is that yellow pamphlet for sale over there," pointing to the Pathfinder title *Farmers Face the Crisis of the 1990s* by Doug Jenness.



# Philadelphia cop scandal unravels daily

BY GLOVA SCOTT  
AND HATTIE McCUTCHEON

PHILADELPHIA — There seems to be no end in sight to the widening police scandal here. City officials are getting nervous. Literally every day some new example of police criminality is being revealed in the daily press.

Five "dirty cops," as the Philadelphia papers call them, from the 39th Police District have pleaded guilty to charges of criminal behavior so far and a sixth is expected to plead guilty soon. More indictments, expanding to the Highway Patrol, are expected.

The cops are accused of planting false evidence, lying, stealing, shaking down alleged drug dealers, making illegal searches, beating people, and framing innocent people.

Lynne Abraham, Philadelphia district attorney, told the *New York Times*, "This whole thing has made me physically ill. This is the ultimate betrayal of the public trust."

What really has Abraham, a notorious proponent of the death penalty, perturbed is that the scandal "justifies people's suspicions of the police."

As a result of the dirty cop exposé, 42 convictions have been overturned and 1,400 arrests are being reviewed.

## Illegal arrests

The FBI, U.S. attorney's office, and local officials are currently investigating numerous reports of illegal arrests, mostly in the city's Black and Puerto Rican neighborhoods.

The initial investigation began as a result of a complaint filed by Arthur Colbert, a part-time student in Temple University's criminal-justice program, in 1991.

Police officers John Baird and Thomas Ryan kidnapped Colbert, beat him, and threatened to kill him as they pressed a revolver to his head and cocked the hammer, according to the *Philadelphia Inquirer*.

After they were suspended from the force, they paid their informant, Pamela Jenkins, a drug user and prostitute, \$100 a week and other rewards if she would say she had bought drugs from Colbert.

The cops "would take care of me, pay my rent for a year, get the warrant lifted off me, pay my fines," Jenkins later testified at a hearing against them.

The case came up for a new hearing in



August 12 rally demanding new trial for Mumia Abu-Jamal. International protests to stop Jamal's execution helped expose cop brutality and frame-ups in Philadelphia.

1994. By then the cop operation started to unravel and Baird and Ryan agreed to cooperate with the investigation, which led to the widening indictments.

Since then many victims of the dirty cops have come forward.

## Victims of police abuse speak out

Betty Patterson, a widow and 54-year-old grandmother, spent three years in prison after being framed up by racist cops and falsely convicted of selling crack cocaine. The cops took drugs to Patterson's home from their secret stash kept at police headquarters. They testified that they were trying to find evidence that could be used against two of her sons in a separate murder case. The case had nothing to do with her.

Patterson's requests for a new trial were vigorously opposed by prosecutors as a "frivolous claim" although they knew the cops who arrested her had been suspended for lying in other cases. "Prosecutors and judges routinely play along with the misconduct, contending these illegal acts are 'harmless errors' or police have 'good faith' exemptions from existing law," Linn Washington, a reporter for the

Philadelphia *New Observer*, wrote July 26.

Tracey Watson had drugs planted on him in 1989, when he was 18, by Louis Maier, the sixth cop in the city to admit to his crimes. At the time Maier testified that Watson threw a plastic bag with 30 vials of cocaine into a briar bush. Despite his innocence, the youth's public defender advised him to plead guilty rather than fight the case.

George Porchea was also a victim of this police ring and spent three years in prison. During that time his oldest daughter was placed in a foster home in North Carolina. He has to fight to get her back now that he is released.

Initially these 1,400 cases under review involved mainly drug abuses. New evidence in the 39th precinct scandal has spread to at least five murder cases.

Trying to limit the political damage amid the police scandal, Mayor Ed Rendell defended the police. "The overwhelming number of officers are good and decent and want these individuals punished as quickly as possible," he said.

Mayor Rendell has stated the guilty cops should go to prison, but "these guys

in my judgment should not necessarily rot in jail."

Bradley Bridge, of the city's public defender office, however, said, "It is more and more clear that the police corruption here was not a few isolated police officers. We are apparently dealing with a systematic, pervasive pattern of corruption."

"I feel I not only have to protect my son from the neighborhood hoodlums," said Nadirah Nock, a resident of the Logan section of the city. "I've got to protect him from the police too."

## Encouragement for Abu-Jamal case

The August 28 *New York Times* notes that the revelations have given encouragement to the supporters of death-row prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Socialist Workers Party candidate for city council at-large Hattie McCutcheon, who resides in the 39th precinct, pointed out that the Philadelphia dirty cop scandal, like the Mark Furman tapes in Los Angeles, exposes that frame-ups, racism, and lying are all normal operating procedures for the cops.

"Anytime the blinders are torn away, so we can see clearly who the real criminals are in our community, the better," McCutcheon said. "The disrespect and disregard for the lives of working people, especially Blacks and Latinos, the racist treatment meted out to working people by the thugs in blue, the prosecutors, and the judges must be vehemently opposed."

"The Socialist Workers campaign demands justice for all the victims of this police scandal," she added. "We call for the immediate prosecution of the police to the fullest extent of the law, with long prison terms for all those involved."

## Philadelphia rally to demand new trial for Mumia Abu-Jamal

BY JOHN STAGGS

PHILADELPHIA — Supporters of death-row inmate Mumia Abu-Jamal are planning a demonstration outside city hall here September 11 as the hearings for a new trial resume. The action will take place at 15th and Market streets at 9 a.m.

Although Abu-Jamal's execution date has been stayed by the court, the death sentence still hangs over his head. In the meantime the government of Pennsylvania is pushing ahead on the sentences of other death row inmates.

Gov. Tom Ridge has signed 18 death warrants since taking office in January. The first to be executed was Keith Zettle-moyer May 2. He was the first death row prisoner executed in 33 years in the state.

On August 16, Leon Moser was put to death. Moser's execution had been scheduled for August 15, but a stay was granted so he could be tested for mental competence. The U.S. Supreme Court brushed aside last minute appeals.

Supporters of a new trial and for the lifting of the death sentence for Abu-Jamal are being urged to build the September 11 demonstration in order to stop the authorities from carrying out another legal murder.

The British Broadcasting Corp. recently produced a video about Abu-Jamal's trial that can be used to build support for his case. For information about the September 11 demonstration and about obtaining a copy of the video call the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal at (215) 476-8812 or write PO Box 19709, Philadelphia, PA 19143.

## 'Militant' supporters plan Labor Day sales

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Supporters of the *Militant* in Peoria, Illinois, are reaching out. A team of *Militant* distributors sold eight papers last week to United Auto Workers members who were voting to ratify a new contract at Mitsubishi Motors. The previous week, eight papers were sold at the plant gate.

Socialist campaigners also went to Illinois State University in Normal, Illinois, where the first week of classes were under way and sold seven issues of the *Militant*. At a union meeting of the locked-out Staley workers in Decatur, four papers were sold and two people renewed their subscriptions to the *Militant*.

Supporters of the socialist press say they plan to participate in upcoming Labor Day activities, which include picnics on September 3 in Peoria and Pontiac, Illinois, as well as the Labor Day parade September 4 in Decatur. Angel Lariscy

from Peoria reports, "We plan to participate in these activities in addition to the march and rally for Irish political prisoners on September 2 in St. Louis."

*Militant* supporters in Detroit have begun to step up their efforts, selling 36 copies of the *Militant* last week. Eleven papers were sold to students at Wayne State University during the first three days of registration. One subscription was sold to a rail worker at Conrail. Teams have taken the *Militant* to Detroit newspaper strikers on the picket line, activists involved in coalitions to defend death-row inmate Mumia Abu-Jamal, and at shopping center parking lots.

"We organized a lot of different sales to turn things around," said *Militant* supporter Rosa Garmendia. Socialist workers there are gearing up to participate in the national Labor Day weekend mobilization September 2-4. The event, which has

broad support in the labor movement, will help back striking newspaper workers and their families.

A *Militant* sales team sold 29 papers and one subscription at a march of 6,000 through Dublin, Ireland, August 26. Another team of supporters sold 13 *Militants* and one subscription at a march marking the 75th anniversary of women winning the right to vote in the United States in Washington, D.C., on the same day.

In New York, Ruth Robinett reports that 15 copies of last week's issue of the *Militant* with the article she co-authored about cuts in Amtrak were sold on the job. Another seven copies of that issue were sold to rail workers during a plant gate sale at the Amtrak station.

We urge *Militant* readers to write about their efforts to get the paper around. If there are plans to participate in future events, regional sales teams, or other activities to distribute the socialist press, let us know so that these efforts can be publicized in the *Militant*.



*Militant* distributor at August 6 event to send off boats sailing to Moruroa Atoll to oppose French nuclear tests and to commemorate atomic bombing of Hiroshima.

## Help get first-hand reports from women's conference in China

More than 30,000 people from around the world are in China participating in discussions on the situation facing women in the world today and the fight to advance women's rights. The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women takes place in Beijing September 4-15 with government representatives from around the world. Thousands are also attending the Forum on Women for members of non-governmental organizations.

*Militant* correspondents Laura Garza and Maggie Trowe are on the scene to bring first-hand coverage of the debates and interview participants there. The cost of sending this *Militant* reporting team to China will be close to \$10,000. Please help by making a generous contribution today.

Make checks payable to the *Militant*, earmarked for the China reporting trip, and send them to: The *Militant*, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014.



# Youth 'impressed by Cuba's resistance'

BY JENNIFER BANATHY  
AND ELLEN BERMAN

SAN FRANCISCO — Most of the delegates from the Cuba Lives! International Youth Festival who spoke at a reportback meeting here August 19 agreed that the highlight of their trip were the days spent living with Cuban families. Sixty people attended the meeting, which was co-sponsored by Global Exchange and Youth Festival '95.

"The family experience was the best opportunity to really interact and to see what life was like for the Cuban people," said Evan Daniel, who visited Cuba for the first time. Each delegate was invited to stay with a family for three days in 1 of 8 provinces where social events and meetings around various topics were organized. Thousands more families requested to house delegates than the 1,300 needed, showing the eagerness of many working people in Cuba to take an active part in a gathering that attracted youth from around the world.

Bay Area delegates to the festival were invited to speak on their experiences in the provinces they visited. Six out of the eight provinces were represented. Sonia Gaind also spoke on behalf of the Freedom to Travel Challenge youth delegation that visited Cuba in June.

The meeting was co-chaired by Rodrigo González of Global Exchange and Tami Peterson of Youth Festival '95. Both groups played a central role in organizing the delegation of 30 people who participated in Cuba Lives! from the Bay Area.

González, who has traveled to Cuba nu-



Militant/Ellen Berman

Cuba Lives reportback meeting in San Francisco drew more than 60 people. "All of the dreams that Cubans have fought for in the past are still there," said one speaker.

merous times, commented that this visit made him more optimistic about the Cuban revolution. "I think that all of the dreams that Cubans have fought for in the past are still there," he stated. "I am very impressed by the resistance of the people and their daily struggle. Cubans are experiencing an economic and social crisis that demands a revolutionary spirit."

González was referring to the severe shortages of food, fuel, and other basic necessities beginning in 1989, when Cuba lost trade at preferential prices with the

former Soviet bloc countries. Cubans refer to this time span and the austerity measures they've been forced to adopt as the special period.

"It was the first time in the special period, if not ever, that Cuba has hosted a youth festival on such a scale," said Ved Dookhum. "It was important not just for what we learned from the Cubans, but because we brought the world to Cuba, the reality of capitalism, what it is that workers face around the world, and our experiences in struggle."

Cuba is not alone, he said, because it's the best living example in the fight for independence, sovereignty, and human dignity. "It is significant that over 1,300 delegates extended solidarity, and that 262 of them were from the United States, pledging to throw ourselves back here into activities with thousands of others to fight Washington's economic war against the Cuban people."

José Aravena, a member of the Young Socialists who attended the workshop on employment in the province of Pinar del Río, spoke about the discussion on workers' struggles for jobs around the world. "Many youth, including delegates from Brazil and Argentina, pointed toward the ongoing attacks against workers and our response — young people are fighting back."

James Gotesky, 13, the youngest delegate from the United States, reported on his experience in Sancti Spiritus province. "In Cuba there are no layoffs in education. Teachers don't have to worry about getting a pink slip, so they can worry about getting to their students," he said. "This is what blew me away — that in this tiny area, the size of the Mission District [where the reportback was held] there are 620 recreation and day-care centers for children ages 2 months to 15 years. Here you might find 1 or 2."

Monty Worth, a teacher who visited Havana Province, reported that he didn't know much about Cuba before this first visit, but he believed everything he had read about the revolution being on the verge of collapse. "But now I don't think that," he said. "Many people still believe in the system and don't resent the government the way the people resented the government in the USSR."

## Lack of racism

Worth said that what impressed him the most about his stay in Cuba, which was a little longer than the week-long festival, was the lack of racism he experienced in social relations among the Cuban people. "I don't think Cuba is a paradise," he concluded, "but socially I felt more comfortable there than with the serious social problems that exist here."

In addition to providing the opportunity to hear eyewitness reports, the meeting was part of an ongoing fundraising effort. Most of the youth who participated in the festival were workers or students. Fundraising efforts were key in enabling those youth to experience life in Cuba. More than \$400 was raised through contributions at the door and passing the hat. Another \$450 was raised through a raffle. Donations were solicited from local businesses and friends. Twenty prizes were donated, including gift certificates to local stores, free passes to music clubs, a case of Italian red wine, and a grand prize of a weekend getaway in a cabin in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada.

Several organizations set up literature tables at the event, including: Radical Women, Saoirse, Global Exchange, the Socialist Workers Party, the Young Socialists, and the October 14 Coalition to End the U.S. Blockade of Cuba.

Representing the October 14 Coalition, which is organizing for a regional demonstration on that date, Jennifer Banathy invited everyone at the meeting to participate in making the October 14 event a success.

"Let people know that Cuba's out there, that Cuba's fighting, that Cuba Lives!"

## Send Cuba Lives articles into the 'Militant'

The *Militant* is interested in publishing articles that are written for other newspapers on the recently held Cuba Lives festival and reportback meetings. This will give our readers a better view of the breadth of Cuba solidarity work that is taking place around the world.

Please send a copy of the original article as it was printed, along with the masthead that identifies the newspaper it was printed in.

# Toronto youth returning from Cuba festival vow to oppose U.S. embargo

BY GEORGE ROSE

TORONTO — "Canadians fight for Cuban rights" was the lead story on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) late-night television news August 27. Viewers across Ontario saw a report on a meeting of 75 people held in Toronto earlier that day to hear eyewitness accounts from the Cuba Lives International Youth Festival.

Fifteen students, workers, and other activists from Ontario were among the more than 1,300 participants from around the world who attended the festival, held in Havana and other Cuban provinces August 1-7. Back in Canada, they have begun efforts to talk to as many people as possible about their experiences.

Two were interviewed for an hour on CKLN radio, an alternative, non-commercial station in Toronto. Another festival participant, who is originally from Iran, wrote an article for a Persian-language newspaper.

The CBC-TV report included an interview with Sylvie Charbin, a Toronto-area factory worker, who voiced the determination of the festival-goers to get out the truth about Cuba and to rally wider opposition to the U.S. trade embargo.

The news report concluded by announcing that Canadians will join a demonstration against the blockade planned in New York October 21, as well as protests in other U.S. cities in October. It also included video footage of the massive march along the Havana waterfront August 5, at which festival participants joined half a million Cubans in support of Cuba's sovereignty and its socialist revolution.

Lena Fung, a community activist in Toronto and member of the Worker to Worker/Canada-Cuba Labour Solidarity Committee, chaired the August 27 reportback meeting. She explained that the march marked the first anniversary of "a political watershed for many in Cuba"—the attempted riot against the revolution in August 1994. At that time, Fung described, "Thousands of Cubans came out into the streets in support of the revolution and subdued the riot without resorting to weapons."

Brent Patterson, a Toronto church

worker, told how his emotions had shifted during the course of the trip. The first few days in Cuba, he said, he felt depressed because, "I wasn't prepared for the state of economic crisis, such as seeing housing that was falling apart." He described hours of discussion with a professor in Havana, who told him that many colleagues had left the university to be waiters because they could get higher pay and tips in U.S. dollars in the tourist industry.

Patterson went on to explain that his attitude changed profoundly after an in-depth discussion with a group of Cuban steelworkers. "They had such a strong sense of consciousness of the gains of the revolution, what it meant for the rights of workers. They were looking toward the future and seeing the difficulties now as part of a transition to better times ahead."

Finally, Patterson said, his mood shifted to one of anger on returning home and learning of the Ontario government's plans to cut funding for municipalities by 20 percent—"which means closing homes for the aged, losing 4,000 day-care spaces, losing emergency dental care for people on welfare. Given all the problems and barriers Cuba faces, they still haven't closed a hospital or school or lost a single day-care space. That's the lesson I learned—when you view problems from the human aspect, resources can be found and solutions can be struggled for."

The experience in Cuba, Patterson concluded, taught him "many lessons that I will take into my work, not only to defend the Cuban revolution but also to build a more humane life here in Toronto."

Ronald Chavez, a student originally from El Salvador and now living in Thunder Bay, Ontario, said that every minute in Cuba he was "comparing what's going on in the rest of Latin America to what's going on in Cuba," seeing Cuba as an example of struggle.

Charbin, a member of the International Association of Machinists at the Ford Electronics plant in Markham, Ontario, and a member of the Communist League, said she has had many discussions with co-workers about her trip to Cuba. She stressed that "the fight of Cuba is not separate from the fight of workers and youth around the world" against the effects of

the capitalist crisis. She urged those present to defend Cuba by joining protests against cuts in social services, by going to Detroit in solidarity with newspaper strikers there, and to "take to all these fights the message that Cuba lives and that there is another road."

Alfredo Marroquin, who came to Canada as a refugee from El Salvador and is now the director of a center for immigrants in London, Ontario, also pointed to Cuba's example "as we enter a new century that will be characterized by struggles all over the world."

"Some people might think, faced with the power of capitalism, faced with the power of the multinationals, that there is not much you can do," Marroquin said. "But the Cubans are teaching us that there is a lot you can do if you believe in socialism, if you believe in justice. We see Cuba not as an island, but as a shining sun that gives us an idea of what people can do."

The meeting was organized by the Cuban Youth Tour Organizing Committee, which had publicized and raised funds for the international youth festival. The committee is now preparing for a fall tour of Canada by two Cuban youth leaders. Those present were encouraged to join in organizing this tour.

Leaders of the Canadian Cuban Friendship Association and the Canada-Cuba Labour Solidarity Committee also participated in the discussion and announced upcoming events of their groups.

In the discussion, some people questioned what will happen "after the blockade is lifted," whether the Cuban revolution can withstand an onslaught of capitalist investment and trade. Others responded that winning an end to the U.S. trade embargo—which is far from happening—would be a historic victory that would strengthen the workers and farmers of Cuba.

While there are no guarantees of what will happen in the future, they said, it will be the consciousness and organization of Cuban workers and farmers, the fact that they exercise governmental power, and their connection to other working-class struggles worldwide that can defend and advance the Cuban revolution under whatever conditions arise.



# Cuba is alive and well in spite of U.S. lies and propaganda

The following is an excerpt from the article "Cuba Vive!-Cuba Lives!" appearing in the August 24 issue of *Community Focus*, a newspaper that describes itself as the "voice of the Delaware Valley's Latino community." Subheads are by the *Militant*.

BY JENNIE NILSON

I have been fortunate enough to have had the opportunity to attend an International Youth Festival in Cuba during the first week of August. I bring back greetings from the people of Cuba to the Puerto

young women, democracy, education, employment, and more. Part of our time was spent in La Habana, where we toured factories, hospitals, schools, reform schools, day care centers, and the like.

The week culminated in a march on Saturday, August 5, in which there were no less than 500,000 people in the streets of La Habana marching against the United States blockade and in support of their right to self-determination. Cuba's President, Fidel Castro, praised our delegation, saying that our presence there speaks to the quality of North American youth.



Rican and Latino community of Philadelphia. Cubans feel a great affection for and solidarity with Puerto Ricans, and they say that Cuba and Puerto Rico "son de un pájaro de dos alas" [are two wings of the same bird]. I found the two cultures to be strikingly similar.

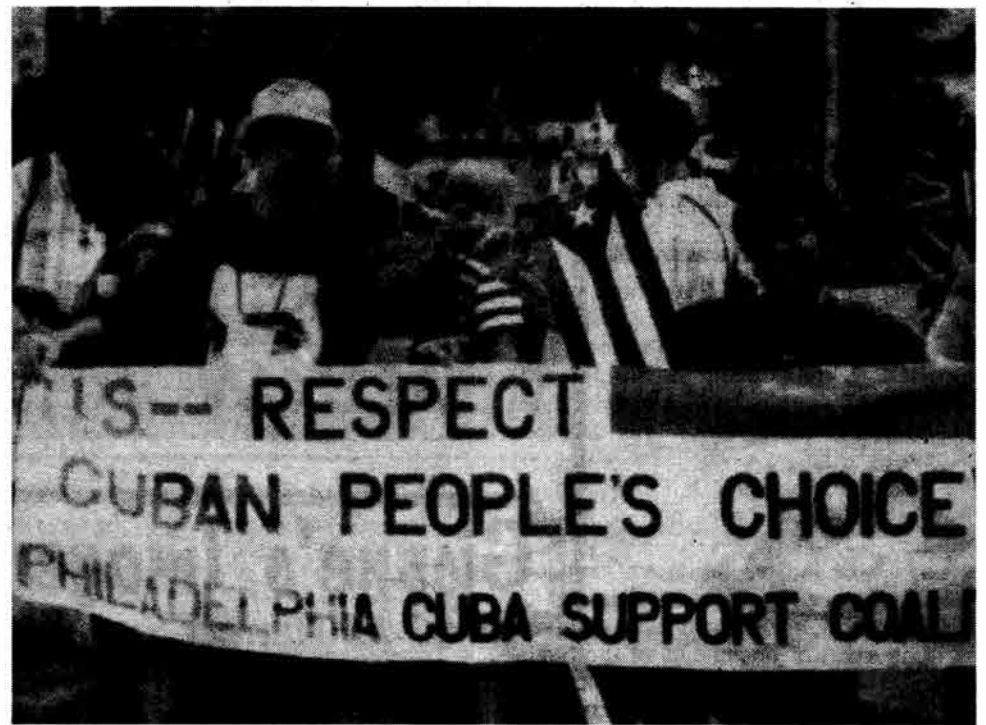
This was my second visit to Cuba this year; I had been down in January on a Youth Brigade. I fell in love with this island which has the most generous and warm-hearted people I have ever met.

The International Youth Festival included 260 delegates from the United States and almost 1,500 delegates from more than 65 countries all over the world. We stayed with families in different provinces and attended conferences on various issues such as culture and identity,

The Festival was appropriately titled "Cuba Vive." Cuba is alive and well despite what the propaganda in the U.S. would have us believe. However, there is a severe economic crisis in Cuba due to the U.S. blockade and the loss of substantial aid from the former Soviet Union.

There is no doubt that Cubans are experiencing tremendous economic hardships and do not even have some basic necessities. Yet, on top of these difficult times the entire country was mobilized for this Festival, which was a huge success.

The Festival was organized by the Union of Young Communists (UJC), who are the vanguard of the country with one million members out of a national population of eleven million. The population of the island country doubled after the Revo-



Nancy Cole

Delegation from Philadelphia marches with half a million people in Havana August 5. Young people were impressed with the accomplishments of Cuban revolution.

lution and is now essentially led by its youth.

In their 35 years of independence Cuba has faithfully maintained human priorities. In spite of extreme financial problems, not one hospital nor school has been closed.

Excellent health care and educational systems have been established which are free of charge at all levels and available to all. There is very little crime or violence, and Cuba has made admirable strides in eliminating racism and sexism.

Cubans can read and write — all Cubans. Ricardo Alarcón, President of the National Assembly, commented to the delegates that there had been a goal set to eliminate illiteracy in the Americas by the year 2010. Even if this is achieved, he said, Cuba will be celebrating in that year its fiftieth anniversary of the eradication of illiteracy.

I was able to converse with Cubans from all different backgrounds and ages, and I was amazed at how articulate, confident and knowledgeable every Cuban I

spoke with was. And, they were more than happy to stop what they were doing to answer at length any question about their country.

In the United States — probably the richest country in the world — we have not begun to solve such important issues as health care, education and crime.

Cuba has successfully done so with only scarce resources and being the only country in the world upon which an economic blockade is imposed.

My heart is filled with awe and respect for this heroic, humble nation of working people who have been unwavering in their path of self-determination and integrity.

There are several trips organized each year to Cuba, as Cubans are always inviting allies to see firsthand the truth of Cuba.

Having seen the truth, my work now is to struggle here in this country to end the U.S. blockade against our neighbor to the south and support their right to autonomy.

## 'We saw what life is for average Cuban families'

The following is an excerpted article from the August 9 *Daily Cougar*, the campus newspaper at the University of Houston (UH).

BY JAMES V. GELUSO

Three UH students were among seven arriving from a week-long stay in Cuba

ship Committee, which successfully lobbied the UH Students' Association to establish a sister-campus relationship with the University of Havana.

While in Cuba, the group participated in a march that drew more than 500,000 to protest the U.S. embargo on Cuba.

The group also stayed with Cuban fami-

Clara. "We got a chance to feel what life is like to average Cuban families. We couldn't have gotten that by just walking around the cities and talking to people."

Chamberlain said the blockade has had real effects on the Cuban people, but hasn't broken them.

"There are real shortages caused by the blockade," he said. "For instance, my family always runs out of toilet paper. I left them a few simple items they couldn't get, like aspirin and shampoo."

"They never run out of food, due to a crash program they started three years ago that's paying off very well."

The blockade hurts the United States as well as Cuba, Chamberlain said. "It would be very beneficial to U.S. businesses to sell simple things like that to the Cubans."

Cubans have to pay inflated prices for simple goods, he said, because they have to go halfway around the world to buy the items, and then must buy from merchants who can charge higher prices because they know they don't have to compete with American manufacturers.

Coltrin said that while he met many Cubans of all sorts, he didn't meet any that were vehemently anti-Castro.

"I talked with some people who were thinking of leaving, but it wasn't because they were specifically anti-Castro," Coltrin said. "The migration from poor countries to rich countries is universal."

Chamberlain said the group also met with the student leaders at the University of Havana, where they discussed ways to further the relationship between the two schools. Ideas included student exchanges, intercollegiate sports competitions and a visit by some of Havana's physics professors.

That relationship exists only between the student bodies of the two schools. The administration here has disassociated itself from that union, according to Chamberlain.

The following article appeared in the August 8 *Houston Chronicle* under the headline "Students visit Cuba."

BY ANDY ALFORD

Despite the U.S. ban on travel to Cuba, eight Houstonians went to the communist island to see a side of Cuba few U.S. citizens ever see.

"You hear so much about Cuba — mostly in a negative light," said University of Houston senior sociology major Lori Williams, who went with other members of her student organization. "I just wanted to see (Cuba) for myself."

Members of UH's Cuba Friendship Committee visited the country to be part of the first annual International Youth Festival.

The multicultural exchange was held in Havana, and the United States — one of 65 countries represented — had 160 youth delegates, the largest. [There were in fact more than 260 in the U.S. delegation — *Militant* editor.]

Cuban families opened their homes to the delegates, showed them the island and, for a week, shared their way of life.

Delegates from as far away as South Africa debated free and universal education, abortion, world health and unemployment.

Houston delegates circumvented the travel ban by obtaining media credentials from newspapers and radio stations.

Delegate Paul Coltrin will write articles on his experiences in Cuba for UH's *Daily Cougar*.

He said he hopes the cultural exchange he experienced in Havana will be reciprocated in this country one day.

"The Cubans are bombarded by news from the United States about how wonderful everything here is," Coltrin said.

"They should come and see (for themselves) how things are here."

## The Daily Cougar

Monday.

Michael Chamberlain, Paul Coltrin and Lori Williams left July 30 for the Cuba Lives International Youth Festival. All three are members of UH's Cuba Friend-

lies during a three-day session that sent them to different areas of the island nation.

"That was just brilliant," said Chamberlain, who visited the province of Villa



Militant/Argiris Malapanis

U.S. youth speaking at event in province of Villa Clara. Students from the University of Houston and other schools are writing about their trip for local papers.



# Women's oppression, like class society, has not always existed and can be ended

Below are excerpts from "The Struggle by Women against Their Oppression as a Sex Is a Form of the Class Struggle," a report presented by Mary-Alice Waters and adopted by the National Convention of the Socialist Workers Party in August 1979. Waters was reporting on the resolution "Socialist Revolution and the Struggle for Women's Liberation," also adopted at that convention. The resolution was debated by parties around the world belonging to the Fourth International, the international movement the SWP was part of at that time.

The report and resolution are included in Part One of *Communist Continuity and the Fight for Women's Liberation*, a three-part collection of documents of the SWP from 1971-86 that is part of the Education for Socialists series. The collection is copyright © 1992 by Pathfinder Press and reprinted with permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

## BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

The struggle for women's liberation is a form of the class struggle. It occupies a vital place in the strategic line of march of the proletariat toward the establishment of a workers government. For the first time in recorded history, such governments, on a world scale, will place power in the hands of a class that has no material interest in oppressing women. As the structure of society is overhauled from top to bottom, vast revolutionary changes in all social relations will unfold, including the eradication of all aspects of sex inequality that are institutionalized under class domination.

We do not say that the fight for women's liberation is a form of the class struggle only because, or even primarily because the majority of women are today part of the labor market in a few imperialist countries, like the United States. That is something very recent in historical terms. This trend indicates the direction of capitalist economic development. It creates objective conditions more favorable than ever before for the victory of the working class and for women. But the struggle for women's liberation, however episodic and embryonic, was an aspect of the class struggle for millennia prior to the current epoch of capitalism in its death agony.

It is a form of the class struggle because women's oppression itself is a product of class society. It has been an indispensable cornerstone of class society at every stage of its development.

Today, the integration of women into the labor market and, increasingly, into the industrial work force gives the struggle for women's liberation greater strategic importance for the class struggle than ever before. The interrelationship of the struggles of women and those of the organized labor movement is much closer. Understanding that women are both allies of the working class and an increasingly weighty component of the working class is indispensable to mobilizing the allies of the working class; indispensable to unifying the working class and helping to strengthen it politically; indispensable to preparing the working class for the socialist reconstruction of society tomorrow.

Thus, as the resolution explains, labor's strategic line of march must include support for and building of mass women's organizations, fighting for women's demands. This is intertwined with the transformation of the organized labor movement into an instrument of revolutionary struggle and the development of a class-struggle leadership of women and men.

To identify these goals, we must construct a revolutionary party whose proletarian composition includes the necessary component of women and oppressed nationalities....

### The character of women's oppression

The two most fundamental questions dealt with in the resolution are the origins of women's oppression in the rise of class society with its concomitant family, private property, and state; and the character of this family as an indispensable economic institution of class rule. Those two



Defending abortion clinics in North Hollywood, California. Fight for women's rights "is part of class struggle because women's oppression is product of class society."

points are part of the bedrock of Marxism, of a historical-materialist approach to women's oppression — and to all of human history.

If the document failed to deal adequately with the origins of women's oppression and the character of the family system, or if it contained an analysis that was wrong on those two points, the entire political line of the resolution would go wrong. It would open the door to divorcing the struggle for women's liberation from the class struggle.

The origin of women's oppression is not something of interest solely to anthropologists. Nor is it a question that only comrades involved in debates in the women's liberation movement need to be knowledgeable about. Nor is it possible to dismiss it as a historical matter on which we need not take a position. What is at issue involves the most fundamental elements of Marxism, the principles of a materialist conception of history.

The resolution says the following on the origins of women's oppression:

"The oppression of women is not determined by their biology, as many contend. Its origins are economic and social in character. Throughout the evolution of pre-class and class society, women's childbearing function has always been the same. But their social status has not always been that of a degraded domestic servant, subject to man's control and command.

"Before the development of class society, during the historical period that Marxists have traditionally referred to as primitive communism (subsistence societies), social production was organized communally and its product shared equally. There was therefore no exploitation or oppression of one group or sex by another because no material basis for such social relations existed....

"The origin of women's oppression is intertwined with the transition from pre-class to class society.... The change in women's status developed along with the growing productivity of human labor... and the development of the possibility for some humans to prosper from the exploitation of the labor of others."

To those of us educated in the school of Marx and Engels, that sounds noncontroversial. But there are comrades in the Fourth International who disagree. For example, in the introduction to the contribution by Comrade Harlow, she and Comrade Clynes note that "the debate on the origins of women's oppression is not reflected adequately" in the international resolution.

They are absolutely correct.

In drafting a resolution to guide the work of the Fourth International we did

not seek to agnostically "reflect a debate." Our purpose was to take a clear and unequivocal stand on the essential points in dispute.

Some comrades in the international clearly reject the position that is contained in the document on the ground that it merely reaffirms the fundamental foundations elaborated by Marx and Engels more than a hundred years ago. They argue that Marx and Engels's analysis was based on ignorance due to the paucity of anthropological research available to them. These comrades think the Fourth International today will only be discredited by associating itself with Marx and Engels's views.

In reaffirming that the cause of women's oppression is economic and rooted in the development of class society, we are unambiguously rejecting several alternate explanations for the nature of women's oppression.

### False theories of women's oppression

First, we are rejecting the position that is upheld by radical feminists, like Shulamith Firestone and others, who deny that changes in women's status are determined by women's role in social production. They argue that women have *always* been oppressed because of their biological role in procreation; that women's "oppression goes back beyond recorded history to the animal kingdom itself"; and that the "materialist view of history [is] based on sex itself." [*Dialectic of Sex*, by Shulamith Firestone.]

We reject each thesis of this biological determinism.

Secondly, we are rejecting the position that women's oppression is defined by sex roles or by the psycho-sexual structure of males and females. In the SWP pre-convention discussion Comrade Kurt argues that in pre-class society, "members of both sexes were born into roles in much the same way one is born into a social class today."

Membership in a class is not defined by what one does or doesn't do. It is defined by what one owns or doesn't own, by an individual or family's relationship to the means of production. Classes are characterized by institutionalized material inequality, perpetuated from one generation to the next through the family system. That is precisely what did *not* exist during the epoch of primitive communism. The product of all social labor was shared equally. That's why there could be no oppression or exploitation, because no material basis for such social relations existed.

Thirdly, we are rejecting the position that oppression stems from a social division of labor *per se*. Of course, we're in favor of developing the rounded skills and abilities of every individual, of each per-

son learning how to do as many different things as possible. But division of labor *per se* does not give rise to inequality.

If a man knows how to do something that a woman doesn't, does that give him power over her? No. Not unless there is a material advantage, a material inequality, involved, one that is institutionalized and perpetuated through generations by forms of private property. We are not idealists. We do not believe that knowledge equals power equals oppression.

Fourthly, we are rejecting the concept that sex oppression — the oppression of all women as a sex — is equivalent to or even largely defined by sexual repression, that is, repression of women's sexuality or of all sexuality. Sexism — that is, all the countless ways in which the economic and social inequality of women in class society is expressed and codified in social mores — is something totally different from what has been called "heterosexism," or judgments about any particular form of sexual activity.

### Sexual repression and class society

The extreme repression of female sexuality and the related warping and distortion of all sexual relations is a *by-product* of women's economic dependence. In other words, sexual repression is a product of class society.

Its original purpose was not, as is often stated, to enable men to ensure the paternity of their offspring. That is an ideological rationalization that came along much later. The function of sexual repression was, and is, to reinforce the social and economic dependence of women on the patriarchal family. On that basis the entire ideological superstructure of the ruling class developed, with the double standard of monogamy for women and almost unrestricted sexual activity for men. Only "thy neighbor's wife" — that is, a married woman of your own ruling class — was not to be "coveted" according to biblical commandment.

Other institutions, such as adultery and prostitution, developed historically as necessary concomitants to the family. All of these grew up on the new economic foundation, institutionalized in the family, where every woman was virtually the private property of a man. That is what the marriage contract was — a property arrangement, a bill of sale. A woman had no rights. She belonged to her father or brother, then to her husband. According to custom, and often sanctioned by law, she could even be murdered by the men of her family for violating their "honor."

Sexual oppression, enforced by such extreme measures, helped keep women in their subordinate place and maintain the stability of the family system. But its efficacy was the *result* of women's economic dependence. Sexual oppression was not the *source* of her degraded status.

While the resolution rejects any biological or nonmaterialist explanation for female inequality and reaffirms the economic origins of women's oppression, it does not ask for a vote on other kinds of historical questions, which remain open to debate and discussion. It simply insists on the fundamental premises of historical materialism.

Class society has not always existed. It had a historical beginning and can be replaced by communism. Likewise women's oppression has not always existed. It had a historical beginning and it too can be replaced by equality of the sexes.

This theoretical foundation underlies our political orientation today and determines our approach to all aspects of the struggle for women's liberation, including our analysis of the character of the women's liberation movement, the program of demands we raise, and why we address them to the ruling class and its agents.

Closely intertwined with the origins and character of women's oppression is the question of the family. The resolution reaffirms that the family system is an indispensable pillar of class rule. It is the historical mechanism for institutionalizing the social inequality that accompanies the



rise of private property and perpetuating class divisions from one generation to the next. The family is first and foremost an economic institution that has evolved a great deal as it has adapted to meet the changing needs of ruling classes throughout all stages of class society.

Because the family system is indispensable to the structuring of social inequality, the economic dependence of women and their oppression within the family system is likewise indispensable to class rule. The domestic labor of women in the home provides the least expensive and most ideologically acceptable system of reproducing labor power. It minimizes the proportion of the social surplus consumed in raising each new generation, and maximizes the proportion available for private accumulation. Thus women's oppression is not an inessential or optional feature of class society....

#### Who gains from women's oppression?

Many workers don't automatically see that women's liberation is in their interests because they are not fully class conscious. They're influenced by ruling class ideology, which inculcates a false consciousness. They think in terms of *I*, not *we*; of *me* and *them*, not *us*.

Comrade Harlow gives a different answer. She says the reason many workers don't see that it is in their class interest to fight for women's liberation is because it is *not* in the immediate interest of all workers. "Male workers especially do have a certain material advantage, for the time being, in discrimination against women." And ... she specifies two areas in which male workers gain special privileges from discrimination against women.

First they are able to keep women out of better paying jobs.

Second, male workers gain a material advantage from the fact that women do the housework.

What is fundamentally wrong with this argument that male workers have a material stake in women's oppression?

Any individual male worker may have a better chance of getting a particular job if women are excluded from competition, or may have a few hours of leisure for himself some evening if his wife feeds the kids and puts them to bed. As long as he thinks in individual terms, as long as he thinks in terms of *me*, and as long as he thinks "the time being" is permanent (and thus capitalism is permanent), he can falsely conclude that he is better off because women are oppressed. But is this objectively true?

We say no. That individual male belongs to a class whose interests, both short-term and long-term, are diametrically opposed to the oppression of women, because women's oppression divides the working class and shifts the relationship of class forces to the advantage of the bosses. This has negative consequences on the wages, working conditions, etc., of all workers — that is, on their immediate interests as well as their long-term ones.

If what one sometimes falsely believes to be in one's immediate personal interests were in the long run more compelling than the historic interests of classes, then Marxism would have no validity whatsoever. If that were true we should have closed up shop a long time ago.

What basis would there ever be for united action by the working class? Why should there be industrial rather than craft unions? Why shouldn't everyone try to make foreman? Why should workers of the world unite?

We are the first to recognize that every worker does not correctly identify his or her class interest on every question every day. The contradiction between the objective needs and the subjective understanding of the class and its components is acute. But it can be overcome, especially in periods of sharpening class conflict. Then the overwhelming majority of workers will begin to see where their real interests lie, not primarily because we tell them, but through their own experiences.



"Affirmative action victories undercut sexist attitudes toward women. Men begin to see women co-workers as equal human beings." Above, auto assembly line in Tennessee.

In the heat of the class struggle they can rapidly become convinced that their personal interests and class interests coincide. It can be pointed out: Aren't you better off if both husband and wife can get jobs as auto workers, steelworkers, or miners? If you both join with other workers to use your organized power to fight for adequate child care and other social services? Isn't that in your immediate personal interests?

This is crucially important. It underlies our proletarian strategy for women's liberation. Our enemy is not male workers — although individuals can wander into the enemy camp ideologically (and in personal practice) for a shorter or longer period of time, and they have to be dealt with accordingly.

But it is the boss class and its agents who consciously strive to deepen the antagonisms between male and female workers, between male workers and their wives, because that weakens the solidarity and unity the class.

Not only is it the bosses who benefit from discrimination against, and harassment of, women on the job; it is also the bosses and foremen who hold the real power over women, not male workers. For example, sexual harassment of a woman worker by a foreman is backed up by his control over whether she keeps her job.

That is why our fire is aimed at the foreman and the supervisors. That is how we pressure and divide the trade union officials and win over fellow workers.

We know that many male workers (and female workers too) have deep sexist prejudices, and often express them in words and deeds. Our attitude is not to let such actions pass without challenge, but we try to counter them in such a way that we educate fellow workers to understand that they are simply doing the boss's job for him if they give women a hard time and do not treat them as equals....

#### Affirmative action

What is our political strategy for raising the class consciousness of male and female workers? In addition to the demands we advance for basic democratic rights such as legal equality, abortion, and others, we put forward basically two axes of struggle.

1. We concretize our demands for socializing the domestic labor of women — such as child care.

2. We demand preferential action programs for women in education, employment, job training, in order to break down the barriers that have kept women out of sectors of the economy traditionally restricted to males.

The fight for preferential programs, for affirmative action, plays a decisive role in effecting changes in consciousness on a mass scale. It undercuts the divisions and stratifications that are used to hold down the wages and working conditions of all workers. Male and female workers can be convinced that it is in their class interest to fight for such demands.

Secondly, the fight for affirmative action makes both men and women more conscious of all the ways in which discrimination against women is built into this society. Oppression is not an idea or a state of mind, it is a social relation. It has material consequences in unequal consequences of life and labor, and deliberate measures are needed in areas to overcome the results of centuries of oppression of women.

Thirdly, affirmative-action victories begin in the most fundamental way to undercut sexist attitudes toward women. As women break down the social barriers of their second-class status, they gain self-confidence. Men begin to see their women co-workers as equal human beings. They learn to respect and judge women more as people and less as female sex-objects. That has a powerful impact on the attitudes and conduct of millions of men and women in their personal lives. Men do start sharing the housework.

It is by charting this kind of political course of broad mass struggle for affirmative action and other demands that we seek to break through the false consciousness that's engendered by the ruling class. It is along this path that we help the working class to think socially and act politically, and thereby become more class conscious.

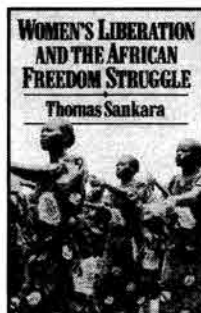
Mass independent women's organizations have a vital role to play in helping to advance in this direction. Their actions can converge with progress by vanguard workers in transforming the labor movement and forging the kind of working-class leadership that is necessary for women's struggles.

for further reading

### Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle

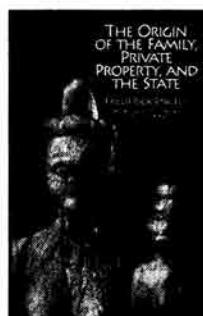
Thomas Sankara

"There is no true social revolution without the liberation of women," explains the leader of the 1983-87 revolution in Burkina Faso. Booklet \$3.50



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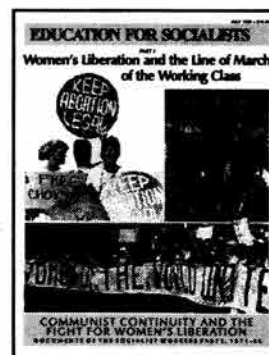
*Documents of the Socialist Workers Party 1971-86*  
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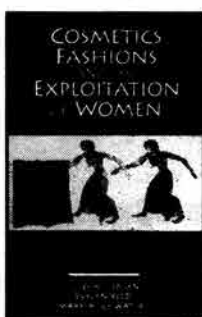
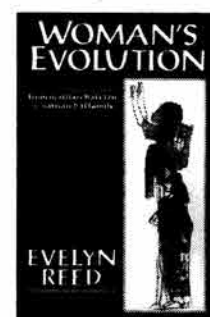
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# Detroit news strike

Continued from front page

the mood to try to stop the scab trucks from crossing, but union officials argued against it. A major demonstration is planned for Saturday, September 2, in front of the plant at the time when the Sunday paper is supposed to be produced.

The anger and frustration of the strikers was evident as the cops moved in to allow scab-driven trucks and vans through the picket lines. Pickets chanted, "Rent-a-cop," at the assembled police officers. Besides employing hundreds of Vance Security goons, Detroit Newspapers, the joint management company for the *News* and *Free Press*, paid Sterling Heights at least \$330,000 for police protection in the first 34 days of the strike.

Detroit Newspapers has also been paying other suburban governments to act as their private police force.

Support continues to grow for the strikers. The labor/community support coalition is now holding two meetings a week in different areas, attracting many new supporters.

Unionists across southeastern Michigan are actively building the September 2-4 "Solidarity Weekend," called by the striking unions with the help of the Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO and the national AFL-CIO, by leafleting at plant gates, phone calls to unionists, and community outreach.

Negotiations resumed the week of August 21 for the first time since the strike began, but union officials report no

progress. The companies are still refusing to negotiate with the Council of Newspaper Unions, which represents all six striking locals.

The bosses told the Pressmen's union that they were withdrawing their promise to maintain five-day workweeks for 231 pressmen. Management claims that because of the strike the company only needs one printing plant, so it will now only guarantee full workweeks for half the workers.

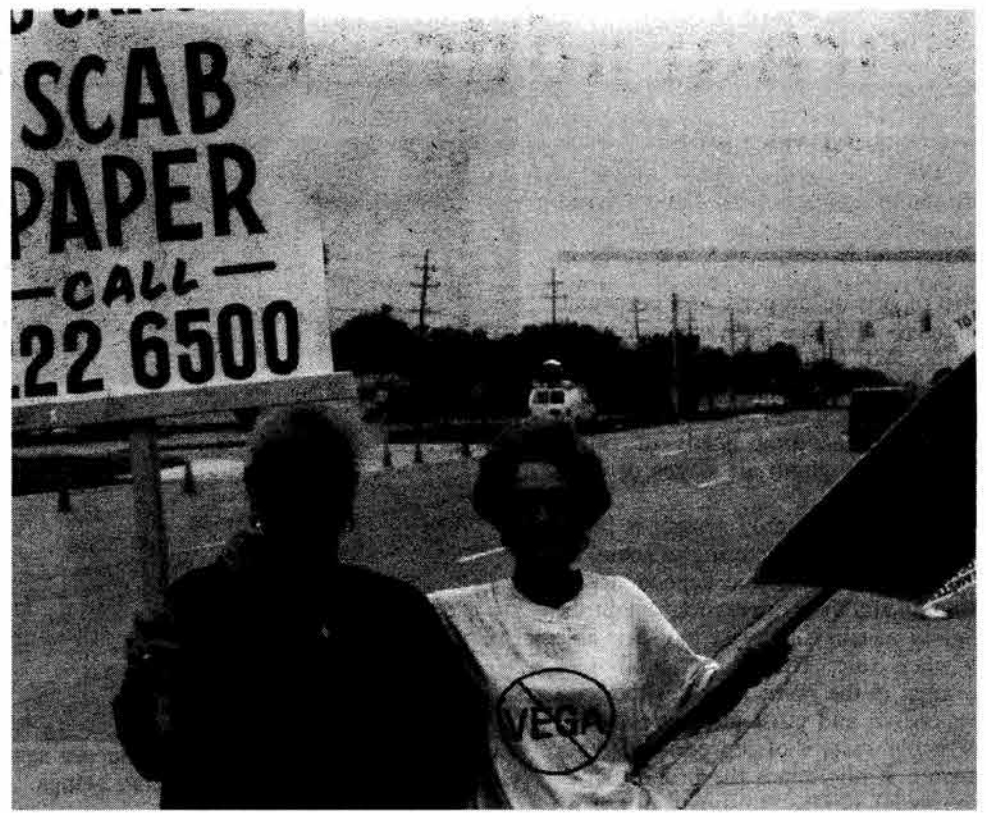
Jack Howe, president of Pressmen's Local 13N, responded, "It's a lot of rhetoric, unless they are not planning to print the product they have been printing."

The Newspaper Guild, the union that has had the most members cross the picket line, is urging line-crossers to reconsider. A letter from the guild's officers asked them to "rejoin our effort as we bring the strike to a fair and timely conclusion.... Help provide us with the maximum leverage to do that."

Newspaper management claims that a joint edition of the paper is within 200,000 copies of pre-strike circulation levels and that separate editions will resume publishing in September.

But there is no indication that the company claims are true. The paper is being boycotted widely by workers across the region. Many small businesses refuse to carry it.

The *Oakland Press*, a daily newspaper in the northern suburbs of Detroit, reports that every carrier interviewed "said they



Militant/Steve Marshall

Picket line outside Detroit Newspapers printing plant in Sterling Heights, Michigan.

had lost a significant number of customers."

The strikers' campaign against newspaper advertisers has stepped up. Belle Tire, a local tire store chain, had resumed advertising in the scab paper until United Auto Workers members supporting the strike showed up at their doors with leaflets that said, "Please do not patron-

ize." This convinced the company to again pull its ads from the paper.

The support coalition has been organizing teams that go to stores that continue to advertise in or sell the paper with literature on the strike urging a consumer boycott.

John Sarge is a member of United Auto Workers Local 900

## Curtis supporters to meet with Iowa parole board

Continued from front page

years in prison. He fulfilled the requirement for time served on the phony rape charge in 1993, and is now being held on the burglary charge tacked on by the cops and prosecutors several weeks after his original arrest.

Among those convicted of the same burglary charge as Curtis who were paroled in 1994, the average time served was 76.2 months. Curtis has already served 84 months. The board will announce in October whether or not Curtis is granted a formal parole hearing.

At the meeting, Mark Curtis Defense Committee supporters will deliver messages to the board sent in from around the world demanding Curtis's release. These

will include 5,000 letters written by delegates at the July convention of the Movement of the Landless Rural Workers in Brazil, plus several dozen already collected in the United States and other countries around the world.

The defense committee is urging supporters to get as many letters to the defense committee as possible prior to that meeting. The committee will continue collecting letters through October 1. A new brochure in Spanish is now available detailing the parole campaign for Curtis.

### New support around world

Hundreds of workers and youth learned about Curtis's fight during the recent "Cuba Lives" festival. Youth from many

countries traveled to Cuba for the event and stayed in the homes of working people during their week there. A Cuban banana farm worker wrote the defense committee to say he is organizing a group of young people there to publicize the parole effort and win new support.

Stanley Ofari, the general secretary of the Ghana Students Union of Cuba, wrote to Curtis directly expressing his support. "We ... are very proud of you, because with you, we are aware that there is something that cannot be bought and that is ... the dignity of a determined people," stated Ofari.

"With the experience we have with people like [Nelson] Mandela of South Africa, we hope that one day, the truth about your

case will come out and, once again, the oppressed will gain victory over the oppressor."

Joining Curtis defense committee endorsers is Larry Quinn, editor of the *Irish People*, published in New York. An *Phoblacht/Republican News*, published in Ireland, recently reviewed several titles from Pathfinder Press, including the booklet *Why is Mark Curtis Still in Prison?*

"The pamphlet exposes in detail the systematic framing of Curtis in a stage-managed arrest and show trial," writer Neil Forde stated. "It's a pamphlet you can read in one sitting and then read again in disbelief at such a deliberate miscarriage of justice, and with sympathy because of its similarity with cases in Britain and Ireland."

Curtis defense committee backers have attended a number of recent conferences to win support for Curtis's release. Bill Kalman from the committee in Des Moines made a presentation on the case to farm activists attending the Federation of Southern Cooperatives meeting in Epes, Alabama. Supporters from Seattle, Des Moines, and Portland, Oregon, attended the National Lawyers Guild Conference in Portland in August.

The Mark Curtis Defense Committee is requesting that supporters write to the Iowa State Board of Parole, 523 East 12th St., Des Moines, IA 50319 urging it to grant parole to Curtis. The letters should be sent to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, Box 1048, Des Moines, IA 50311 or faxed to (515) 243-9869. The defense committee will arrange to deliver the messages to the board.

## Meatpackers mark 10 years since strike at Hormel, discuss new contract fights

BY JON HILLSON

AUSTIN, Minnesota — The 10th anniversary reunion of the 1985 Hormel meatpackers strike here August 19 provided the backdrop for discussing current contract fights with workers from two of the plants that were struck a decade ago.

Dale Chidester worked in Hormel's Ottumwa, Iowa, plant during the 1985-86 strike. Today he works at the company's flagship Austin plant and is secretary-treasurer of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 9. The local's contract with the company expires September 9.

Contracts also expire the same day at Hormel's Fremont, Nebraska, and Atlanta, Georgia, plants. "There is no chain; we just have common expiration dates. These are individual local contracts, negotiated together. It's not chain bargaining like in the old days," Chidester said.

Hopes on the floor are for "keeping even," Chidester emphasized. "Hormel made record profits again, over \$100 million last year. People are talking about a cost-of-living type deal. We just don't want to end up taking home less in these economic times. We'd like a fair share of the profit."

Hormel changed the name of its pork slaughtering operation here in 1988 to Quality Pork Processors, claiming the new plant was a separate company. At the Austin Hormel plant there are 1,000 workers today. Some 700 work at the adjoining Quality Pork facility, explained Chidester. "There is really a two-tier system here with Quality Pork," he said. They have a

different contract with a different expiration date than at the Hormel plant. Pay at Quality Pork, where most of the kill and knife work is done, begins at \$7.20 an hour and tops out at \$9.50. Many of the workers are from Mexico, Central America, and Southeast Asia.

The company scheduled work at both plants during the anniversary celebration. "The word was out in the plant," Chidester said, "that you could lose your job if you came to the reunion."

"I think this [reunion] is important," he told the crowd of 300. "It's about our history. If you don't remember your past, you're condemned to repeat it."

"I'm not here as Local 9 secretary-treasurer," he said, "I'm not representing anyone but myself. But as a member of the working class, I think I have the right to speak here."

### Ottumwa plant

Hormel closed down its Ottumwa plant shortly after the strike. It was sold to Cargill's Excel packinghouse division and reopened in 1987. Glenn Matters worked in the plant before and after it was sold. Members of UFCW Local 230 recently approved a new four-year contract there by a three-to-one margin.

"We gained nothing," Matters said. "There's a 15-cent an hour raise. We get that in 1998."

"The company got the Beardstown, Iowa, local to settle for less and then came to us" with the same offer, said Matters. "At least we said 'no' to that. But we were played against each other, the same old

story."

In the negotiations the company also pushed to hold down its compensation costs by dangling bonuses in front of the workers. "The new contract states that if we keep workers' compensation costs under \$2 million, we get a share of what's saved. If costs go over \$2 million, we get a check for \$100," Matters said with disgust.

Jon Hillson is a member of the United Auto Workers in St. Paul, Minnesota. Dick McBride, a member of UFCW Local 1149 in Perry, Iowa, contributed to this article.



Militant/Jon Hillson

Part of crowd at meeting to mark 10-year anniversary of strike at Hormel



# Forum addresses struggle of Black farmers

BY GEORGE WILLIAMS

EPES, Alabama — The Federation of Southern Cooperatives/ Land Assistance Fund held its 28th annual meeting here August 18-19. Some 150 people participated in workshops on the 1995 farm bill, marketing, housing, and other matters of concern to farmers. The organization is made up primarily of Black farmers and cooperative members.

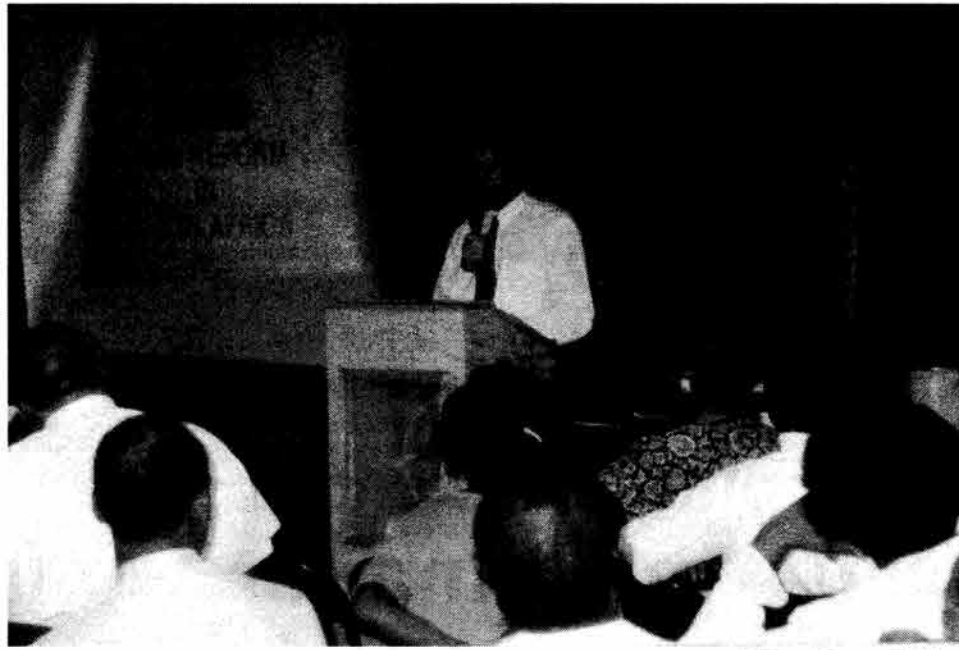
One of the main goals of the federation is to end the devastating loss of land owned by Blacks and other minority farmers. From a high point in the early 1900s of 15 million acres, Blacks own less than 3 million acres of land today, the overwhelming majority of which is located in the southeast. Over the past six years the federation says it has helped Black farmers maintain 125,000 acres of land.

During the workshops and informal discussions, the 1995 Farm Bill was a topic of debate. Some favored lobbying as a way to defend their interests, while others thought farmers should organize a march on Washington. Ralph Paige, executive director of the federation, argued for defeating the Republican Party in the next national election as the most effective tactic, as did other members of the organization's board of directors.

## Fight against a frame-up

A highlight of the meeting was a presentation by Dewayne Boyd, a Black family farmer from Mississippi who was framed-up for protesting the theft of his land by a wealthy landowner. Boyd announced to prolonged applause his October 4 acquittal on arson charges by a jury in Oktibbeha County, Mississippi. Boyd furnished additional details of his fight in an interview.

Boyd returned to Mississippi in 1990 to find that Waldrop Farms, a big-business agricultural outfit, was farming his family's land. Boyd's grandmother Margaret



South African minister of land affairs Derek Hanekom speaks at Federation of Southern Cooperatives meeting about fight for land in post-apartheid South Africa.

Weaver is the deed owner of 1,000 acres that her grandfather purchased in 1867. To ensure adequate legal protection in maintaining the family's land, Boyd and his uncle leased the land from his grandmother, with an intent to purchase.

After inspecting U.S. Department of Agriculture documents, Boyd discovered Waldrop Farms held lease rights to only 315 acres of land owned by his family, even though the company was using all 1,000 acres. A warranty deed drawn up on behalf of Waldrop Farms by former Starkville city attorney Ben Hilbun, Boyd insists, was fraudulent. "It didn't take an expert to see that something was wrong with those documents," he said. "My grandmother didn't sign that deed nor any of the other documents. Her signature had been forged, even her name was mis-

spelled."

Boyd won some early battles against Waldrop. As a result of Boyd's complaints, the government dropped Waldrop from a number of farm assistance programs during 1990. Boyd said, "It's a crime when well-off big businessmen such as Waldrop, which controls most of the farming in this area, are the main recipients of governmental assistance programs."

In 1992 the Mississippi Supreme Court ruled that Waldrop was occupying Boyd's family's land illegally. Just days before the Supreme Court ruling, Boyd was charged with burning a Waldrop Farms tractor. A raid on Boyd's home by Sheriff Dolf Byrne caused Boyd to fear for his life and he escaped out a back window, later turning himself in.

The Federation of Southern Cooperatives helped bail Boyd out of jail and arranged for his legal defense. Initially, a grand jury refused to indict Boyd because only circumstantial evidence was presented by the sheriff. Byrne then somehow dug up a witness to whom Boyd allegedly confessed. On the basis of this new "evidence" an indictment was issued. "My dream was put on hold," Boyd said.

## Broad support wins fight

Boyd was tried for arson twice. The first trial in 1993 ended in a hung jury. His victory against the frame-up charges was largely due, Boyd said, to the support he had received from the federation and others from around the country. "Farmers, working people, Black, white, and red showed their support for me," he told the Black farmer's conference. "Many expressed their gratitude for my standing up for what's right."

"This ordeal was scary, real scary, to the point of fearing for my life," Boyd explained. "Many people have died or been put in prison for fighting against the status quo. One of my hopes coming out of this is that we all realize that we've got to stand up and fight together or we lose what we've gained and struggled for over many years."

Now that his name has been cleared, Boyd says he is looking forward to farming his family's land and bringing Waldrop and others to justice. He has initiated proceedings to force Waldrop to reimburse taxpayers for subsidies received while illegally farming Boyd's land.

Also speaking at the meeting was South African minister of land affairs Derek Hanekom. Participants listened with rapt attention as he explained how Africans in South Africa were forced off their land and the steps being taken today by the new government to rectify this. Both Hanekom and his aide, who are members of the African National Congress, were surrounded after the meeting by those wanting to discuss the struggle by the landless in South Africa.

Bill Kalman, representative of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee from Des Moines, Iowa, received a hearty round of applause as he hailed the recent stay of execution for Mumia Abu-Jamal. Kalman drew the connections between that case and Mark Curtis's fight for justice. Curtis is a meatpacker who was framed up on rape and burglary charges seven years ago. He had been active in farm and labor issues.

Many participants in the farm conference stopped by the information table set up by the Curtis Defense Committee after Kalman's remarks and expressed their support.

George Williams is a member of the United Auto Workers Union in Birmingham, Alabama. Nancy Boyasko and Alyson Kennedy of Birmingham, Alabama, and Jerry Freiwirth of Houston, Texas, also contributed to this article.

# Hundreds protest shipment of nuclear waste

BY CHRIS RAYSON

TACOMA, Washington — Five hundred people demonstrated at a recent U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) meeting here on the agency's proposal to ship nuclear waste through the Port of Tacoma.

The overflow crowd packed the Tacoma Public Utilities auditorium. Another 200, locked out by city officials citing fire regulations, gathered outside.

Chants of "No Nukes" from those outside echoed into the meeting room. As one person voiced support for the plan, many others argued vociferously with him. Two locked-out protesters left briefly to get poster board and set up at street corners with signs saying "Don't Waste Tacoma" and "No to Nuclear Waste."

Inside the mood was hot. According to

*The News Tribune*, "The crowd took every opportunity to jeer, scoff, hiss and laugh" at the plan.

"I just don't believe a word that guy is saying," said Ann Woolnough, listening to Charles Head, DOE project chief. "There isn't supposed to be a problem with oil shipments either."

Linda Cunio was exposed to radiation in the 1960s when plumes of radiation were released from the Hanford reprocessing plant in eastern Washington. As a result, she decided not to have children.

"I don't need any more technical problems," she said. "The grandchildren I will never see are enough technical problems. I vote no."

Many working people turned out, some wearing union jackets. Local 23 of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union at the Port of Tacoma has stated that it will refuse to handle the nuclear waste.

The DOE plans to ship spent nuclear fuel from around the world through as many as 10 ports.

In addition to Tacoma, these include Portland, Oregon; Charleston, South Carolina; Galveston, Texas; Hampton Roads, Virginia; Jacksonville, Florida; Sunny Point, North Carolina; Concord, California; Savannah, Georgia; and Wilmington, North Carolina.

The spent nuclear fuel is composed of highly enriched weapons grade uranium. All of it originated in the United States. The U.S. government promoted an "Atoms for Peace" program that began in the 1950s, encouraging countries to use highly enriched uranium in their reactors. In return for promises not to use the fuel to make nuclear weapons, Washington agreed to store the waste in the United States and did so until 1988.

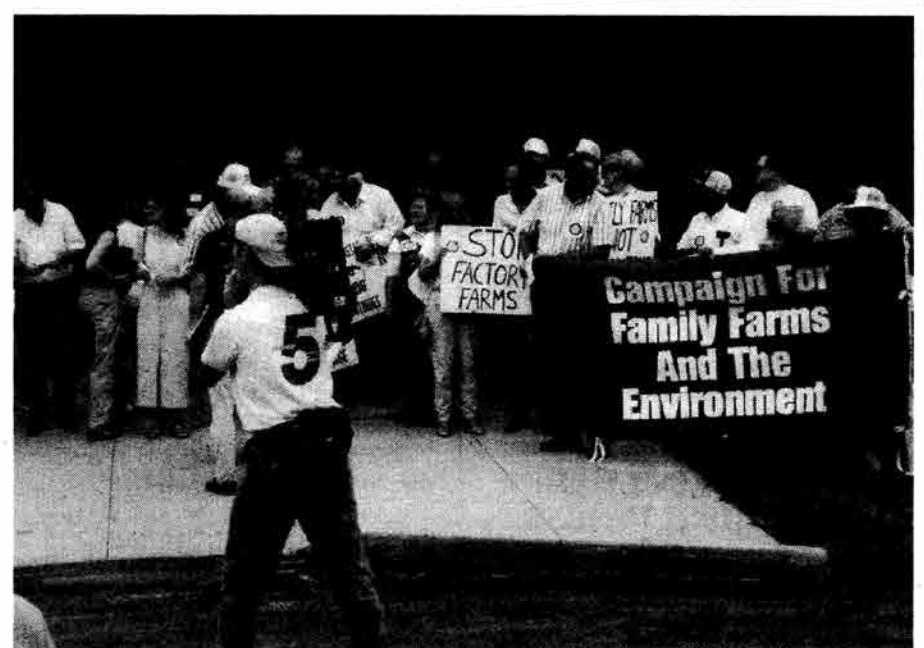
The U.S. government now proposes to start receiving spent fuel again. Highly enriched uranium is accumulating on site in nuclear power plants abroad from past U.S. exports and from a newer DOE policy to encourage the conversion of highly enriched to low-enriched uranium. In this way Washington hopes to maintain its nuclear advantage in the world.

The government plans to schedule more than 700 shipments over 13 years of 20

tons of nuclear waste. From the ports they would be shipped by truck and rail to reprocessing sites at the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory and the Savannah River Site in South Carolina. In a later stage, the DOE plans to upgrade reprocessing capability at the Hanford; Oak Ridge, Tennessee; and Nevada nuclear sites.

Rich Stuart, Socialist Workers candidate for Seattle Port Commission and a rail worker, joined the protest outside the Tacoma hearing.

"The DOE can't be allowed to decide this," he stated. "We are the ones who will suffer the deadly effects, whether on the job or in the community. The only solution is to shut down the nukes now. Every day they operate the likelihood of another Three Mile Island and another Chernobyl increases. In the meantime tons of nuclear waste piles up that no one knows how to get rid of."



Several dozen farmers and supporters protest August 16 at the headquarters of the National Pork Producers Council (NPPC) in West Des Moines, Iowa. Following a press conference, the farmers and their supporters filled the executive meeting room, where they confronted several NPPC board members over the disastrous effects of large-scale hog production.

From Pathfinder

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## FLORIDA

### Miami

Eyewitness Report and Slide Show from Hiroshima Commemoration: The Truth

**About Why the U.S. Dropped the Bomb.** Speaker: Rick Walker, member of Transport Workers Union, just returned from Japan. Fri., Sept. 8, 7:30 p.m. 137 N.E. 54th St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (305) 756-1020

## ILLINOIS

### Chicago

**Detroit Newspaper Strike - Union Solidarity in Action.** Speaker: John Sarge, member United Auto Workers Union Local 900 and Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Sept. 8, 7:30 p.m., 545 W. Roosevelt Road. Donation: \$4, Tel: (312) 829-6815.

### Peoria

**"Never Again": An Eyewitness Reportback from Hiroshima 50 Years After the A-Bomb.** Speaker: Patti Iiyama, member of Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers Union and So-

cialist Workers Party in Houston, who had relatives killed in Hiroshima and parents interned in U.S. prison camps. Sept. 8, 7:30 p.m. Baker Hall, Rm. 253, Bradley Univ., 1422 Main St. Donation: \$4, Tel: (309) 671-2202.

## MASSACHUSETTS

### Boston

**Defend Affirmative Action in Boston Schools.** Speaker: Valerie Johnson, Socialist Workers Party candidate for District 3 Boston City Council. Fri. Sept. 8, 7:30 p.m. 780 Tremont St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

## NORTH CAROLINA

### Greensboro

**How We Won the Vote: The Exciting History of Women's Fight for Equality.** Video

narrated by Jean Stapleton. Fri. Sept. 8, 7:30 p.m. 2000-C S. Elm Eugene. Donation: \$3 Tel: 272-5996.

## BRITAIN

### Manchester

**Cuba Lives International Youth Festival.** An eyewitness report. Fri. Sept. 8, 7:30 p.m. First Floor, 60 Shudehill. Donation: £2 Tel (016) 839-1766.

## NEW ZEALAND

### Auckland

**Hear the Socialist Candidates for Mayor.** Speakers: James Robb, Communist League candidate for mayor of Auckland; Annalucia Vermunt, CL candidate for mayor of Manukau. Sat. Sept. 9, 7 p.m. 203 Karangahape Road. Donation £3 Tel: (9) 379-3075.

# Thousands arrive in China for women's forum

Continued from front page

girl child. In Malawi violence against women and rape of young girls is a big problem. The girl child should have equal education and opportunity. The destiny of women is not only marriage. Development fails without the advancement of women."

Irene Foyentin of the National Association of Women's Studies of France, said her group wanted to get a resolution passed by the NGO conference to encourage more women's studies programs at universities.

Valda Napurrula of Australia said she is "interested in the rights of indigenous women and meeting up with others from around the world to see what common goals we have."

Two women from Cuzco, Peru, also came to highlight the problems facing indigenous women in Latin America in particular. A representative of the Peasant Federation of Anta Province was interested in discussing, "education, pay, and employment."

"The poverty we suffer obliges us to organize ourselves," she said. "We are not respected for who we are, as women, as Quechua Indians. The economic situation in Peru is returning women to poverty."

These delegates plan to return to Peru and begin working on a nationwide mobilization of indigenous women to coincide with the UN's declaration of 1995 as the year of indigenous peoples.

## 30,000 expected to participate

The China Organizing Committee expects 30,000 overseas participants will be on hand including more than 12,000 people from Asian and Pacific countries.

Some 5,000 women from China will join the discussions. Reporters from India and Indonesia said those countries would have 300 and 200 participants respectively.

By the afternoon of August 29 more than 10,000 delegates had arrived. The unparalleled attendance at this event reflects the greater participation of women in the workforce that has come in part with the growing penetration of industry and manufacturing throughout the world.

While the growing economic crisis takes a heavy toll on women, there are more women in the labor force today, from Africa to Latin America and Eastern Europe.

Women's participation in the labor market grew an average of 10 percent in all regions of the world. In Africa the ratio of women in the workforce for every 100 men went from 39 to 71 between 1970 and 1990, while in Asia and the Pacific it went from 28 to 48 from 1970 to 1980.

Many of those participating in the NGO Forum hope to influence the outcome of the platform of action that is to be voted on by the delegates to the Fourth World Conference on Women. A draft of the platform, 149 pages long, has been discussed for months as women prepared their participation and planned workshops and conferences.

Many sections of the document are in brackets, denoting lack of agreement. This includes passages such as, "Moreover, the debt burden has forced many developing countries to undertake structural adjustment policies that are detrimental to their social development. The number of people living in poverty has therefore increased disproportionately in most countries, particularly the heavily indebted countries, during the past decade."

The platform states abortion should not

be used as a contraceptive method and that if it is legal, it should be safe, but does not take a stand in favor of abortion being safe, legal, and accessible for all women.

The fact that thousands of women will come together, with a large component from the third world, has drawn the ire of right-wing forces.

The words 'mother' and 'marriage' occur rarely," complained Philip Lawler in an August 22 column in the *Wall Street Journal*, "and only once does the word 'motherhood' appear in a positive context. 'Wife' and 'husband' do not appear at all."

The role of the family, women's integration in the workforce, equal access to employment and decent pay, abortion, immigration, and violence against women are among the issues that will be debated at the conference.

Among the speakers at the conference will be Hanan Ashrawi of the Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizen's Rights who will address the opening plenary session; Cheryl Carolus of the African National Congress who will join a session on Approaches to Governance; and Hillary Clinton who is scheduled to address the session titled Strategies for the Future.

Participation from the United States is expected to number 5,000. The official U.S. government delegation, headed by UN Representative Madeleine Albright, has been posturing as a leading defender of human and women's rights in the world.

## Hundreds of presentations

Hundreds of presentations each day are planned by a myriad of organizations including the Asian Pacific Environmental Network, the Federation of Cuban

Women, Hiroshima Women's Network, YWCA, World Assembly of Muslim Youth, Hmong Women of Minnesota Count Down to Beijing Coalition, Catholics for Free Choice, and the All Armenian Women's Union.

The status of women in the Middle East will be discussed, with more than a dozen events planned to express varying points of view on women in countries where Islam is the dominant religion.

There are also a large number of workshops on women in Asia, with organizations from Japan participating, including several that will take up the issue of the Korean "comfort women" who were forced to provide sexual services for the Japanese military during World War II.

Tian Qiyu of the China Organizing Committee said a playground area in Huairou has been set aside for demonstrations and processions, "but these should not infringe on the sovereignty of the host country."

The holding of the conferences in China has been the subject of much debate, with some U.S. politicians advocating a boycott to pressure the Chinese government to be more agreeable to Washington's dictates.

While there have been dire warnings about possible problems entering the country with literature and materials for the conference, when we arrived with several other plane loads of participants customs officials simply watched as everyone collected their boxes and proceeded to the exits. We didn't see Chinese officials check a single piece of luggage.

Most delegates we spoke with said they believe the conference provides an important opportunity to advance the case for women's equality and in general were excited to be here.

# CALENDAR

## ILLINOIS

### Chicago

**Classes on the Cuban Revolution.** Sponsor: The Young Socialists. 1st class on What is Behind U.S. Government Hatred of Cuba. Sun. Sept. 10, 3 p.m.; 2nd class on Why Working People and Youth Should Support the Cuban Revolution. Sun. Sept. 17, 3 p.m. 545 Roosevelt Rd., Donation \$1, Tel: (312) 274-4335.

### Urbana

**Rally to Defend Affirmative Action.** Sponsors: College NAACP, Champaign County NOW, Socialist Forum. Fri. Sept. 8, 5 p.m. Univ. of Illinois Quad, 1401 West Green.

## NEW JERSEY

### Patterson

**A Report from the 1995 International Cuba Youth Festival: Eyewitness report and slideshow presentation.** Sponsor: The Black Forum. Wednesday, September 6, 6-8 p.m. Patterson Library 750 Broadway, Tel: (201) 591-1037.

## HEAR SINN FEIN LEADER MARTIN McGUINNESS

### Boston

Tues. Sept. 5, 8 p.m. Marriott Longworth Hotel New York

### Hartford, Connecticut

Sat. Sept. 9, 8 p.m. Elks Hall, 34 Prospect St.

### Philadelphia

Sun. Sept. 10, 12:30 p.m. Irish Center, Carpenters Lane and Emlen St. Admission to all events \$20. Tel: (212) 227-5522 for more information.

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**The sane society** — We agree with New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani that it's "very sensible" for the city to spend \$40,000 for an Index of Mental Health survey. For openers, they could put the



**Harry Ring**

good mayor on a couch in front of a shuttered mental health clinic.

**Racist? Philadelphia cops?** — During the big Philadelphia de-

monstration for Mumia Abu-Jamal, bystanders heard a white cop say to a perspiring Black cop: "You're sweating like a nigger," adding, "I should take you home to my wife and tell her you're my daughter's boyfriend." A complaint was filed and Capt. Thomas Thompson was removed as head of a "race relations" unit.

**The 'developing' countries** — In 1970, Africa's share of world exports totaled 4 percent. By 1990 it was a hair above 1 percent.

**Just their 'secret'?** — Journalist Patricia Axelrod recently spent eight weeks in Iraq researching the Gulf War. In a report to the San Francisco *Chronicle*, she cites the

ridiculously low casualty figures offered by the Iraq and U.S. governments. (Iraq: 8,243; U.S.: about 13,000) Axelrod says the actual toll may be as high as 300,000. The *Chronicle* headlined the story, "Baghdad's terrible secret."

**Quick learner** — A Russian Orthodox priest set up a mock church on a road, along with a sign offering to bless drivers and cars for 150,000 rubles, about \$32, although he will take less.

**'Enjoy your flight'** — Since April, there have been 21 air traffic control system failures, with controllers turning to even less reliable backup systems, or simply losing contact with hundreds of

planes. Failures are attributed to aging computers. Said a controller: "It's like going down the highway knowing your steering wheel could come off at any time."

**'Don't ask, don't tell'** — New guidelines adopted by Wall Street brokers stipulate that investors don't have to be told the risks involved in gambling on derivatives unless they specify, in writing, that the dealer is acting as an investment adviser. Officials of bankrupt Orange county are suing Merrill Lynch for sticking them with derivatives that were dicier than they realized.

**Hard choice** — We never heard

of Bob and Carole McNeil, and the San Francisco *Chronicle* society column saw no need to identify them. They report the McNeil family will be staying three weeks at the Ritz in Paris at \$1,200 a night. Declares Bob, "What can you do? It's that or sleep in the street."

**Meanwhile, enjoy** — In England, supermarkets are featuring "mechanically recovered" burger meat. (After the carcass is cut up, remaining meat is retrieved from the bones in high-powered washing machines.) Apparently concerned about the bacteria count, the label on one chain's "No Frills Burgers," warns, "Ensure no trace of red remains."

## U.S. court moves to extradite Irish activist Smyth

BY TAMI PETERSON

SAN FRANCISCO — On July 27 a U.S. appeals court ruled that Jimmy Smyth, one of the H-Block Four who escaped from Long Kesh prison in Northern Ireland in 1983, will be handed over to British officials there. The three-judge panel claimed that Smyth's life would not be in danger if he were returned.

Judge Mary Schroeder stated, "Smyth would have to demonstrate... that the criminal justice system in Northern Ireland likely would exact additional retribution for his crime beyond the remaining term of imprisonment."

In the initial ruling against Smyth's extradition last September, Judge Barbara Caulfield ruled that because of collusion between the British Army and loyalist paramilitary forces, Smyth's life would be in danger from right-wing death squads.

The appeals court said Caulfield relied improperly on the British government's general discrimination against Catholics and opponents of British rule in Northern Ireland. The evidence did support Smyth's argument that he would be abused in prison, Schroeder said, but failed to prove that the abuse would be based on his politics or religion.

The appeals court characterized Smyth as a member of the Irish Republican Army (IRA), which he denies. Smyth was never charged with membership in the IRA. He was an activist in Sinn Fein, a legal political organization that is opposed to the British occupation of Northern Ireland and seeks the reunification of Ireland's 32 counties.

Letters and statements of support for Smyth came from many organizations and activists. A news release from the H-Block Defense Committee in San Francisco stated, "All who support our cause, all who speak for freedom everywhere will rally now to be heard."

Maggie Lynch, Smyth's wife, said, "Had they [the judges] read the testimony, it would have been clear that all former political prisoners' lives are in danger in the north of Ireland." In Ireland Sinn Fein, the Saoirse campaign to free political prisoners, and the Irish Anti-Extradition Committee called for an end to the extraditions.

"Smyth is a criminal," said British consul general Malcolm Dougal in a letter published in the San Francisco *Chronicle* August 8. Dougal was responding to a letter by Ciaran Scally, president of the local Irish Northern Aid chapter. "How would Mr. Scally feel if after conviction, the Oklahoma City bomber should escape to the United Kingdom?" the British official demanded. "With their decision to extradite Smyth, the U.S. appellate court upheld the rule of law in the fight against terrorism."

Tony Mastrogiorgio, a spokesman for the San Francisco H-Block Defense Committee, responded in the *Chronicle* later that week. "Here are the facts," he wrote. "Smyth was convicted in a non-jury court by a political judge. The man and woman he is alleged to have attacked, and with whom the assailant spent several minutes, failed to identify Smyth.... Smyth was arrested some distance from the scene of the attack by an off-duty policeman, who claimed to have recognized the back of Smyth's head. That remarkable identification was good enough for a 20-year prison sentence."

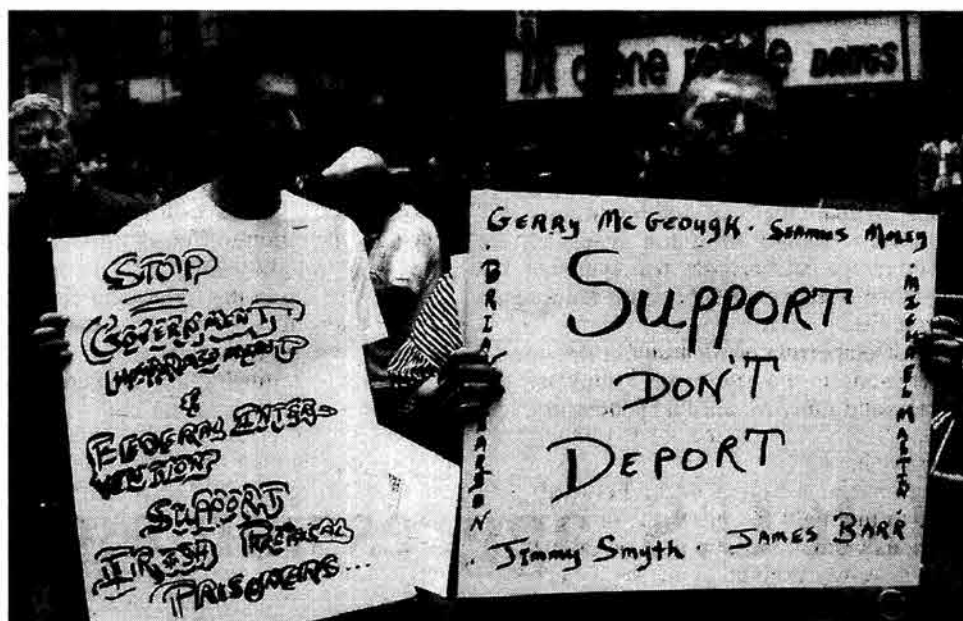
"Smyth's case is just one of the hundreds of similar abuses in that beleaguered province," Mastrogiorgio noted.

**'I'm going to keep fighting'**

After the ruling Smyth stated "I'm just going to stay and keep fighting, just like people in the north of Ireland are fighting for peace." He urged supporters to keep struggling, "We've been so close. If we give up now, they've won."

Smyth expressed his concern that this ruling was a blow to the remaining H-Block Four, Terry Kirby, Pol Brennan, and Kevin Barry Artt, who have already spent up to three years awaiting trial in U.S. jails. "Their judge was waiting for this decision before letting them out on bail... At least I've been out for months. Those fellows haven't been allowed out a single day since their arrests," Smyth said.

Smyth, arrested in 1992, had worked as a house painter in San Francisco for eight years. He has been free on bond since September 1994. After the recent ruling, the U.S. Justice Department initially moved to revoke his bail, declaring Smyth



Rally in New York June 3 to free Irish political prisoners and stop deportations. Several Irish activists have already spent years in U.S. jails awaiting trials.

"a flight risk." The same three judge panel later decided not to revoke bail.

Smyth intends to appeal before the full Ninth Circuit Court and, if necessary, take it to the Supreme Court.

The San Francisco chapter of Saoirse is planning various protest actions in the San Francisco Bay Area, including picketing

the British Consulate August 31, the anniversary of the cease-fire in Northern Ireland, and protesting an October 5-7 speaking tour by former British prime minister Margaret Thatcher. Saoirse received a great response to a table and leafletting at an August 12 demonstration demanding justice for Mumia Abu-Jamal.

## — 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —

### THE MILITANT

Published in the Interest of the Working People  
September 18, 1970 Price 10¢

SALINAS, Calif., Sept. 7 — The Salinas Valley, beginning at Monterey Bay and stretching southward for over 50 miles, produces a major portion of the entire country's lettuce, tomatoes, celery, artichokes, broccoli, cauliflower, beans and strawberries. In America's "salad bowl," five companies control 90 percent of the farmland.

Over the last two years the predominantly Chicano workers have followed the development of the Delano grape strike. This spring they began to organize themselves. Their representatives made a trip to Delano and asked the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee (UFWOC) to come to the valley. By the end of July, to keep UFWOC out, farm growers signed a sweetheart contract with the Teamsters union.

The five-year contract provided little more than the minimum wage. The workers were summoned to an owner's house where he explained that the union official would come around the following week to sign them up. Anyone who did not sign could no longer work.

The UFWOC responded by taking both the growers and the Teamsters to court, charging that the field workers had been denied the right to choose their own union. When a grower tried to fire 250 workers who refused to join the Teamsters, the UFWOC threw up a picket line. Growers and

Teamsters obtained a court order against picketing, but the line continued. Packinghouse workers honored the strike, and the lettuce crop lay rotting in the fields.

### THE MILITANT

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

September 8, 1945

ST. LOUIS, Aug. 21 — The AFL newspaper carriers have completely paralyzed the three capitalist dailies here, the Post Dispatch, Star-Times and Globe-Democrat, by a militant strike which began August 16. The end is not yet in sight.

Because union pressmen, in complete solidarity with the carriers, have refused to go through the picket lines, the publishers have been unable even to print papers, let alone to get them distributed! Both the carriers and the pressmen belong to the International Typographical Union.

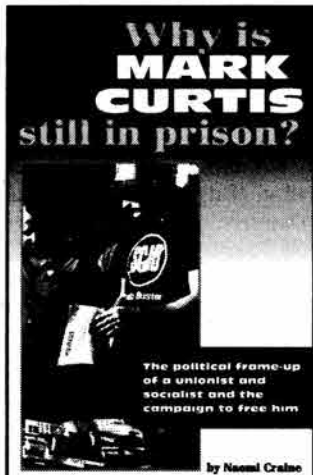
St. Louis is literally without newspapers and seems to be bearing up under the "ordeal" manfully. It is this cold, passive indifference by the overwhelming portion of the people that has the publishers frightened. Deprive this city for three months of the scandal sheets (so-called "news" papers) and a large part of it might be weaned away for good.

St. Louis carriers are striking mainly to compel this recognition of bargaining rights by the bosses. Collective bargaining however is no empty abstraction with the workers and their demand denotes a large number of grievances in the background. If they win — and we think they will — new struggles will develop rapidly on more concrete and specific issues.

## 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.



## World debate on women's rights

The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women opening in Beijing will be a rolling forum for discussion and debate by tens of thousands of women on a wide range of questions. Its size and breadth — and the very fact that it is taking place in China — reflect the increasing role of women in the workforce and in society throughout the world, and the self-confidence that comes along with that. This conference on women will be several times larger than the last one, held 10 years ago in Nairobi, Kenya. It will be even more marked by the participation of women from the oppressed nations in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

Because of the enthusiastic response of fighters for women's rights to this event, the capitalist rulers cannot brush it aside. The Clinton administration is jumping in, purporting to carry the banner of defending women's interests.

Washington's record shows otherwise. A message to the U.S. delegation at the Nairobi conference in 1985 from then-president Ronald Reagan read, "The business of this conference is women, not propaganda." By "propaganda" the U.S. president meant: keep out of the discussion such central political questions as the imperialist-imposed debt crisis facing the semicolonial countries, the struggle against apartheid in South Africa, condemnation of Washington's counterrevolutionary war in Central America, and the struggle of the Palestinian people for self-determination. All of these questions — which were, and many still are, linked to the international struggle for women's liberation — were discussed and debated at the conference to the dismay of the imperialist powers.

The Democratic administration this time around will likewise attempt to steer the discussion clear of such questions, putting forward a "pro-family," pro-capitalist

line. At the same time right-wing politicians in the United States, who would rather not see this conference happen at all, are on a hypocritical campaign against China, supposedly concerned over human rights abuses.

The fact is that the capitalists, and especially U.S. imperialism, are the biggest violators of human rights and perpetrators of women's oppression in the world. It's their system that breeds the depression conditions and brutal wars — from Iraq to Bosnia — that working-class women and men bear the brunt of. It's their system that depends on the exploitation of women as one of the central pillars upholding class society.

The anti-China campaign, which most bourgeois forces in the United States have joined, is being waged because they can't forgive the workers and peasants of China for seizing their country for themselves in the 1949 revolution. In doing so they removed close to one quarter of the world's population from the dictates of capital.

Today the Chinese government is taking on a greater political, economic, and military role in Asia and the Pacific, out of the control of Washington, London, Tokyo, and other imperialist powers. And, for all their investment, the imperialists are finding they can't reimpose capitalism in China just by opening a stock market in Shanghai.

Fighters for women's rights from around the world will be looking for each other at this conference, trying to find ways forward. Neither Hillary Clinton and Madeleine Albright, leading the official U.S. delegation, nor the right-wing forces campaigning against the conference speak for the vast majority of women. Our future will be forged in uncompromising fights for women's equality, and is intertwined with the worldwide struggle for socialism.

## Halt U.S. aggression against Iraq

"Hope springs eternal," goes one popular saying. Washington seems to have taken it to heart. Five years after dropping 88,000 tons of bombs on Iraq and slaughtering hundreds of thousands, including literally thousands buried alive, Washington still hopes it can remove Saddam Hussein and replace his regime with one more amenable to U.S. dictates.

That's why President Bill Clinton refuses to lift the embargo on Iraq, in spite of the immense suffering it causes for the Iraqi people.

The latest pretexts for stepping up the pressure were training exercises by the Iraqi army and the defection of two former high officials in Hussein's regime. Washington immediately rushed troops to Kuwait to send a message to Hussein and to see if it could encourage a palace revolt. The defections, if anything, underscored that Washington has no one it can count on to put in Hussein's place.

The U.S. rulers have another problem. They will never again be able to put together the coalition formed after Hussein invaded Kuwait in 1990. While Washington temporarily bolstered its edge against its competitors in Paris, Bonn, and Tokyo, imperialist rivalries since then have accelerated.

Now the French government, with the backing of Moscow, and apparently even some feelers from businessmen in London, is seeking to loosen the embargo

against Iraq. Not because Paris has any sympathy for the workers and peasants in Iraq who face the brunt of the economic devastation caused by the blockade, but because they want to strengthen their position vis-à-vis Washington.

But the latest U.S. troop moves to the Middle East should not be taken lightly. While a shooting war seems to have been avoided this time, the U.S. government, regardless of who ends up in the White House after the 1996 elections, has not given up on its goals.

The Middle East, and the world, is less stable, not more stable, since the 1990-91 Gulf War. There will be more wars and more imperialist intervention, not less.

Washington still believes it is the world's cop. Working people in the United States are getting a sharper picture of what that means. In Philadelphia we have the gang in blue planting evidence and sending hundreds of innocent people to jail. In Los Angeles those who are supposedly there "to protect and to serve" once again have had their masks torn off with Officer Mark Furman's tapes, which show their standard operating procedure.

Around the world, working people need to oppose Washington's so-called police actions, whether in Iraq or the former Yugoslavia.

No blood for oil! U.S. out of the Middle East! Lift the embargo on Iraq!

## Step up fight for Curtis parole

Supporters of Mark Curtis's fight for justice will want to step up their efforts in coming weeks. The Iowa State Board of Parole has agreed to meet September 7 with a delegation speaking on his behalf. The board will decide by October whether or not to schedule a parole hearing.

The September 7 meeting with the parole board, which will include a number of prominent supporters of Curtis, will be an important opportunity to press the authorities to end the discriminatory treatment of this political activist and union fighter. Curtis has now been behind bars for nearly 7 years on frame up charges of rape and burglary.

Wherever possible messages calling on the parole board to release Curtis should be sent before the September 7 meeting. The Mark Curtis Defense Committee is also asking that letters continue to be sent through October 1.

The recent revelations about criminal cop behavior in Los Angeles and Philadelphia will make it easier for working people to see the true character of police in every city, including Des Moines, Iowa. The tapes of ex-Los Angeles cop Mark Furman spewing racial epithets and bragging about being a liar and framing people has brought to the surface the real nature of the men in blue.

The cops in Philadelphia are fairing no better from the

exposés surrounding the notorious 39th District. Five cops have already pleaded guilty to falsifying reports, robbing and beating people, and planting evidence. At least seven more may be indicted.

The chief witness against Curtis was Des Moines police officer Joseph Gonzalez. This cop also has a history of lying and beating people. He was once disciplined for beating up on two youths he picked up because of an expired traffic warrant. One of the young men suffered a head injury, the other was thrown around by the hair. One of the youths later won an out-of-court damages settlement and Gonzalez was suspended for 10 days for lying on his report. Even though the case against Curtis hinged on the testimony of Gonzalez, the jury was not allowed to hear evidence of the disciplinary actions that were taken against him that demonstrated he had a history of lying.

Supporters of Mark Curtis can take advantage of the naked brutality, corruption, and racism that has been exposed by the recent scandals in Los Angeles and Philadelphia to once again explain the issues in Curtis's frame up. Mobilizing support from workers and farmers in struggle and from students and youth around the world will put maximum pressure on Iowa authorities to grant Curtis a hearing and consider his release.

## Photo journalism helps 'Militant'

BY ERIC SIMPSON

Imagine the *Militant* without pictures. Thanks to our many worker correspondents we don't have to. But the *Militant* needs more and better photos, on a wider array of topics, and from more countries.

Photographs are a big component of the *Militant's* journalistic style. We need photos to bring life and action into our pages. Photographs quickly and directly set the scene for a story — give a sense of place — and show the main characters. Photographs communicate the scale of an event: whether it involves hundreds of people, or hundreds of thousands.

And photographs can substantiate the facts in a story, driving home the point that the *Militant* tells the truth. Helping to get the facts out to our readers — to tell the truth directly and without embellishment — is the number one goal of *Militant* photography.

The facts are in the details. We have to reflect the immediacy of the specific situation we are reporting on as journalists and participants.

A photograph should never show a "picket line" in general, for example, but should show *certain* workers, with first and last names, standing in a unique place for a very specific and important reason. A *good* photograph would put you on the line, and introduce you to fellow fighters. A *great* photograph would give voice to those fighters, speaking to the reader with their expressions.

### Get up close

Only through clear detail can a photo communicate the facts. To capture the detail, you must put yourself at the center of the action. *You have to get close.*

*Militant* photographers must always photograph what they see, never what they know. From 100 yards in the driving rain, I know the five gray shapes are a picket line because I am looking for a strike at that mine. But what do I really see? Some shapes and a lot of rain. What is in my mind will not show on film.

But if I stop and participate in the picket line for a while, talk with the strikers and learn about their struggle, and introduce myself and my newspaper, I'll be part of their fight and they'll appreciate an up-close shot to support their strike. The photographs I take of fighters on the line in the driving rain, drenched, with dripping union caps and soggy placards, will show real people and their determination.

Always shoot a number of pictures. Not only will it be more likely that one of them will turn out to be usable, but it also will help to put people at ease.

Even without an article, a photo and a short caption can communicate a wealth of information. It can show how the picket line works. It can show the attitude of the workers as they explain their fight to new people.

Here is another helpful example. From the back of the hall, I know the speaker is opening my mind to new facts in politics. I know the meeting is filled to overflow, and that participants are making plans to build protests in solidarity with Cuba. But my photo shows the backs of heads and a small shadow behind a podium.

What if I take some pictures as the meeting breaks up and some of the participants have begun to circulate a sign-up sheet for buses to the October 21 demonstration in New York? And some when a couple of students have sat down together to design a flyer publicizing the rally. Wouldn't these photographs, with their very concrete details, with people's eyes and expressions as they interact and work together in politics and protest, be more vivid, interesting and helpful to *Militant* readers?

### People and action

The subject of every *Militant* photo should be people moving into political action. One way or another, these two words — people and action — cover the entire range of *Militant* photography. This is the reality of our class, the working class, which is reflected in the pages of the *Militant*.

We need *Militant* readers to send photographs of the struggles you are involved in. Of fights against cop brutality. Of your factory and the conditions of work you are organizing to improve. Of people getting together to study politics or to organize against tuition increases. We need photos of the rotten conditions in your high school or neighborhood. Of struggles you aren't a part of but want to let the world know about.

We need photographs of people selling the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and Pathfinder books.

If you hear that something is going on, go to the action. Take copies of the *Militant*, take a pen and paper, and take your camera. Shoot a whole roll of film and send it in immediately.

You don't need a fancy camera if you put yourself in the middle of the main event. If it is a little dark out, or if people's faces are in a shadow, use the flash. You can photograph at night as well. Remember to get close.

If all you can find is color film, use it. The *Militant* can use color photographs, but black and white is better. You can send film or prints. And every photograph or roll of film should be accompanied by as much back-up information as you can put together, including your name and phone number.



# MacLean Forge workers strike for equal wages

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

the downtime created by the strike to install new electric furnaces.

On August 28, the union will present a new proposal to the company. Strikers are hopeful of returning to work.

"But it's hard to say what the company's up to," said one picketer. "We may be out here for a long time."

industry.

## Unions reach accord with British Rail

The executive of the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (ASLEF) called off plans for further one-day strikes after reaching an agreement with British Rail that moves up the date for negotiations on reducing the workweek by two hours to 37 hours.

The train drivers had voted 5,101 to 4,370 to reject British Rail's offer of a 3 percent pay increase. The 16,000 drivers held two one-day strikes in July, which cost the company up to \$30.8 million in lost revenue. British Rail did not increase the 3 percent offer under the settlement and has insisted on ending national pay bargaining, which the union leadership accepted.

Workers on the London Underground did hold a 24-hour strike over pay and working conditions August 25. The train drivers there voted by a 3-1 margin in favor of strike action. The London Underground bosses say they cannot increase the 3 percent offer but are expected to negotiate on working hours, rostering, and other conditions of service.

As British Rail has been facing strike action and negotiations with the trade unions, the debate over privatization has deepened. The latest blow to privatization has been "leaks" in the media about the lack of safety carried out by Railtrack.

Railtrack manager Jack Rose, who is responsible for maintenance safety, warned in a letter to management that unless the company improved its safety proce-



Militant/Paco Sánchez

Rail workers' picket line in London in 1989. Train drivers across Britain held two one-day strikes in July to press British Rail for higher wages and shorter hours.

## ON THE PICKET LINE

about what is happening in your union, at your workplace, or other workplaces in your area, including interesting political discussions.

One hundred members of the United Auto Workers (UAW) have been on strike against MacLean Forge in Havana, Illinois, 50 miles downriver from Peoria, since July 31. MacLean Forge is the only manufacturer of sickle guards for farm equipment in North America.

UAW Local 2030 members have rejected two contract proposals in as many weeks, both times by large margins. The strikers' main demand is to bring the wages of hourly workers up to the level of incentive workers, who are paid according to productivity.

Workers at MacLean Forge are determined to stay out as long as it takes to win a fair contract, despite articles in the *Peoria Journal Star* assuring readers that relations between the union and company in this strike are more harmonious than in the strike against Caterpillar.

"The company is spending \$2 million on upgrades but they can't afford to give the workers anything? It's a slap in the face," said Bruce Deering as he walked the picket line.

"Some of the guys in the plant can't keep up with inflation as it is," Deering added. Because workers from the local power company have refused to cross the picket lines, MacLean Forge has been unable to take advantage of

## Death of rail worker sparks anger over safety

Workers at Longsight maintenance depot in Manchester, England, were shocked when they heard that a train driver had been hit July 26 by a passing train outside the depot as he was using a trackside phone to call the signal box. He died later of his injuries.

Track workers said they had refused to guide trains through the blocked line at this place because there was insufficient room to stand safely. It was known there was not minimum clearance at that phone.

Two days earlier a driver had his leg amputated after his train was derailed near York.

Safety issues rank high among rail workers' concerns as the industry heads towards privatization. The national weekly paper *The Mail on Sunday* ran an article July 23 under the headline, "We want to kill only one or two workers a year."

The article quotes rail quality director Graham Eccles commenting in a safety training video on improvements since three years ago. "At that time we were killing about 12 people a year on the track, and the chairman wanted to reduce that to no more than one or two people a year," Eccles said. "So that's quite an improvement."

There was angry discussion at such blatant callousness. Many rail workers believe safety conditions will worsen in a privatized

ture, it risked a repeat of the 1988 Clapham disaster in which 35 people died. Rose said that Railtrack's safety procedures are so lax that another Clapham has been narrowly averted twice.

## St. Paul unions support Detroit newspaper strike

Seventy-five workers picketed August 24 outside St. Paul's *Pioneer Press* newspaper, protesting the company's decision to send managers to scab against striking workers in Detroit. *Pioneer Press* is owned by Knight-Ridder — the same company that owns the *Detroit Free Press*.

Peter Ritter, a spokesperson for the Interplant Council of Newspaper Unions, sent a letter to *Pioneer Press* demanding the newspaper send the managers back. The company replied that it had the "absolute right to send managers to support the company the same way that you have the right to support the striking workers."

"Informational picket lines like this are being organized around the country," said Mike Sweeny, a member of Newspaper Guild

Local 2.

"Tomorrow there is one in San Jose, California, and others are scheduled for Cincinnati, Ohio, and Des Moines, Iowa. The major issue is to let people know what is going on in Detroit," he said.

Other unions have joined the picket lines in St. Paul, including the Service Employees International Union, the International Association of Machinists, the Teamsters, Operating Engineers, the Typographical Union-CWA, and the Mailers union.

Steve Hanke, a member of Mailers Local 4, explained why members of his local were participating in the picket line. "We just wanted to show that we don't like the company sending managers to Detroit to bust the union."

David Marshall in Peoria, Illinois; Debbie Delange, member of the Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers (RMT) in Manchester, England; Shellia Kennedy, member of the RMT in London; and Megan Arney and Amy Roberts, members of the Young Socialists in Twin Cities, Minnesota, contributed to this article.

## LETTERS

### Saoirse campaign

Many thanks for reviewing the pamphlet *Where is Liberty? The Prosecution of Irish Republicans in the United States*.

As your reviewer Jim Altemberg noted, the pamphlet was released as part of our international campaign Saoirse (Gaelic for "freedom" and pronounced "seer-shaw"), which aims to secure the immediate release of all those who have been jailed as a result of Britain's war in Ireland — releases which are critical for laying the foundation of a just and permanent peace.

The campaign was officially launched in the United States on May 5, the anniversary of the death on hunger strike in 1981 of Irish political prisoner Bobby Sands. We have already held pickets, circulated a petition, and lobbied political and community leaders. But much work still needs to be done, and we need everyone's help.

Readers are welcome to attend Saoirse events. If unable to attend, perhaps individuals could circulate a petition, or even simply wear a green ribbon — the symbol of support for those behind bars as a result of the conflict in Ireland.

Information on the Saoirse campaign, as well as Irish political prisoners in general, is available from Irish Northern Aid, 363 Seventh Ave., Suite 405, New York, NY 10001. Tel: (212) 736-1916.

The campaign is still at its early stages. But knowing the long-standing commitment of your readers to civil and human rights, I am confident they will join with us in building a permanent peace in Ireland.

Peter Hegarty  
Saoirse national  
coordinating committee  
San Francisco, California

### 'Philadelphia's Finest'

I attended the demonstration in support of Mumia Abu-Jamal on August 12 in Philadelphia. In just a few days since the demonstration I have seen that the defense campaign has had an impact in this city. One example of this impact can be seen in the pages of the *Philadelphia Inquirer*.

On August 15, just a few days after the demonstration, an article appeared in the *Inquirer* that consisted of interviews with the residents of Logan (a working-class neighborhood in Philadelphia) concerning their attitudes towards the police department. The *Inquirer* routinely refers to the police as "Philadelphia's Finest" and gave this description of why Sarah Simon became angry at the police:

"Her anger dates back 25 years, when her father was in a traffic accident and her husband and brother-in-law stopped to check on him. Her husband was beaten and ferried down to the police station. He later received 20 stitches



in his head.

"Days later the officers called, she said, threatening that if the family complained, worse things could happen. Simon's brother-in-law, himself a policeman fired on account of corruption, warned that the police could do it."

Simon remembers him saying, "They can set you up just like that. They can get a body in your basement... and you'll be in prison like that."

The MOVE bombing, the indictments of police officers, and the defense campaign for Mumia Abu-Jamal have made growing numbers of people in Philadelphia question the role of the police. If the police are referred to as "Philadelphia's Finest" in the future, I think that there will be a lot

more people who will understand the insanity of that statement.

Steve Halpern  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

### Protests in New Zealand

The annual conference of the ruling National Party opened in Dunedin on the weekend of August 19. Socialist youth, university and high school students, and groups affiliated to RAN (Rational Against National) massed at the University of Otago on Friday August 19 and marched into the city center.

Giving the impression of a government under siege, police ranks confronted protesters outside the town hall.

Later in the evening, a further demonstration and scuffles with

police occurred outside the town hall. Students burned the National Party flag and later took part in noise raids on delegates' hotels.

The following day delegates were met by a small, vocal crowd chanting "National Out!" and "Shame!" An alternative conference was held shortly afterwards at the senior citizens club in the city center. Members of the public, students, and others debated questions of Maori rights, unemployment, and the selling off of state assets and services in areas such as housing, education, and health. Speakers included unemployed workers' rights activist Sue Bradford, Maori activists Mike Smith and Annette Sykes, and Peter Hughes of the State Housing Action Coalition.

On Sunday, August 20, students gathered to launch their seventh demonstration of the weekend and again rallied outside the town hall.

Six people, including this writer, were arrested as police sought to move protesters away from ministerial cars.

Kyle Webster  
Dunedin, New Zealand

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.



## 'Peace talks now,' says Dublin rally

BY JO O'BRIEN

DUBLIN, Ireland — Chanting "What do we want? — Peace Talks! When do we want them? — Now!" 6,000 people marched here August 26. The whole route was lined with observers.

The march was called by the Irish National Congress, which is working to help secure a political and military withdrawal by the British government from Ireland and a broadly acceptable peace settlement.

The march was timed to commemorate the first anniversary of the cease-fire in Northern Ireland and call on London to allow the peace process to advance.

Many of the marchers walked behind Saoirse banners from all parts of the country. Saoirse is an organization campaigning for the release of Irish political prisoners. To highlight the condition of these prisoners, an open lorry carrying a mock prison cell was part of the march. The "cell" had three men inside, dressed only in a blanket. Refusing to wear prison clothing became a widespread form of protest by Irish political prisoners in the late 1970s and early '80s.

### Protesting prison conditions

The treatment of Irish political prisoners in British jails has been in the news in both countries in recent weeks. Campaigns have been mounted about the treatment of republican prisoner Patrick Kelly, who is being held in the Special Secure Unit of Whitemoor Prison in Britain even though he has skin cancer. Kelly has been on a protest against the conditions in Whitemoor along with fellow republican prisoner Michael O'Brien.

Kelly was moved to Peterborough Hospital August 9. While there he was kept chained to his bed and to prison officers. He was due to be returned to Whitemoor Prison the weekend of August 26, where



August 6 Saoirse picket of 70 people at Whitemoor prison in Cambridgeshire, England, protested conditions and demanded transfer of political prisoners to Ireland.

he would be kept in isolation 23 hours a day.

Joanne, a member of Portadown Saoirse, explained that 60 people had come on a coach from her town to be on the march. Fifteen members of the Derry women's group Guth na mBan (Women's Voice) set out from Derry August 22 and walked to Dublin to be part of the march and to raise awareness of the lack of progress made in the peace process.

When asked why he was on the march, Brendan from Portadown said, "I came on the demonstration because I am not satisfied with the way things are going and the response from the British. We need round table talks. Everything else will flow from that."

On the eve of the march Patrick Mayhew, London's Northern Ireland secretary, made an announcement regarding the sentences of Irish political prisoners. According to the August 26 *Irish Times*, Mayhew "confirmed that if there was no resumption of violence he would seek early legislation to increase remission from 30 per cent to the 50 per cent level which applied up to 1989. Strict conditions would apply to early releases."

"These are no new proposals," commented Brendan. "They take us back to where we were. The situation in the Kesh [Long Kesh, a high security prison in Northern Ireland] is that there are fellows in there who are already entitled to this remission because they were sentenced be-

fore 1979."

Among the large numbers of youth carrying placards demanding "All Party Talks Now" were three women who are working in Dublin. Rosa, originally from Spain, explained, "Britain hasn't the right to stay in Ireland."

"When I was in France I heard there was peace in Ireland and I hope peace continues," commented Gwen, who is from France. Francesca, from Italy, said she was on the march because "where I come from is on the border of former Yugoslavia, so I am interested in peace."

### Calls for all-party talks

The march concluded with a rally outside the General Post Office, focal point of the 1916 rebellion against British rule. At the rally, Declan Bree, a Labour Party representative in the Dail (Irish Parliament), said, "It must be made clear to British prime minister John Major and his government that a refusal to act and agree to all-party talks could lead to the end of the greatest opportunity for peace in our lifetime." Fianna Fail representative in the Dail Eamon O Cuiv also called for all-party talks.

To cheers from the large crowd, Gerry Adams, president of Sinn Fein, explained "We need to demand and ensure that London reacts as urgently to acts of peace as it did to acts of war.... Sinn Fein believes absolutely in dialogue as the only way to resolve conflict."

Contributing to this article were Anita Östling, a member of the Transport Workers Union in Stockholm, Sweden; Joyce Fairchild, a member of the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union in Manchester, England; and Jim Spaul, a member of the Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers Union in London.

## Tire workers in Québec strike against long hours

BY ROSEMARY RAY

JOLIETTE, Québec — Some 150 workers on the midnight shift at the Bridgestone/Firestone tire plant here refused to work August 22 and instead held a 10-hour union meeting in the plant cafeteria to protest the company's refusal to negotiate a new contract. The current agreement expired August 31.

At the company's request, municipal and provincial cops dressed in riot gear entered the plant at 5:15 a.m. and ordered the workers out. The company then locked the gates on the incoming day shift. The plant of 730 union workers has since remained closed.

Immediately after the cops cleared the plant, the workers, members of the National Confederation of Trade Unions (CSN), held a union meeting where they voted overwhelmingly to turn the lockout into a strike. CSN members say they will end their strike only if the company begins "serious contract negotiations" and guar-

antees no reprisals against the workers who occupied the plant.

CSN representative Henri-Paul Goyer told the press that the union is demanding the right to take unpaid personal days off in the new contract because workers are exhausted by the 12-hour shifts and the pace of work. "The plant works 24 hours a day, seven days a week," Goyer said. The unpaid days off would give the tire workers a chance "to breathe a little."

On the picket line outside the plant, Yvon Lauzon, who has worked at Bridgestone/Firestone for 25 years, described the grueling pace in the plant. "I have to put steel rims on 2,300 tires every shift — it's hard on your body, especially on the 12-hour midnight shift."

Lauzon said that company discipline has created a lot of resentment. "Come to work 10 minutes late and they put it on your record as an unjustifiable absence for the whole shift. Take a day off sick and you get hauled into the office," he said.



Riot cops in front of "welcome to Firestone" sign after removing workers from plant

"Taking a day off for personal reasons or because your kid is sick is a crime at Bridgestone/Firestone," said Norman St. Louis, a union steward at the plant.

The company acts like a "dictator," according to one striker named Noël. When the riot cops came into the cafeteria "I

thought I was in Tianamen Square in China," he said. Sending the cops into the plant was "a big mistake," added St. Louis. "They tightened the screw one notch too much this time."

One striker told St. Louis that they didn't have to accept "the Japanese way of doing things," referring to the plant's Japanese owners. St. Louis responded by saying, "It doesn't matter whether the boss is Japanese, American, or Canadian — all they want is to make more money and what we want is respect."

Several strikers said they didn't like the company's demand that new-hires get paid 30 percent less for the first three years. "Same work, same pay," was how Noël responded to the proposal.

Picket lines are up every day and the strikers say they'll be organizing special solidarity activities in the weeks to come.

Rosemary Ray is a member of International Association of Machinists Lodge 712 at Canadair in Montreal.

## Kenworth strikers in Canada stand firm

BY MONICA JONES

STE-THERÈSE, Québec — The strike at the Kenworth truck plant here remains solid after its third week. The 850 members of Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) Local 728 are waging the strike to improve their pension plan.

Negotiations broke down the first week in August and the union voted 95 percent in favor of strike action. The company refused to discuss changes to the pension plan. The monthly pension for a retiring worker is \$28 for each year of service,

with a penalty for retiring before age 62. The union is demanding an increase in pension payments to \$33 per month in the first year of the new contract, \$38 in the second year, and \$41 in the third. Workers also want to be able to retire as early as age 55, with no penalty, if they have 30 years of service.

Rather than negotiate with the union the company mailed letters to workers at home. The letter, dated August 9, the second day of the strike, included a summary of their final offer. "They are trying to di-

vide us," a striker explained.

Negotiations are tentatively scheduled to resume September 6. On the picket line this is seen as a good sign. But there have been many strikes at Kenworth before; the longest lasted for more than eight months in 1978. That year the company enlisted the help of the provincial police to close the main highway as they tried, unsuccessfully, to take trucks out of the plant.

Monica Jones is a member of CAW Local 728 at Kenworth.