

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

**Ours is the Epoch  
of World Revolution;**  
*International Socialist Review, PAGES 9-13*

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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## Illinois miners strike over health benefits

BY ALYSON KENNEDY  
AND JOHN STUDER

FARMERSVILLE, Illinois — At 12:01 a.m. September 11, some 350 members of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) went on strike at three Illinois mines run by Freeman United Coal Mines. Freeman is owned by General Dynamics. The central issue in their fight is health care.

The strikers are members of UMWA Local 1969 at Crown 2 Mine in Virden, Local 12 at Crown 3 near Farmersville, and Local 2488 at the Industry mine, a strip mine near Macomb. The two Crown mines are underground.

In June 1997 Freeman dropped out of the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA), the employers organization that negotiates with union miners industry wide.

Freeman announced they were refusing to participate in negotiations for the 1998 national Bituminous Coal Wage Agreement, which was ratified by UMWA members and BCOA in December 1997.

The company said it would negotiate separately with the UMWA locals at their

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Members of UMWA Local 1969 and supporters picket outside Crown no. 2 mine

Militant/Alyson Kennedy

## Protests will demand release of Puerto Rican prisoners

BY ANGEL LARISCY  
AND JACK WILLEY

CHICAGO — "We're planning a national day of protests in cities throughout the United States December 10, focusing on a protest at the United Nations in New York to demand the release of the 15 Puerto Rican political prisoners," said Marcos Vilar, national organizer of the National Committee to Free the Puerto Rican Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners. "December 10 marks the 50th anniversary of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights and the 100th anniversary of the Treaty of Paris, in which Spain illegally ceded Puerto Rico to the U.S."

The protests were called at a meeting of 50 activists from nine cities held here September 5 to discuss the next actions in the campaign to free the 15 Puerto Rican *independentistas* held in U.S. prisons, using the momentum following the successful actions on that question July 25. The meeting was called by the National Committee to Free the Puerto Rican Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners.

Activists voted to hold the December 10 actions around four central demands: release of the Puerto Rican political prisoners; independence for Puerto Rico; stop the repression of the Puerto Rican community and in-

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## The pornographication of politics

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

Amid an orgy of media attention, Kenneth Starr delivered to Congress on September 10 a voluminous report with his conclusions on an investigation of U.S. president William Clinton. The report centered on an affair Clinton had with former White House employee Monica Lewinsky and the attempts by the president to cover it up.

Starr — who was appointed as a special counsel four years ago to investigate the so-called Whitewater charges against the president — claimed that his report includes substantial evidence that Clinton "committed acts that may constitute grounds for an impeachment."

The scandal has thrown the Clinton ad-

ministration into crisis. Many capitalists politicians, with rightists leading the charge, are calling for impeachment proceedings, resignation, or at least congressional censure of the president.

The report and all the hubbub around it are but another eruption — in a way that directly affects the competing interests among the U.S. rulers — of a phenomenon best described as the pornographication of bourgeois politics (see also article on page 17).

Starr's 453-page report is filled with lewd details of Clinton's sexual encounters in the Oval Office. The day after it was handed to Congress, it was posted on the Internet and published in its entirety in special supplements by the *Washington Post*, *New York*

*Times*, and other U.S. dailies. Its contents filled television screens and radio shows. And the salacious saga has continued since.

Soon after he was first elected president in 1992, Clinton faced similar scandals that have persisted through his administration.

Starr was appointed to investigate the "Whitewater" affair that exploded in 1994. That was centered on accusations that the president and his wife, Hillary Clinton, had used the Arkansas governorship to enrich themselves and promote big-business interests — and then used their powers in the

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## Northwest pilots' victory encourages other unions

BY JEFF JONES

MINNEAPOLIS — The Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA) announced victory in its 15-day strike against Northwest Airlines (NWA). ALPA's 17-member Master Executive Council for Northwest voted unanimously September 12 to approve the terms of the tentative agreement reached two days earlier. Their win has given encouragement to flight attendants, ramp workers, mechanics, and other workers also fighting for new contracts with the airline.

President William Clinton sent Secretary of Transportation Rodney Slater and White House deputy counsel Bruce Lindsey to oversee the negotiations leading up to the agreement, but did not do as politicians in several Midwest states had urged and use the Railway Labor Act to end the strike and impose a 60-day Presidential Emergency Board to propose an agreement. Last year, Clinton invoked powers under the Railway Labor Act to halt a strike by pilots at Ameri-

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## 'Militant' sales drive kicks off with bang

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Socialist workers and members of the Young Socialists are hitting the road for regional *Militant* sales teams, reaching out to miners in the coal fields in Arizona and West Virginia, striking miners in southern Illinois, and striking Steelworkers and Black farmers in Mississippi. These teams are part of the sales drive that supporters of the *Militant* launched around the world September 12. The goals of the eight-week effort are to win 1,300 new readers to the socialist news-weekly and 400 new subscribers to its Spanish-language sister publication *Perspectiva Mundial*, and to sell hundreds of copies of the Marxist magazine *New International*.

"I campaigned at a United Auto Workers (UAW) meeting in Chicago, where we sold two *Militant* subscriptions and three copies of the paper," said Sarah Katz, Socialist Workers candidate for Lt. Governor of Illinois and member of the Union of Needle-trades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE). "The Democratic Party candidate for governor, Glen Poschard, was there along with other capitalist politicians. Many workers told me they were interested in what I had to say and I was invited to speak at their next union meeting."

Helen Myers, a member of the UAW local, said, "The unionists who bought cop-

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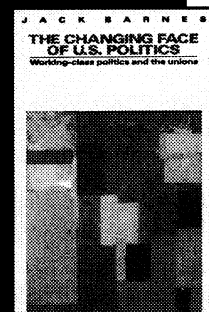
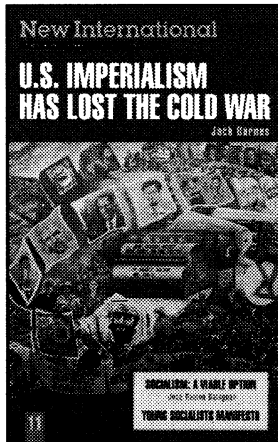
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FOR THE BOOK IN ENGLISH, FRENCH, OR SPANISH AND 12 WEEKS OF THE 'MILITANT'

**Fidel Castro speaks to S. African nat'l assembly — pages 6-7**

### Moscow delays paying interest

For the first time since Russia's economy began its downward spiral, Moscow has delayed interest payments on loans due at the end of August and issued by Bonn. The Russian government made only a partial loan payment to the German government, its biggest creditor. Since the economic crisis hit Russia, Bonn had agreed to issue export credits as long as interest payments kept coming. "This could be the first in a series of defaults," commented David Riley, director at the Fitch credit rating agency.

### Russian gov't okays new premier

In a rare compromise for Russian president Boris Yeltsin, Yevgeny Primakov was appointed the new prime minister of Russia, after the Duma (parliament) rejected Yeltsin's nomination of Viktor Chernomyrdin for the second time by a substantial margin. An article in the September 14 *Wall Street Journal* described this as "a shift away from the free-market model that has guided Russia's fitful reform for the past seven years." Primakov, who had been Yeltsin's foreign minister, vowed to make payments on the multibillion-dollar debt to foreign investors. At the same time he appointed Yuri Maslyukov as deputy prime minister, who helped draft an economic program of the Communist Party that among other things calls for price controls and the renationalization of "strategic" enterprises. Primakov called for more state regulation against "wild capitalism," while saying he opposes returning to a centrally planned economy.

Meanwhile, gasoline prices in Russia rose nearly 33 percent and prices for most goods have shot up as the ruble plummeted by more than two-thirds in one month. Atomic energy workers in Moscow, as well as other toilers in cities all over Russia, have taken to the streets demanding back pay.

### Iran, Afghanistan in conflict

The Iranian government positioned 80,000 troops on its eastern border with Afghanistan by September 10, in preparation for military maneuvers. "Commandos, special forces, armored artillery, and mechanized units backed by the air force and the

## Palestinians protest stagnant 'peace' accord



Israeli troops killed two Palestinians they dubbed "Islamic militants" in early September. They raided the home of Imad and Adel Awadallah — first sending in attack dogs, then shooting the two men. Rather than returning the bodies to the families for burial, Israeli authorities decided to bury them, claiming a public funeral could start a riot. These actions, together with closing off access to Israel for Palestinians in the West Bank, were the target of a September 13 protest in the Dahaishe refugee camp, West Bank (above). Demonstrators carried a coffin marked "Oslo Is Dead," referring to 1993 "peace agreement" between Tel Aviv, Washington, and the Palestinian Liberation Organization.

army's air corps will take part in the war games," said Iranian Maj. Gen. Ali Shahbazi. The same week the bodies of nine Iranian diplomats killed in Afghanistan by Taliban forces in August were discovered.

The Taliban, a rightist militia force that has taken over much of the country, seized the town of Mazar-i-Sharif August 8 where 11 diplomats and one Iranian journalist were staying. A Taliban spokesman claimed the killings were carried out on individual initiative and that those who did it would be found and punished.

### Tel Aviv bombs Lebanon

An Israeli attack helicopter fired a mis-

sile into southern Lebanon September 2, killing Husam Amin, a leader of Amal, a group fighting against the Israeli occupation of that country. The same day rocket attacks launched by the Israeli government-sponsored South Lebanese Army wounded at least seven Lebanese civilians. Hezbollah, another armed organization fighting to expel all Zionist occupation forces from Lebanon, fired some 30 rockets into Israel in response, reportedly hitting Kiryat Shmona, and parts of the Western Galilee. The rockets knocked out power lines and caused minor property damage. Tel Aviv justified the missile assault by claiming Amin was a terrorist.

### Malaysian gov't faces recession

Stocks in Malaysia plunged 21.5 percent September 8, the moment the government temporarily eased its new capital controls. The Malaysian government, facing a deepening recession, instituted the controls September 1 to force all foreign investors holding Malaysian stocks to keep them for at least a year before selling. This maneuver initially had a currency-stabilizing effect and stocks rose 22.5 percent. But when Malaysian prime minister Mahathir Mohamad's regime lifted the controls September 8, foreign investors yanked investments out. Since July 1997, when currencies throughout Asia went tumbling, the ringgit has lost more than 40 percent of its value.

### Seoul tries to sell off Kia again

Seoul is attempting to sweeten up its offer to sell off Kia Motors and its truck affiliate Asia Motors to foreign capitalists. South Korean creditors have offered to write off 7,800 billion won (\$5.85 billion) in debts owed by the two bankrupt automakers, including a 2,900 billion won in principal, before the second auction takes place. In the first auction, Ford Motors and three other south Korean companies withdrew their bids after creditors refused to do a principal write off. Kia officials said there would likely be a winner in the second bid, which closes September 21.

Meanwhile, south Korea's commercial banks, reeling from many unpayable loans they issued to now-bankrupt companies, continue to merge and "restructure." The latest merger of Hana Bank and Boram Bank would create the seventh-largest bank in that country. Some financial analysts say that the restructuring of these banks may be difficult. Bank workers and others have opposed layoffs accompanying other mergers and stalled the proceedings. This is one of the indications of the worsening depression in the country. South Korea's Gross Domestic Product plunged 6.6 percent in the second quarter of this year, following a 4 percent drop in the first quarter. "We definitely do expect that the second half [of 1998] will be quite worse than the first," said Namuh Rhee, an executive director at Samsung Securities Co. in Seoul.

### S. African oil workers win strike

About 30,000 oil workers in South Africa scored a victory August 27. After a three-week strike, they forced the National Petroleum Employers Association to concede a wage increase of 8-10 percent. Some raises won by members of the 40,000-member-strong Chemical Workers Industrial Union (CWIU) are retroactive from July 1 and some of the workers secured an entry-level minimum wage of about 2,000 rand (\$320) per month. Another 10,000 CWIU members in chemical plants remain on strike.

### Arsonists hit N. Carolina clinics

Arson fires erupting within minutes of each other damaged the two abortion clinics in southeastern North Carolina on September 8. Firefighters responded to a blaze of the Carolina Women's Clinic outside Fayetteville, discovering that an accelerant had been sprayed on the facility's back door. A second fire broke out 15 minutes later at the Hallmark Clinic in Fayetteville, damaging the roof and ceiling of the building and resulting in smoke damage inside.

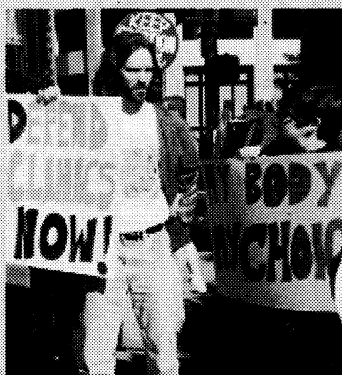
In spite of the attack, both clinics were open the next day. Police made no direct links between the two assaults. Robin Davis, North Carolina president of the National Organization for Women, said, "None of these are isolated incidents. They are part of a nationwide campaign to prevent abortion services."

— BRIAN TAYLOR

# THE MILITANT

## Defend a woman's right to choose!

The recent arson attacks on abortion clinics in North Carolina highlight the importance of defending a woman's right to choose. The 'Militant' explains why the capitalist rulers are waging a bipartisan assault on women's rights, opening space for rightist attacks like these. Don't miss a single issue!



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# What the drop in the Canadian dollar means for workers

BY MICHEL DUGRÉ

MONTREAL — Between March 1 and the end of August the Canadian dollar plunged nearly 11 percent against the U.S. currency to a record low of US\$0.63. This is part of a broader economic crisis in Canada, one of the weaker imperialist powers. Workers and working farmers will particularly feel the squeeze in the coming period.

Recent gyrations of the stock market are an indication of the underlying financial turmoil. Canadian stock markets were among the hardest hit on August 27, when all major stock markets around the world plunged. The Toronto stock exchange dropped by 6 percent, its fourth-largest one-day drop ever.

Over the last year, Canada has had the worst stock market performance of all countries of the so-called Group of Seven industrialized nations. While the bourses in France, Germany, Italy, United Kingdom, and United States all rose during this period, Japan's fell by 13 percent and Canada's dropped by 22 percent.

As stock prices were falling August 27, the Bank of Canada announced a raise in interest rates, hoping to stabilize the currency.

Since then the Canadian dollar has gone up. But none of the previous attempts to slow the retreat of the Canadian dollar by increasing interest rates has worked for more than a few months. The last attempt was earlier this year. Since then, the Canadian dollar has repeatedly hit record lows.

## Impact of economic catastrophe in Asia

One factor in Ottawa's economic problems is that the Canadian economy is particularly vulnerable to the financial disaster sweeping much of Asia and the economic turmoil in Russia. As an exporter of natural resources, the Canadian bourgeoisie is very sensitive to falling commodity prices, due to the lower demand in Asia and greater

export of the same resources from Russia. The downward pressure on commodity prices is accelerated by the attempts of capitalists in other countries that export natural resources, including Australia and Canada, to take advantage of their lowering currencies to increase sales.

Another factor that plays against Canadian capitalists is that more than 80 percent of their foreign trade is with the United States, by far the largest economic power in the world.

While Canada has done relatively well over the last year in increasing production and exports, the productivity of Canadian industries still lies far behind those in the United States. The U.S. bosses have made more progress in forcing speedup and lowering real wages. As a result, over the last 20 years productivity in manufacturing has risen twice as fast in the United States as in Canada. Canadian capitalists have been able to maintain their sales in the United States only thanks to a lower Canadian dollar.

Fundamentally, the crisis of Canadian capitalists is no different than that of their rivals around the world, as they all face the threat of a deflationary spiral. Prices of basic commodities — oil, cotton, copper, gold, and so on — have dropped by 20 percent over the last year. In fact, this fall began two years ago but accelerated with the opening of the crisis in Asia in July 1997.

In their attempts to reassure investors, Canadian prime minister Jean Chrétien and Finance Minister Paul Martin point to the fact that unemployment in Canada is still going down, that productivity has increased faster in Canada than in the United States over the last year, and that the government deficit has been almost eliminated. All this is true.

## Workers face joblessness, high prices

But this expansion hasn't come close to reversing the long-term decline in the capitalists' rate of profit. This trend — which is true throughout the capitalist world — is fueling greater competition among rival capitalists, both within Canada and internationally, and a greater drive to cut workers' wages and speed up the pace of work. With each drop of the Canadian dollar and the corresponding rise of the price of imported food and other products, workers' real purchasing power goes down. Some 38 percent of the consumer goods sold in Canada are imported.

Unemployment levels in Canada, even after six years without an official recession,

## Georgia Machinists close Lucas Aerospace



Militant/Mike Itale

BY FLOYD FOWLER

ATLANTA — More than 600 members of International Association of Machinists Local 2726 have shut down Lucas Aerospace in Bibb County, just south of Macon, Georgia. These workers, who produce aircraft parts for virtually all planes built by Boeing, rejected the company's contract offer by a 90 percent margin August 29. Two days later, the last day before the old contract expired, workers arrived at the plant to find they had been locked out. The unionists then set up picket lines.

The workers' main issues are job security and forced overtime. Unionists have averaged 60-70 hours a week for months, even as the company has farmed out

work. Tony Roland, the striking local's president, said, "As older workers retire they are not being replaced. The maintenance department used to be over 60 workers, and is now down to 30."

Three hundred unionists and their families attended a Labor Day cook-out and rally held September 5 at the picket camp (above), directly across from the plant, complete with tents and a giant "on strike" sign. A local restaurant brought ice for the coolers. Support to Local Lodge 2726 has begun to come in from across central Georgia. Workers at the nearby Brown and Williamson tobacco plant, the Pratt and Whitney plant in Columbus, and the Miller Brewing plant in Albany have taken up collections.

remain at 8 to 9 percent. Workers in Canada, in particular those who are young, are getting poorer. Average real incomes in Canada have fallen by 5 percent in the first half of the 1990s. Average real incomes for people aged 15-24 fell 38 percent between 1980 and 1995.

Canadian capitalists are getting more concerned. Appeals to the Bank of Canada and the Canadian government to defend the Canadian dollar are getting more strident. "Stand up for the dollar," screamed an August 6 editorial of the Montreal daily *Gazette*.

But Canada's capitalist rulers don't agree on what to do. Most objected to the rise of interest rates by the Bank of Canada, fearing this might ignite a recession.

These contradictory opinions reflect the fact that there is little Canadian capitalists can do to reverse this trend.

The main response by Canada's rulers to

their sagging economy has been a nationalist campaign, calling on workers to make sacrifices in order to make the economy more competitive.

Earlier this year Maple Leaf Foods gave working people an example of what this means. Complaining that wages and benefits for workers in its plants were much higher than those of workers doing the same jobs in the United States, Maple Leaf succeeded in defeating a strike and imposing drastic wage cuts.

By calling on workers to support "their" company against its foreign competitor, Canadian capitalists want to force workers to pay for the crisis of the capitalist system by accepting a lower standard of living.

Michel Dugré is member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees and the Communist League candidate for mayor of Montreal.

## Communist League candidate: workers unite to defend our interests

In an August 28 statement, Elssa Martinez, Communist League candidate in the upcoming Montreal municipal elections, explained, "There is nothing workers can do to prevent the dollar from falling. The only way for us to resist its impact is to unite and defend our interests against the capitalists in Canada. By uniting workers in Quebec and English Canada, the 4,000 members of the Communication, Energy and Paperworkers union, who are going into their 10th week on strike against Abitibi Consolidated, are showing the way forward for all workers."

In Quebec the number of days that workers have been on strike increased 68 percent in 1998 over the same period in 1997. The Quebec Employers Council called on the labor minister to do something about the situation.

The socialist campaign, however, hailed this resistance. Martinez stated, "We put forward a program that aims at uniting all working people. This includes fighting for a reduction of the workweek with no loss in pay as part of overcoming unemployment and poverty. We campaign for affirmative action measures that can redress the impact of discrimination against oppressed sectors of the working class such as women, Francophones, Blacks, and Natives. This perspective of working-class unity cannot stop at borders. We demand Canadian banks cancel the debt of countries oppressed by imperialism. A fight for such a demand will be key in uniting workers from oppressed countries with those from imperialist countries."

# Air Canada pilots win some safety gains

BY NED DMYTRYSHYN AND MARY ELLEN MARUS

VANCOUVER, British Columbia — After grounding Canada's largest commercial airline with a 13-day strike, 2,100 Air Canada pilots voted 83 percent in favor of accepting a contract offer. "We won major concessions on safety and quality of life," said Jean Marc Bélanger, chairman of the Air Canada Pilots' Association (ACPA).

The pilots strike was costly for Air Canada. The September 12 *Globe and Mail* reported, "Analysts estimate the strike cost the Montreal-based airline upwards of CAN\$200 million pretax wiping out any chance of profit in the third quarter while the turbulent economy may do the same in the fourth." In an interview with the *Militant*, Air Canada Pilots Association representative Ken Fales was asked whether the strike was worth it. He replied, "Our flight operators were not respecting the agreement. Hopefully, we've renewed the dialogue. If not, we'll do this again in 18 months." Fales added that training-to-standard rules are an important gain in the contract. The onus is now more on the company to train pilots properly.

Labor contracts for three major unions representing 17,000 workers at Air Canada come up for negotiation over the next nine months. About 5,000 flight attendants organized by the Canadian Union of Public Employees plan to start bargaining next

month, 4,000 ticket agents represented by the Canadian Auto Workers begin negotiations in February 1999, and 8,000 maintenance and ramp workers represented by the International Association of Machinists will open talks by June.

The pilots' two-year agreement includes a 4 percent wage increase retroactive to April 1998 and 5 percent starting in April 1999. The increase is what the company offered before the strike. The agreement ends in April of the year 2000; the company had demanded a five-year contract.

The hours of flying time, which was another issue in the strike, remain the same: 78-80 hours a month except the regional jet CL65, which is 85 and will be gradually reduced to 80 hours by the year 2000. Pilots will get extra help on long flights, their training will improve, they can organize their schedules a bit better, and they won additional protection from layoffs.

The pilots were fighting for work rule changes that directly affect flight safety. Actual working time, including flight preparation and training, is double the 80 hours flying time. Some pilots have duty time of more than 85 hours, well over the industrial average of 75-78 hours per month. For the company this means a leaner work force; for the pilots it means increased fatigue. The ACPA members were fighting against company threats to cut training time on simulation equipment and for increased flight

crews for longer flights to ensure safety. Before the strike, two pilots did both take-off and landing on a 14-hour flight.

Air Canada pilots made concessions in the 1990s along with other airline workers, when the company cried poverty. In 1997 the company posted a \$427 million profit.

Ned Dmytryshyn and Mary Ellen Marus are members of IAM Lodge 764.

## Available from Pathfinder

### Why Working People Should Support the Fight for Quebec Independence

An article from the *Militant*  
By John Steele

The struggle of the Quebecois for independence, justice, and equality has mobilized thousands of workers and youth against the Canadian imperialist state, cutting across the national divisions imposed by the bosses. This struggle is an integral part of the fight to replace capitalist political power in Ottawa with a workers and farmers government, Steele explains. Also available in French. **CAN\$2.00, US\$2.00**

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# 'New International' fund campaign: read, sell, finance Marxist magazine

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

Politically active workers, Young Socialists, and others in cities around the world are kicking off a campaign September 18 to raise \$115,000 to finance the new issue of *New International*, a magazine of Marxist politics and theory. The eight-week campaign, which ends November 15, will also raise money for new issues of *Nouvelle Internationale* in French, *Nueva Internacional* in Spanish, and *Ny International* in Swedish. In addition, socialists in Reykjavik have announced plans to produce a first issue of the magazine in Icelandic.

The issues in the various languages will feature "U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War" by Jack Barnes, a resolution adopted by the 1990 Socialist Workers Party convention.

The contents also include the Young Socialists Manifesto, written by Young Socialists in Los Angeles based on the political line of issue no. 10 of *New International*; "Socialism: A Viable Option" by Cuban communist leader José Ramón Balaguer; "The Communist Strategy of Party Building Today" by Mary-Alice Waters; and "Ours Is the Epoch of World Revolution" by Jack Barnes and Mary-Alice Waters, published elsewhere in this issue of the *Militant*.

Like all 10 previous issues of *New International*, the funds needed to print this one will be raised entirely by working people and others who agree with its revolutionary perspective. In many areas, they are making plans to seek out working-class fighters, readers of the socialist press, and other politically minded individuals who value the working-class explanations and course of action presented in *New International* and

its sister publications.

Maggie Trowe, fund director in Des Moines, writes, "We are discussing how to combine advance orders and sales of *NI* no. 11 with reaching out for pledges to the fund. And we hope to get a few fellow fighters of the Titan Tire strike, Communications Workers of America contract fight, and others to buy the magazine."

The New International Fund coincides with an eight-week international drive to win new subscribers to the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* and to sell *New International*. The effort to get these political tools into the hands of fighting workers, farmers, and youth will be an ideal vehicle to approach a broad circle of people for contributions to the fund.

Socialist workers in different factories and industries are discussing goals for fund-raising among their co-workers. Over the past year, a noticeably growing number of workers have been making contributions to similar political funds.

Young Socialists are eager to get their hands on the new issue of *New International* and raise funds for it, especially since it con-

tains one of the newest political tools they have produced — the Young Socialists Manifesto. They will be using fund-raising activities to build the Young Socialists and the upcoming YS convention.

Likewise, active supporters of the Socialist Workers Party in a number of cities have been planning out their participation in this campaign. In the San Francisco Bay Area, for example, active supporters have taken on a goal of raising \$4,800.

Supporters of the fund in every city will be organizing public fund-raising events, for which the contents of *New International* no. 11 provide a political axis. Experience demonstrates that one key to the success of the drive will be early meetings.

*New International* readers in Minneapolis/St. Paul are setting the pace by building a meeting for Friday, September 25. Entitled "The Deepening Dilemma for World Capitalism and New Opportunities for the Working Class," the event will feature SWP leader Doug Jenness, a member of the Steelworkers union. Before the forum, the local Young Socialists chapter is holding a class. YS members there are also planning to start rais-

ing funds to make it possible for them and other youth to travel to the Young Socialists convention, scheduled for late November in Los Angeles.

Organizing the local fund campaign on a steady footing to be on time week by week is necessary to maximize the breadth of the contributors as well as the amount of contributions.

But there is another important reason to avoid a hectic surge in payments at the end: in city after city, fund-raising efforts to enable Young Socialists and other interested youth to travel to the YS convention will be in full swing by late October and early November. Every area that can get ahead in the New International Fund will be in a stronger position to raise money to cover travel and other costs for those attending the YS gathering.

As we go to press, the total goal for the New International Fund adds up to \$112,520, a little short of the overall \$115,000 goal. Supporters of *New International* are urged to review their goals and raise them wherever possible so we can confidently make the international goal.

## Cuban poet, editor plans U.S. visit

BY HELEN MEYERS

CHICAGO — Norberto Codina, editor of *La Gaceta de Cuba*, has been invited to speak on university campuses in several U.S. cities this fall. *La Gaceta*, published by the Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba (UNEAC), is the foremost journal of arts and letters in Cuba.

Codina, who is also an award-winning poet, will be speaking on the topics of art, literature, and culture in Cuba today. On two previous visits to the United States, he gave well-attended lectures at campuses in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Washington, D.C.

The Cuban editor will attend the Latin American Studies Association (LASA) conference taking place in Chicago September 24-26. Codina will then speak in New York, Boston, San Francisco, Minneapolis, and Chicago.

In New York, for example, he will be speaking at Hostos Community College. Professors and students at the University of Minnesota are planning a meeting for him that is sponsored by six academic departments and the College of Liberal Arts.

Lectures are also planned at the University of California at Berkeley; Emerson College and Tufts University in Boston; and DePaul University in Chicago. Dr. Félix Masud-Piloto, Director of the Center for Latino Research at DePaul University is coordinating his speaking engagements in collaboration with professors at the other campuses.

Poetry readings, lectures at cultural institutions, and meetings with other supporters of the arts are also being organized. For further information on Codina's speaking engagements, call (773) 325-7316.

## Support your local Socialist Workers candidates

Below is a list of Socialist Workers candidates across the United States. A (\*) appears after candidates who will appear on the ballot. Others are running write-in campaigns. Union names are listed on page 5. Young Socialists members are indicated by (YS).

### ALABAMA

Kristin Meriam, Governor, (USWA)  
George Williams, Lt. Governor, (UAW)  
Susan LaMont, U.S. Senate, (USWA)  
Richard Stuart, U.S. Congress — 7th CD, (USWA)

### CALIFORNIA

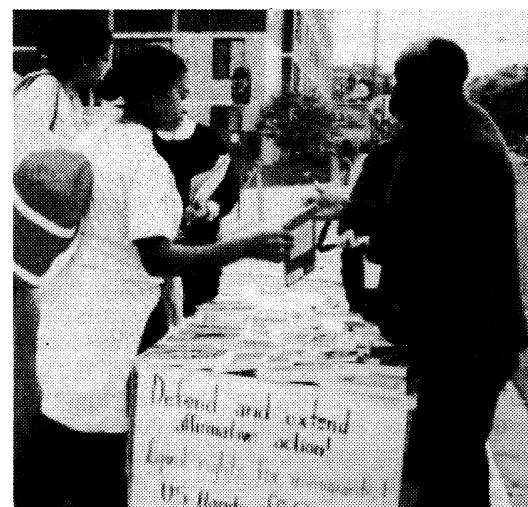
James Gotesky, U.S. Senate, (OCAW)  
Gale Shangold, Governor, (UNITE)  
Eli Green, Lt. Governor, (OCAW)  
Carlos Hernández, U.S. Congress — 35th CD, YS  
Laura Anderson, U.S. Congress — 30th CD, (IAM)  
Marklyn Wilson, U.S. Congress — 8th CD, (UTU)

### FLORIDA

Ernest Mailhot, Governor, (IAM)  
Shirley Peña, Lt. Governor, (IAM)  
Kay Sedam\*, Miami-Dade County Commissioner — Dist. 2, (UTU)

### GEORGIA

James Harris, Governor, (UTU)



Militant/Brian Williams  
Socialist candidate for D.C. mayor, Sam Manuel, campaigns at Howard University dorms April 23.

Dan Fein, U.S. Senate, (UFCW)

Arlene Rubenstein, U.S. Congress — 4th CD, (IAM)

Paul Cornish, U.S. Congress — 5th CD, (USWA), YS

### ILLINOIS

John Studer, Governor, (USWA)

Sarah Katz, Lt. Governor, (UNITE), YS

Alyson Kennedy, U.S. Senate, (OCAW)

### IOWA

Margaret Trowe\*, U.S. Senate, (UFCW)

Tom Alter, Governor, (UFCW)

Raymond Parsons, Secretary of Agriculture, (USWA)

Amanda Ulman\*, Iowa House — Dist. 70 (UAW), YS

### MASSACHUSETTS

Ted Leonard, Governor, (UNITE)

Andrea Morrell\*, U.S. Congress — 8th CD, (UTU)

### MICHIGAN

Rosa Garmendía, Governor

Gary Boyers, Lt. Governor, (USWA)

Holly Harkness\*, U.S. Congress — 15th CD

John Sarge, U.S. Congress, (UAW)

### MINNESOTA

Tom Fiske\*, Governor, (IAM)

John Hawkins\*, Lt. Governor (USWA)

Heather Wood\*, U.S. Congress — 4th CD (USWA), YS

Michael Pennock\*, U.S. Congress — 5th CD, (OCAW)

### NEW YORK

Rose Ana Berbeo\*, U.S. Senate, (IAM)

Al Duncan\*, Governor, (UTU)

Ruth Robinett\*, Lt. Governor, (UTU)

Wendy Lyons, State Attorney General, (UNITE)

Ryan Kelly, State Comptroller, YS

### NEW JERSEY

José Aravena\*, U.S. Congress — 8th CD

Susan Anmuth\*, U.S. Con-



Militant/Michael Pennock  
Heather Wood, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress, 4th CD, talks to a worker at Northwest Airlines in June.

gress — 13th CD (UAW)

Maurice Williams\*, U.S. Congress — 10th CD

### OHIO

Matthew Herresoff, U.S. Senate, (UTU)

Tony Prince, U.S. Congress — 10th CD, (USWA)

### PENNSYLVANIA

John Staggs, U.S. Senate, (OCAW)

Cecelia Moriarity, Governor, (USWA)

Jason Coughlin, Lt. Governor, (UAW)

Dorothy Kolis\*, U.S. Congress — 14th CD, (USWA)

Nancy Cole\*, U.S. Congress — 1st CD (IAM)

### TEXAS

Laura Garza, Governor, (IAM)

Lea Sherman\*, U.S. Congress — 29th CD, (IAM)

Patti Iiyama, U.S. Congress — 25th CD, (OCAW)

### WASHINGTON, D.C.

Sam Manuel\*, Mayor, (UTU)

Mary Martin\*, D.C. Delegate to House, (IAM)

Brian Williams, City Council Chairman, (USWA)

Olympia Newton, City Council At-large, YS

### WASHINGTON

Nan Bailey\*, U.S. Senate, (IAM)

Jeff Powers\*, U.S. Congress — 7th CD, (UTU)

Scott Breen, State Senate — 37th Dist. (IAM)

# Socialists join workers' fights, sell subscriptions

Continued from front page

ies of the paper liked how the *Militant* explained Malcolm X's opposition to the Democrats and Republicans." Myers said supporters in Chicago also participated in a Mexican Independence Day parade and sold five subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial* (PM), one subscription to the *Militant*, and three copies of *New International*.

Chris Remple, a member of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) in Pittsburgh, said, "In our first day of the subscription drive we sold four *Militant* subs and two PM subs." One of the new *Militant* readers got the paper at a conference on the miners disease black lung in southern West Virginia.

"Salm Kolis, a USWA member and the SWP candidate for Congress in Pennsylvania will travel to the coal fields in southern West Virginia starting September 27," Remple added. "She will also travel to eastern West Virginia to meet miners at the Pittston Coal company, who went through a major strike battle in 1989-90. Anyone interested in joining Kolis on this regional coal team can call me at (412) 381-9785."

Another *Militant* supporter in Pittsburgh, Paul Coltrin, who is a member of the Young Socialists said, "We sold two subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial* when we went door to door in a working-class community in Erie, Pennsylvania, where a lot of Puerto Ricans live." One of the new subscribers was particularly interested in the magazine's coverage of the auto workers strike against General Motors. "He was prepared to buy the paper even before I finished talking," Coltrin said. "He just looked at it and asked, 'How much is it?'"

In Los Angeles, UNITE member Gale Shangold said, "We are organizing teams to travel to the western coal mines of the Navajo region in Arizona. One team is there already and another team will leave here next week."

Shangold also said supporters there are

"working hard to build a September 18 Militant Labor Forum celebrating '100 Years of Anti-Imperialist Resistance,'" which is part of an upcoming national leadership gathering of the Young Socialists.

"So far we have sold five *Militant* subscriptions, including two to workers who are members of the International Association of Machinists and one to a member of the United Transportation Union," she added.

These will count toward the goals taken on by socialist workers in those unions. Socialist packinghouse workers in Iowa are also on their way toward meeting their sales goal to other members of the United Food and Commercial Workers. One worker bought a *Militant* subscription and another a copy of *New International* no. 7, with the article "Opening Guns of World War II: Washington's Assault on Iraq," when they were forced to work overtime.

"We got off to a good start for the first weekend of the subscription drive," said Cindy Jacquith from Birmingham. "We were able to send out two teams of *Militant* supporters and also organized volunteers to staff the Pathfinder Bookstore. One team went to Montgomery where there was a march of about 200 people protesting against racism in jobs and education."

Others went to Washington, D.C. to participate in a demonstration of Black farmers against racist discrimination. Seven of the protesters bought copies of the *Militant*, and one got a subscription.

Jacquith added, "Next week we plan to send out a regional team to Natchez, Mississippi, where USWA members are on strike against Titan Tire Co."

Jeanne FitzMaurice, a member of the USWA, who will join the regional team to Natchez said, "We will also meet with some of the Black farmers from Tchula, Mississippi, who we spoke with recently met at the annual meeting of the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund in Epes, Alabama. We are organizing a Mili-

tant Labor Forum next week that will feature the struggle of Black farmers to defend their land." Among these farmers is Eddie Carthan, who was mayor of Tchula before he was removed on a series of racist frame-up charges, including murder. Carthan, who served 14 months behind bars, was elected in 1977 as the first Black mayor of a Mississippi delta town since reconstruction in the South after the Civil War.



The chart in next week's issue will include sales results as well as revised goals for *New International*. Supporters in many cities are re-evaluating their goals to include selling the new issue of the magazine, which will be available by October 1 (see *International Socialist Review* on pages 9-13 of this issue).

Supporters of the subscription drive are urged to send in articles or jot down a few lines about discussions with workers, farmers, and students.

Describing sales experiences on regional teams, on the job, at plant gates, going door to door in working-class communities, and on campuses strengthens the campaign to win new readers to the socialist press.

Also, the *Militant* wants pictures of sales activities. You can send prints or negatives, or e-mail your photos to the address on page 2. Be sure to scan them at a resolution of at least 300 dpi and send them as a TIFF or *uncompressed* JPEG file.

Anyone interested in joining the regional sales teams being organized from Los Angeles and Birmingham can call the numbers listed in the directory on page 16.

## SUBSCRIPTION DRIVE September 12-November 8

MILITANT/PERSPECTIVA MUNDIAL/NEW INT'L

Country/City	Militant Goal	PM Goal	NI Goal
<b>Australia</b>	16	3	18
<b>Canada</b>			
Montreal	25	10	40
Toronto	40	5	50
Vancouver	40	5	40
<b>Canada Total</b>	105	20	130
<b>France</b>	5	3	25
<b>Iceland</b>	8	1	4
<b>New Zealand</b>			
Christchurch	18	1	15
Auckland	28	1	25
<b>N.Z. Total</b>	46	2	40
<b>Sweden</b>	16	8	12
<b>United Kingdom</b>			
London	40	10	60
Manchester	24	2	15
<b>UK Total</b>	64	12	75
<b>United States</b>			
Atlanta	28	8	40
Birmingham, AL	50	6	12
Boston	35	20	20
Chicago	65	25	20
Cleveland	35	10	10
Des Moines	45	25	35
Detroit	45	5	40
Houston	35	10	8
Los Angeles	90	45	70
Miami	40	20	20
New York	140	60	120
Newark, NJ	120	40	50
Philadelphia	35	8	30
Pittsburgh	40	5	45
San Francisco	95	38	45
Seattle	70	20	70
Twin Cities, MN	65	10	15
Washington, D.C.	45	15	25
<b>U.S. Total</b>	1078	370	675
<b>International Total</b>	1338	419	979
<b>International Goal</b>	1300	400	

### IN THE UNIONS

Country/Union	Militant	PM	NI
<b>Canada</b>			
CAW	4		3
USWA	4		4
IAM	8	1	5
<b>Canada total</b>	16	1	12
<b>United States</b>			
UFCW	10	13	9
UNITE	4	5	4
UTU	50	5	25
IAM	50	10	25
OCAW	24	4	12
UAW	40	5	20
USWA	31		13
<b>U.S. total</b>	209	42	108
<b>New Zealand</b>			
MWU	1		1
EU	4		2
SFWU	2		
<b>N.Z. total</b>	7		3
<b>Australia</b>			
AMWU	3		4
TCFU			
<b>Australia total</b>	3		4
<b>United Kingdom</b>			
AEEU			
RMT	5		5
TGWU	5		3
<b>UK total</b>	10		8

### Union abbreviations key

AEEU — Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Workers Union; AMWU — Amalgamated Manufacturers Union; CAW — Canadian Autoworkers Union; EU — Engineers Union; MWU — Meat Workers Union; IAM — International Association of Machinists; OCAW — Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; RMT — National Union of Rail, Maritime, and Transport Workers; TGWU — Transport and General Workers Union; UAW — United Auto Workers; UFB-GWU — United Food, Beverage, and General Workers Union; UFCW — United Food and Commercial Workers; UMWA — United Mine Workers of America; UNITE — Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees; USWA — United Steelworkers of America; UTU — United Transportation Union.

## U.S. government arrests 10 Cuban patriots, accuses them of espionage

BY ERNIE MAILHOT

MIAMI — On September 14 the FBI announced the arrests of 10 Cubans living in southern Florida who it accused of being agents of the Cuban government. The FBI said two others it wanted to arrest had left the country.

The charges by the U.S. government against the 10 include working as unregistered agents for a foreign power, conspiracy, and seeking to deliver U.S. military information to a foreign power. They are accused of trying to infiltrate MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, the U.S. Naval Air Station in Boca Chica near Key West, and the U.S. Southern Command, which coordinates U.S. military operations in Latin America and the Caribbean. One member of the group, Antonio Guerrero, had a civilian job at the Boca Chica

Naval Air Station. If convicted, they could receive sentences ranging from 15 years to life in prison.

Several of the arrested are also alleged to have infiltrated or tried to infiltrate ultrarightist groups in the Cuban-American community here. René González-Sehweret, one of the arrested, had been the assistant director of "air command" for the Democracia Movement. This organization has organized several anti-Cuba flotillas, at least one of which entered Cuban waters and ended up having one of its boats forcibly turned around by Cuban gunboats. The "air command" attached to the flotillas refers to several small planes piloted by Cuban-American rightists that accompany the flotillas.

Among the other rightist groups the FBI

said were targeted for infiltration were Alpha 66, a paramilitary group that trains in the Florida Keys, and Brothers to the Rescue, which organized many provocative flights in Cuban airspace before two of its planes were downed over Cuban waters by the Cuban air force on Feb. 24, 1996.

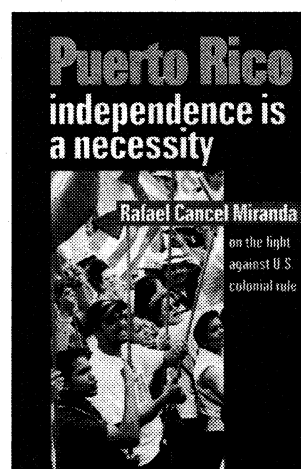
Ultrarightists on Spanish-language radio stations in Miami and U.S. government officials such as congresspeople Lincoln Díaz-Balart and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen have used the arrests to intensify their ongoing campaign against the Cuban revolution. Referring to the supposed threat to the United States from Cuba, Juan Cortinas, a spokesman for Ros-Lehtinen, said, "Last year we reached an agreement with the State Department that every time a Cuban official would come here, we need to see the paper of where they are going."

### NEW! from Pathfinder

## Puerto Rico: independence is a necessity

Rafael Cancel Miranda  
on the fight  
against U.S. colonial rule

In two interviews, a leader of Puerto Rico's independence struggle speaks on the brutal reality of U.S. colonial domination, the resurgence of the independence movement, the campaign to free 15 Puerto Rican Political prisoners, and the example of Cuba's socialist revolution for all those fighting for freedom. Rafael Cancel Miranda addresses, above all, the new generation joining this struggle. Available in English and Spanish. \$3.00



Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 16, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Fax: (212) 727-0150. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 to cover shipping and handling.

# 'Great crises have always spawned great

## Cuban president Fidel Castro speaks to National Assembly

Printed below is the text of a speech given by Cuban president Fidel Castro to a special meeting of South Africa's National Assembly in Cape Town September 4. The Cuban leader was given a hero's welcome by millions of South Africans during his two-day state visit. His talk to the National Assembly was televised throughout the country that afternoon. The speech was published in *Granma*, the daily paper of the Communist Party of Cuba. Translation and sub-headings are by the *Militant*.

Members of the South African Parliament, Distinguished Guests:

As I was flying to South Africa, I was told that this speech had to be in written form because of the need to have it translated and printed for those guests who would not have access to simultaneous translation.

I tried to imagine what impression I would get when coming before this Parliament, what I could and should say that would deserve the interest and attention of all of you who have so graciously gathered to hear these words.

What I bring here, with the help of some facts that I carry with me, therefore, is only the fruit of my imagination. It is like a love letter written from thousands of miles away to a girlfriend without knowing how she thinks, what she wishes to hear, or even what she looks like. [Applause]

For me, a speech represents a frank and intimate conversation. That is why I make a habit of always looking into the faces of those I am addressing and having discussions with, to try to convince them of what I say to them. [Laughter and applause]

If at some point I leave this paper aside to add some ideas that come to me in the heat of the moment, I hope that those who have no headphones will forgive me and that the organizers and those responsible for the efficiency and formality of this event will understand. [Applause]

As you can all see, it has turned out differently; there are no headphones for anyone, there will be a direct translation (he points to the translator). We will have to do it one paragraph and one idea at a time. The interruption will be minimal. This shows us once again that there is no need to lose heart over the hardships, that everything has its solution. [Laughter and applause]

As I think about this country and its history, all sorts of developments, events, facts, realities that reflect the enormous responsibility and the huge historical task involved in creating the new South Africa you have set out to build, come to mind.

I hope that the only important remembrance left by my presence here will be my fervent and sincere desire to support the tremendous effort you are making to stanch the deep wounds that were opened over the centuries.

This promising country, that yesterday had been the object of isolation and universal condemnation, can tomorrow become an example of humanity and justice. This is made possible by the timely presence, at just the right moment, of a leader of exceptional human and political characteristics. That



"There are many countries that face similar economic and social problems as a result of the conquest, the colonization, and an unbearable inequality in the distribution of wealth, but in none has the struggle to gain respect for human dignity awakened so many hopes as it has here." Above, Nelson Mandela and Fidel Castro in Havana in 1991, shortly after Mandela's release from prison after more than a quarter century in the apartheid jails.

man was there, in the dark corners of a prison. He was not just a political prisoner sentenced to life; he was a prophet of politics, who is today admired even by those who yesterday hated and punished him mercilessly. [Applause]

Nelson Mandela will not be remembered for the 27 consecutive years he spent in prison without ever giving up his ideas [applause], but because he was able to tear from his soul all the poison that such an unjust punishment could have produced, [exclamations of "Yes!" and applause], and for the generosity and the wisdom with which he so brilliantly led his dedicated and heroic people at the moment when victory could no longer be contained, knowing that the new South Africa could never be built on the basis of hate and vengeance. [Applause]

### Two South Africas: rich and poor

Today, there are still two South Africas, which I cannot call the white one and the black one. In order to create a multiracial and united country, that terminology needs to be uprooted for ever. [Applause] I prefer to say it differently: two South Africas: the rich one and the poor one, [applause] one and the other. One in which the average family earns twelve times more income than the other. One in which 13 per thousand children die before the age of one, the other in which 57 per thousand die. One in which the life expectancy is 73 years, the other where it only reaches 56. One in which practically one hundred percent of the population can read and write, the other which has an illiteracy rate of more than 50 percent. One



There are still two South Africas, "the rich one and the poor one." Gold miners rally to present demands to bosses at Kloof mine near Carltonville in September, 1994.

where almost full employment exists, the other where almost 45 percent is jobless. One where 12 percent of the population owns almost 90 percent of the land, the other where almost 80 percent of the inhabitants own less than 10 percent. [Shouts of "Yes!" and applause] One that accumulated and holds almost all the technical and management knowledge, the other that was condemned to inexperience and ignorance. One that enjoys well-being and liberty, the other that has only been able to conquer liberty without well-being. [Applause]

This terrible legacy cannot be changed overnight. [Applause]

Absolutely nothing is gained by disorganizing the productive apparatus or by not taking advantage of the considerable material and technical wealth and the productive efficiency created by the noble hands of the workers under a cruel and unjust system, a virtual slavery. Perhaps one of the most difficult tasks for human society to achieve is to carry out social change in an orderly, gradual and peaceful manner, so that this wealth can bring the South African people the most benefit. [Applause] In the opinion of this bold visitor that you have invited here to say a few words, this is the greatest challenge that faces South Africa today. [Shouts of "Yes!"]

I deplore demagoguery. I would never say a word to rouse discontent, much less to gain applause and please the ears of millions of

South Africans who are understandably pained because their country has yet to attain the paradise of equal opportunities and justice for all that was dreamt of during the long years of struggle. [Shouts of yes and applause]

There are many countries that face similar economic and social problems as a result of the conquest, the colonization and an unbearable inequality in the distribution of wealth, but in none has the struggle to gain respect for human dignity awakened so many hopes as it has here. The contradiction between the hopes, the possibilities, and the priorities is not an internal problem of South Africa alone; but something that is being debated and will continue to be debated among honest theoreticians in many countries.

The system of conquest, colonization, slavery, the genocide of native populations and the razing of their natural resources throughout the past centuries, has brought terrible consequences for the overwhelming majority of the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America. [Applause]

Seventy-million Indians were exterminated in the American hemisphere by the relentless exploitation, slave labor, and imported illnesses, or the blade of the sword of the conquerors. Twelve-million Africans were uprooted from their villages, their homes and transported in

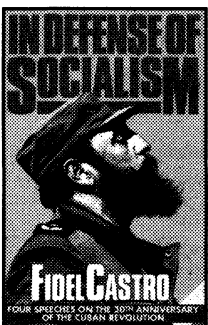
### FIDEL CASTRO SPEECHES

#### In Defense of Socialism

Volume 4, 1998-89

FOUR SPEECHES ON THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CUBAN REVOLUTION

Not only is economic and social progress possible without the dog-eat-dog competition of capitalism, Castro argues, but socialism remains the only way forward for humanity. Also discusses Cuba's role in the struggle against the apartheid regime in southern Africa. \$13.95



#### From Pathfinder

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#### Cuba's Internationalist Foreign Policy

Volume 1, 1975-80

Castro discusses the historic importance of the anticapitalist revolutions in 1979 in Grenada and Nicaragua; Cuba's internationalist missions in Angola and Ethiopia; relations with the U.S. government and with Cubans living in the United States; the fight within the Nonaligned Movement to forge a front of struggle against imperialist exploitation; and the proletarian internationalism that has guided the foreign policy of the Cuban government since the 1959 revolution. \$20.95

# solutions' of South Africa

so much for so few. You the citizens, the South African leaders of all the parties, from every ethnic origin, are those few for which we, the inhabitants of the planet, wish so much and of whom we expect so much from a political and human point of view.

An idea can give rise to another: from the new South Africa, the hope of a new Africa. [Applause] Economically, from the point of view of industry, agriculture, technology, and science, South Africa is the most developed country in the African continent. Its mineral wealth and energy resources are countless and in many cases among the first in the world. Today, South Africa produces 50 percent of the electricity of the continent, 85 percent of its steel and 97 percent of its coal; it accounts for 69 percent of all the freight moved by train; it has 32 percent of all the motor vehicles and 45 percent of the paved roads. The rest of Africa is also extremely rich in natural resources. The tremendous potential and raw talent of its children, their extraordinary valor and intelligence, their ability to assimilate the most complex concepts of science and technology, is well known to those of us who have had the privilege to fight alongside them, struggling for freedom or in peaceful construction.

## Internationalist assistance in Africa

Cuba is a small island next to a very powerful neighbor, but in spite of this, 26,294 African professionals and technicians, have already graduated from our learning centers [applause] and 5,850 have been trained. At the same time 80,524 Cuban civilian volunteers, of whom 24,714 are doctors, stomach specialists, nurses, and health technicians, along with tens of thousands of professors, teachers, engineers, and other professionals and skilled workers, have provided internationalist services in Africa [applause]; and throughout more than thirty years, 381,432 soldiers and officers have stood guard or have fought alongside African soldiers and officers for national independence or against foreign aggression in this continent. The numbers add up to 461,956 during a brief historical period.

The only things they took back with them to Cuba from the African territory, in which they worked and fought voluntarily and selflessly, were the remains of their fallen comrades and the honor of having served. [Applause] We are therefore aware of and value the human qualities of the children of Africa, much more than those who colonized and exploited this continent for centuries.

It is with deep and wrenching pain that today we look upon its internecine wars, the economic underdevelopment, its poverty, its famines, its lack of hospitals and schools, its lack of communications. We find it awesome that Manhattan or Tokyo have more telephones than the whole of Africa.

The deserts expand, the forests disappear, the soil is eroded. And what is worse, their populations are being decimated by old and new illnesses such as malaria, tuberculosis, leper, cholera, ebola, parasites — curable infectious diseases. Relative to the rest of the world, infant mortality is reaching record rates; also rising is the number of mothers who die in childbirth; in some countries life expectancy is being lowered.

The terrible virus of HIV is spreading in geometric proportions. I do not exaggerate, as you know, when I say that whole countries of Africa are at risk of disappearing. In order to survive, each person who has the virus would have to pay \$10,000 a year in medication, when the health budgets allow only \$10 dollars to be spent in the health of each person. At today's prices \$250 billion would need to be invested in Africa every year simply in order to fight AIDS. That is why Africa accounts for 9 out of every 10 persons who die of AIDS in the planet.

Can the world look at this catastrophe with indifference? Given the amazing scientific advances, couldn't humans cope with this situation? Why speak to us of macro-economic indexes and other endless deceptions, recipes and more recipes from the International Monetary Fund, the World Business Organization; of the miraculous virtues of the blind laws of the market and of the wonders of neoliberal globalization? [Applause] Why not accept these realities? Why not search for other formulas and recognize that

man is capable of organizing his life and his destiny in a more rational and human manner? [Applause]

## Unavoidable crisis

Today, we are all being threatened by a deep and unavoidable economic crisis, perhaps the worst one in history. Each day throughout the world, which has



become a casino, speculative transactions worth one-half trillion dollars are carried out that have no relationship whatsoever to the real economy. [Shouts of "Yes!" and applause] Such a phenomenon has never taken place before in the history of the world. The price of stocks in the United States stock markets have multiplied to preposterous levels.

It was only a historical privilege, together with a series of factors, that enabled a rich nation to become the world issuer of the reserve currencies for the central banks in every country. Its treasury bonds are the last refuge for the frightened investors facing any financial crisis.

The dollar ceased to be backed by gold when that country unilaterally eliminated the conversion that was established in Bretton Woods. As the alchemists of the middle ages had fervently dreamed, paper turned into gold, the value of world reserve currency since then is simply a question of faith. Wars like the one in Vietnam, which cost 500 billion dollars, gave rise to this huge deceit. This was followed by a colossal rearmament without taxes, which increased the U.S. public debt from 700 billion dollars to 2.5 trillion dollars in the course of only eight years.

Money became fictitious, securities ceased to have a real and material basis. In recent years, U.S. investors acquired 9 trillion dollars simply as a result of the mechanical and uncontrolled multiplying of the price of stocks in their stock markets. This brought about a giant rise in their multinational corporations' investments both in their own country and around the world, coupled with an excessive growth in internal consumption, thus artificially feeding an economy that seemed to grow and grow without inflation and without crisis.

The world would have to pay the price sooner or later.

The richest countries of Southeast Asia are now bankrupt. Japan, the world's second-largest economy, can no longer contain the recession; the yen continues to decrease in value; the yuan is staying afloat by sheer sacrifice on the part of China, whose high rate of growth this year has been reduced to less than 8 percent, a figure that comes dangerously close to the tolerable limit in a country that is rapidly carrying out a radical reform and



Top: Verde Olivo; left: Militant/ Greg Rosenberg  
Between 1975 and 1991, some 300,000 Cuban volunteers fought in Angola, above, to help repel South African invasions. "The only things they took back with them to Cuba from the African territory were the remains of their fallen comrades and the honor of having served." Today, about 400 Cuban doctors are serving in rural hospitals and clinics across South Africa. At left, Cuban doctor Norys Mayo Castro and ANC health policy coordinator Lulu Madalane (right) at Empilisweni Hospital in Sebokeng township in May 1996.

an extraordinary rationalization of the workers in its productive companies. As the economic

crisis in Asia reemerges, the economic catastrophe develops in Russia, the biggest economic and social failure in history as it attempts to establish capitalism in that country, in spite of the enormous amount of economic aid and the advice and prescriptions of the top intelligences of the West. [Laughter] Perhaps here, at this very moment, is the greatest political risk arising from the situation created in a state that owns thousands of nuclear weapons, where the operators of strategic missiles have been without pay for the past five months. [Laughter and applause]

In the last few months, the Latin American stock markets have already lost more than 40 percent of their stocks' value; Russia's, 75 percent. The phenomenon is becoming generalized everywhere. In many countries the price of commodities — copper, nickel, aluminum, oil, and many others — has dropped by 50 percent in the recent period.

Stock markets in the United States itself are teetering. As you know, they have just had a black Monday. I don't know why they call it black, [applause]; in fact, it has been a white Monday. [Applause] It is not certain when or how a general panic will set in. At this point, who can guarantee that a collapse like the one in 1929 will not be repeated? Not Rubin, nor Greenspan, nor Camdessus, nor anybody can guarantee it.

They are all plagued by doubt, including the most eminent economic analysts. Except that today there is an enormous difference. In 1929 there was not 1.5 trillion in speculative transactions taking place and only 3 percent of the U.S. population owned stocks.

Today, 50 percent of the population of the United States has invested its savings and retirement funds in the stock market.

This is not something I made up, it is not a fantasy, read the news. Add to that, if you will, that the new world order is destroying more than ever the natural resources needed for the survival of the 6 billion inhabitants that already exist, and of the 10 billion who will depend on them for their livelihood only fifty years from now.

I have carried out my task. I have just presented to you everything that went through my mind while flying at 10,000 meters. [Laughter and applause] Don't ask me for solutions. I am not a prophet. I only know that great crises have always spawned great solutions. [Applause]

I have faith in the intelligence of the peoples and of human beings. I have faith in the need of humanity to survive. I trust that you, distinguished and patient members of this Parliament, will think about this issue. I trust that you will understand that it is not a question of ideologies, of races, of colors, of personal incomes, of social categories. For all of us who sail in this same boat, it is a question of life or death. [Applause]

Let us, therefore, be more generous, have more solidarity, be more human. Let South Africa become a model for a more just and human future world. If you can, all of us will be able to. [Applause and exclamations of "Fidel, Fidel, Fidel!"]

Thank you very much. [Ovation]

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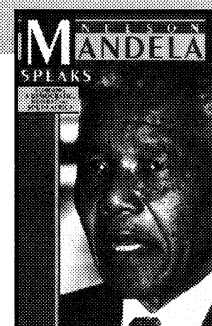
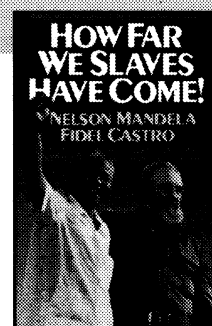
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# AMFA is part of boss antiunion campaign

BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN  
AND MIKE ITALIE

ATLANTA — There is rising dissatisfaction among cleaners, mechanics, ramp workers, and others organized by the International Association of Machinists (IAM) at Northwest Airlines.

On July 29, IAM members rejected a tentative agreement whose wage package and work-rule changes the rank-and-file saw as an insult. The Machinists voted 92-percent in favor of authorizing a strike and since August the IAM has called on the National Mediation Board (NMB) to release the union from mediation and begin a countdown to a possible strike.

But just as IAM members were saying "Enough!" to the company's concessions, the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association

strike preparations by the Association of Flight Attendants, in addition to hiring replacement workers and threatening to fire flight attendants if they struck. Another example is the use of goons to beat up supporters of the United Farm Workers among strawberry pickers in Watsonville, California. Along with physical intimidation, the growers have a "union" for the farm workers to join, which is counterposed to the UFW.

AMFA revealed its true colors when the IAM requested to be released to strike by the NMB on Aug. 31, 1998. Rather than support this move to limit government control over workers' right to strike, AMFA proposes to suspend further negotiations until their representation election can be completed.

In a letter to the National Mediation Board responding to the IAM's request to be released to strike, the company stated, "Northwest believes that the practical implications of the pending AMFA election will make it difficult, if not impossible, to have meaningful negotiations at this time." Further delays, after 24 months of failed government mediated talks, would serve only one purpose — to thwart workers' ability to strike and buy time for the company.

Unlike the IAM, AMFA did not support the striking pilots. In fact, the September 4 AMFA hot-line complained that the NMB delayed the AMFA election because of the pilots' strike. The taped message stated "What impact does the pilots' strike have on our elections? The answer is nothing."

When 6,200 pilots struck the carrier on August 28, some workers at the DC-9 maintenance base here saw it as round one. "This



Militant/Alyson Kennedy

**Before 1989-91 Eastern Airlines strike, union-busting boss Frank Lorenzo offered mechanics a smaller pay cut than ramp workers and others organized by the IAM in an attempt to get the mechanics to break ranks with their union brothers and sisters. Instead workers there stood together to fight. Above, Eastern strike anniversary picket in Birmingham in March 1990.**

is our fight," stated mechanic José Cornado. "If the company gets tough with the pilots, we should fight this together and show that we're united." It's no coincidence that the response of many AMFA supporters here to the pilots' strike had much in common with Northwest's media blitz, claiming that the pilots are greedy and childish for asking for more money and that "Northwest cannot afford an industry leading contract."

Most of the 27,000 members of the IAM at Northwest were laid off by the company

when the pilots struck. "The company laid us off so that we would have nothing to fight with, so they could divide and conquer," stated Mike Brown, a cleaner in the Engine Shop at the Atlanta hangar. "The longer the pilots stay out the more the company will be hurting. The company is trying to scare the IAM by prolonging the pilots' strike. Support for the pilots is the most important thing for the IAM right now," he added.

AMFA's position, however, is that mechanics will make gains by helping the company drive down the wages and benefits of other workers. According to Terry Tindall, 32, who works in the Machine Shop here, crew meetings prior to the layoff became weekly debates — IAM vs. AMFA. "The body of people were being divided just when we needed to be together most," he said. Tindall stated that "a pro-AMFA steward said that he thought Northwest ramp workers make 'too much.' Besides, he bragged the company is willing to pay mechanics more."

AMFA claims mechanics are victims of supposed IAM "partiality toward the unskilled (majority)." One of their flyers states "How many more injustices must the mechanics endure before they sign an AMFA card to separate from the IAM/unskilled?"

This is not a new pitch. Prior to the 1989-91 Eastern Airlines strike, union-busting boss Frank Lorenzo offered mechanics at the airline a smaller pay cut than ramp workers and others organized by the IAM. This was an attempt to get the mechanics to break ranks with their union brothers and sisters, instead of standing together to fight Lorenzo and his union busting.

If the company succeeds, with AMFA's help, in forcing a rotten contract on ramp and clerical workers, it will then be in a stronger position to beat down the mechanics as well. Northwest has already begun to farm out maintenance work and its partner in a new airline alliance, Continental Airlines contracts out almost all of its maintenance.

AMFA was defeated in a 1991 representation election at Northwest. Looking back on that experience Willie Turnipseed, 39, a stock clerk with 16 years overall at Northwest, commented, "I didn't feel the need to go to any of AMFA's meetings or to listen to anything else this time around. In their last campaign, it came out that they only wanted 'skilled' employees like mechanics and it was the court that said that they had to take cleaners. I don't think they have changed their minds. They just want to get in and want the cleaners' vote," he concluded.

"It's clearly true that mechanics have a lot of bargaining power, but that's beside the point. We have the right to support our families and ourselves with a decent wage," stated Mike Brown. "AMFA is company-oriented. Their main goal is to bust the IAM. Listen, anybody can call themselves a union. But workers need to know history," he said.

*Arlene Rubinstein and Mike Italie are members of the IAM at Northwest Airlines in Atlanta.*

## UNION TALK

tion (AMFA), a company-minded outfit that masquerades as a union, announced it had collected enough cards from Northwest mechanics to call for a vote on whether they wanted to split from the IAM and join AMFA. AMFA's move and timing aims to divide and pit workers against each other. It is part of a more general campaign by the company to weaken the IAM and defeat any resistance coming from the unions. Northwest has amassed a \$3 billion-dollar war chest for this purpose.

AMFA is not unique. The bosses at AirTran tried to organize a company "union" as a part of their response to recent

## Pilots' win encourages airline workers

Continued from front page

can Airlines within minutes. ALPA's chief negotiator Steve Wilson noted that if they can count on the president to intervene and appoint a government board to recommend a settlement, airline executives avoid serious negotiations with union members.

According to ALPA officials, the pilots gained \$156 million more in the new contract over the final offer of NWA before the strike deadline. The four-year contract includes 3 percent raises each year; retroactive pay in a lump sum equaling 3.5 percent of pay since Oct. 31, 1996; and a plan of profit sharing and stock options. Additionally, the contract includes a three-year phase out of the B-scale (lower pay for new pilots), a no-layoff clause, better benefits for pilots and spouses, and stronger guarantees against cancellation of vacations.

ALPA accepted NWA's demand for unlimited growth of regional jets flown by lower cost affiliate airlines on condition that an equal number of new planes would be added to Northwest's fleet. The pilots' union also approved NWA's alliance with Conti-

mental Airlines — which would allow the two companies to sell seats on each other's domestic routes — with language to maintain the current proportion of flights between the two airlines.

In addition to giving more ground to the pilots than they offered before the strike, the bosses at Northwest airlines suffered significant losses, estimated at \$300 million, due to the strike. NWA announced September 11 that they expect a loss for the entire year of 1998, while their competitors say they will post large profits. Northwest's chief financial officer said that the strike and an earlier campaign of working to rule and refusing overtime by ground workers will cost NWA nearly \$1 billion. The figure includes losses Northwest will incur over the next several months to restart flight operations and recover from lost bookings. NWA bosses had set aside \$1 billion to fight the strike, as well as putting up its fleet of jets as collateral for another \$2 billion in loans.

Other workers at Northwest have been watching the pilots' strike with interest. Many have demonstrated their solidarity.

Some 27,000 cleaners, ramp workers, and mechanics organized by the International Association of Machinists (IAM); 11,000 flight attendants organized by the Teamsters; and three small unions are also in the middle of contract fights at Northwest.

Tracy Cartwright, a mechanic in Minneapolis, told the *Militant*, "The pilots got most of what they wanted though the company didn't give up everything. Hopefully this will be positive for the other groups.... Everything we've gone through leaves us bitter with the company. But the pilots' strike does show us that we can stick together."

"They definitely cracked the door open for all five groups to settle with the company," said Danny Campbell, secretary-treasurer of Teamsters Local 2000, which represents the 11,000 flight attendants at NWA. "The threat of another strike is one the company has to take seriously. This showed the company the public supports the workers. I hope they learned that."

*Jeff Jones is a cleaner at Northwest and a member of IAM Local 1833.*

from Pathfinder



### The Eastern Airlines Strike

Accomplishments of the Rank-and-File Machinists  
and Gains for the Labor Movement

Ernie Mailhot, Judy Stranahan, and Jack Barnes

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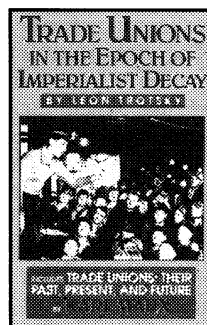
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—Karl Marx, 1866.

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## Ours is the epoch of world revolution

### 'New International' no. 11 helps prepare workers parties to act politically, with speed and effectiveness

Below we print "Ours is the Epoch of World Revolution," the introductory article to issue no. 11 of *New International*, a magazine of Marxist politics and theory. The new issue will be available at Pathfinder bookstores October 1. Jack Barnes is the national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party and a contributing editor of *New International*. Mary-Alice Waters is the editor of *New International*. Copyright © 1998 by 408 Printing and Publishing Corp., reprinted by permission.

BY JACK BARNES  
AND MARY-ALICE WATERS

"We cannot think about the world clearly today without the beginnings of motion toward a youth organization. Why is this so? Because in addition to the working-class experience, composition, and continuity without which any communist organization will go off the rails politically, there are also points in history at which so much is changing so rapidly that even the best fighters will be disoriented unless they can break from habits of thought developed in the past and see the world through the eyes of a generation just awakening to political life."

These words from the featured article in issue no. 10 of *New International*<sup>1</sup> are also at the center of the "Young Socialists Manifesto," the opening piece in this issue. This document was drafted by members of the Young Socialists chapter in Los Angeles, California, in April 1998. It is the product of several chapter discussions in the course of which they put down working notes to clarify for themselves the character and activity of their organization and the necessity of its political relationship to the Socialist Workers Party, the communist vanguard party of the working class in the United States.

The brevity, clarity, and freshness of the document are a testimony to the hard work and collective effort of its authors, as well as evidence of its insight.

The "Manifesto," as others soon named it, became the center of discussion at a West Coast Young Socialists regional conference held in San Francisco, September 5-6, 1998, hosted by the California YS chapters. Participants in that conference, acting on the request of the National Executive Committee of the Young Socialists, issued a

<sup>1</sup> "Imperialism's March toward Fascism and War" by Jack Barnes, published in issue no. 10 of *New International*, had been discussed and adopted by delegates to the Socialist Workers Party's August 1994 national convention.



Militant photos: Megan Arney (top), Scott Breen (right)

"The 'Young Socialists Manifesto' brings into focus what this issue of *New International* is about: understanding the depth of the political, economic, and social changes reshaping our world, and forging the kind of working-class parties whose units are capable of acting in a politically centralized manner, with speed and effectiveness, as we are confronted with the unpredictable challenges and opportunities created daily by capitalism's accelerating world disorder." Above, YS banner in July 25, 1998, demonstration for Puerto Rican independence, New York. Right, Seattle YS member campaigning for socialism, March 1998.

call for the third national convention of the organization to be held in Los Angeles at the end of November 1998. They decided YS chapters around the country should begin work to build the convention by discussing the manifesto, along with the "Young Socialists Organizer" adopted by the second national convention of the Young Socialists in March 1997. The opening section of that document, too, is printed here.

The "Young Socialists Manifesto" brings into focus what this issue of *New International* is about: understanding the depth of the political, economic, and social changes reshaping our world, and forging the kind of working-class parties whose units are capable of acting in a politically centralized manner, with speed and effectiveness, as we

are confronted with the unpredictable challenges and opportunities created daily by capitalism's accelerating world disorder.

Without the trajectory the YS Manifesto traces for the new generation just beginning to move toward the working class politically, the other contents of this issue of the magazine might still have historical and analytical merit. Alone, however, they would not constitute a communist course for today. Marxism is a guide to revolutionary practice. As the founders of the modern working-class movement put it so succinctly more than 150 years ago: the point is not to interpret the world, but to change it.

The opportunities for organizations of communist workers and of youth to act together along the lines presented in the pages that follow have been expanding at least since early 1997. The evidence continues to accumulate that the working class in the United States and most other imperialist countries has emerged from the period of political retreat that followed the short, brutal — and demoralizing, because largely uncontested — imperial assault on the people of Iraq in 1990-91. Signs of renewed defensive action are all around us — more numerous strike actions reflecting the tenacity and resistance of the embattled ranks; a noticeable growth in the confidence and determination of women in industry; the increased weight of Black leadership in labor battles and struggles of working farmers; an upswing in the Puerto Rican independence movement; more actions in defense of immigrants' rights. Such develop-

ments prepare the strengthening of working-class leadership in these struggles and increase the potential of the unions "to act deliberately as organizing centers of the working class in the broad interests of its complete emancipation."<sup>2</sup>

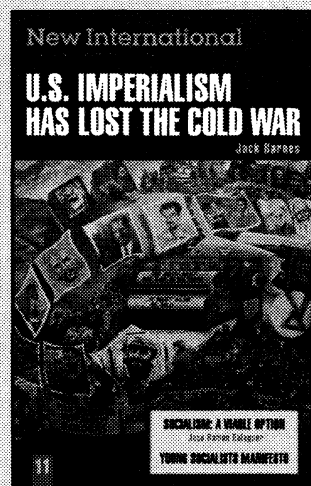
It is at moments such as these, above all, that the vanguard party of the working-class and revolutionary-minded young people who seek to build a proletarian youth movement must march together, deepening their understanding

and organizing their work within the history and line of march of the modern communist movement. That is the precondition for carrying out effective mass work and recruitment to both organizations — not in the long-run, but today. It is the only way to implement a proletarian course, responding in a timely way — free of political hesitation, abstention, or ultraleft missteps — to the accelerated resistance bred by capitalism's deepening crises.

"Theory is not dogma, nor an IOU. It is the living generalization of the line of march of a class, of the strategic political lessons our class has learned through bloody sacrifice and struggle," states the document cited by the Young Socialists in their manifesto. "These lessons are the most valuable asset of the communist movement, our most valuable weapons. It is the absorption of these lessons into the day-by-day, week-by-week political practice of an organized world communist movement that makes it possible, when the crunch comes, for millions of individual communists to think and act in a disciplined way to do the necessary."

That is the course the Young Socialists Manifesto charts, and that the Young Socialists will be moving along as they build toward the third national convention of their organization in Los Angeles. That is why their manifesto deserves its leading place in this issue of *New International*, and the attention of every revolutionary-minded person, regardless of age or years of political experience.

<sup>2</sup> From "Trade Unions: Their Past, Present and Future," the founding trade union document of the communist movement. Drafted by Karl Marx for discussion and adoption by the First International in 1867, it is published in the book *Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay* (Pathfinder, 1990).



**New International no. 11**

**U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War**  
Jack Barnes

Also:

- **Ours is the Epoch of World Revolution**  
Jack Barnes and Mary-Alice Waters
- **Young Socialists Manifesto**
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“U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War,” the document featured in this issue of *New Internationalist*, was discussed and adopted by delegates to the 35th national convention of the Socialist Workers Party in the United States, August 8–12, 1990. The resolution was put before convention delegates by the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party. As the resolution was being discussed and debated in party branches across the United States and by communist organizations in other countries, the historic events that marked the end of Stalinist regimes across Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, and the disintegration of the power of the Communist Party apparatuses in those countries, were unfolding day-by-day. The imperialist rulers had begun to loudly proclaim the defeat of communism and the birth of a “new world order” — even the end of history itself — with themselves supposedly heading toward undisputed control at the world’s helm.

At the very time delegates to the SWP convention were deliberating, the U.S. government opened a drive toward war against Iraq that culminated five months later in six weeks of massive, devastating bombing, a 100-hour invasion of that country, and the slaughter of some 150,000 Iraqi men, women, and children.

Plans to rapidly edit and publish the resolution adopted at the August 1990 convention were temporarily put aside, as the branches and trade union fractions of the Socialist Workers Party and chapters of the Young Socialist Alliance, along with communists around the world who shared the political conclusions of that document, turned to the immediate tasks campaigning against the approaching war. U.S. imperialism was to prove unable to achieve its goals in the Iraq war, however. The “grand coalition” engineered under the baton of President George Bush began to come apart even as the guns blazed, obliging the U.S. rulers to stop short of establishing the protectorate they need in that region. The outcome of the Gulf War was among the first striking confirmations of the sharpening interimperialist conflict that would mark the post-Cold War world, sounding a minor-key chord in the midst of paeans to U.S. hegemony in the new world order. The consequences of that outcome for U.S. finance capital are still being played out today.

That “U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War” would be published by *New Internationalist* only some eight years after it was written and adopted was not foreseen or intended. But its appearance now is perhaps fortuitous. What is printed here has not been rewritten with the benefit of hindsight: it is published as it was presented in the *Discussion Bulletin* of the Socialist Workers Party in May 1990, incorporating the changes decided by the delegates to the convention that adopted it. The resolution has been edited only to eliminate unnecessary repetition, digressions, and ambiguities, and to footnote facts and references that the passage of time has left dated or unclear. We read the document today with different eyes, however. The perspective of a few short years allows us to appreciate the enormity of the consequences that followed from imperialism’s historic loss, and the speed with which some of the most fundamental linchpins of world politics in the post-World War II era have changed and are changing.

• Far from the “relative strengthening of German finance capital within the imperialist system” and the formation of a European Union “increasingly dominated by German finance capital,” long-term trends noted by the resolution, the German bourgeoisie, and its previously solid currency, the mark, have been politically and economically weakened by the traumatic nine-year attempt to swallow and digest the east German workers state. The resolution accurately points to the manifold contradictions inherent in the coming reunification of Germany. But it stopped short of indicating the probable consequences,



Some of the most fundamental linchpins of the post-World War II era are changing with enormous speed. The German bourgeoisie and currency have been politically and economically weakened by attempt to swallow and digest the east German workers state. At right, shipyard workers in Bremen, Germany, on strike against layoffs in both east and west, 1996. The first war in Europe in almost 50 years has been unfolding in Yugoslavia since 1991. U.S. troops moved in under NATO banner, above, to establish U.S. supremacy in Europe, create conditions that will one day facilitate restoration of capitalist relations there, and tighten encirclement of Russian workers state.

since they were at such variance with the previous period marked by a sharply separated “East” and “West” Germany, as well as by a long capitalist wave of expansion.

Official unemployment rates matching those not seen in Germany since the eve of Hitler’s installation as chancellor of the Third Reich, sharpening political polarization with rising fascist currents, and German finance capital’s heightened vulnerability to the destabilizing consequences of Russia’s economic disintegration — these are among the most visible manifestations of the new reality in capitalist Europe.

This relative weakening of the German bourgeoisie vis-à-vis its rivals, especially imperialist France, has been the single biggest shift in world politics since the resolution was drafted. Together with Tokyo’s accelerated decline over much the same period, it has altered the popular misconception — which was reaching its zenith among bourgeois commentators leading up to 1990 — that Germany and Japan, with their respective “economic miracles,” were the “real victors” in World War II. But only a new interimperialist slaughter, with new powers emerging victorious, can change the balance of forces established with the outcome of the last world war. And such a contest is being prepared.

The real victor in World War II, we should never forget, was not only U.S. finance capital, which emerged



Balkans.

On the blood and bones of the Yugoslav people, the United States government has established itself as the major “European” power. As the rival national capitalist classes of Europe, wrapped in the United Nations flag, wore themselves out in futile attempts to displace one another as the “winner” in the new Balkan wars, Washington, unfurled its NATO banner in 1994 and decisively moved in. Despite demagogic rationalizations, the U.S. rulers’ aim is not to stop “ethnic cleansing” or to impose “democracy,” but to establish U.S. supremacy in Europe and create conditions that one day will facilitate the restoration of capitalist social relations throughout the Yugoslav workers state.

• The growing strains within the reactionary NATO alliance “from intensifying interimperialist competition and shifting alignments” noted in the resolution have sharpened not diminished. But under the guiding hand of a U.S. ruling class far from unanimous on the fateful consequences of its course, NATO is being expanded to encompass even more explosive contradictions; its center of gravity is being shifted sharply to the east. The encirclement of the Russian workers state is being tightened along

## “Disintegration of the bureaucratic castes in the workers states has removed an enormous roadblock to revolutionary fighters finding their way to Marxism.”

largely unchallenged among the imperialist ruling classes. The “American century” remained a sad delusion of Washington liberals, much to their surprise, due to the checkmate imposed by the working class internationally, the other victor in that world conflagration. The toilers’ victory resided in the fact that the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union, however weakened and deformed, was not destroyed. The working people of the Soviet Union, at an enormous material and human cost, with the support of workers and farmers worldwide, turned back the imperialist invasion and began to reconstruct.

The economic foundations laid by the October revolution survived. And the oppressed nations and peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America seized the moment created by the weakening of the imperialist system to unleash powerful national liberation struggles that changed the face of world politics and the relationship of class forces internationally to the detriment of finance capital.

• The first war on the European continent in almost fifty years had not yet begun in 1990. But for seven years now, since early 1991, it has been sometimes smoldering, sometimes exploding, throughout the lands of Yugoslavia and across the

its entire perimeter, from Central Europe, through the oil-rich Caucasus, and deep into Asia along the historic Silk Road to the south. This ring of fire will be fanned into raging flames with increasing frequency, as the capitalist powers seek to advance their interests. The uncontrolled forces set in motion will grow. That is the actual perspective at the dawn of the twenty-first century.

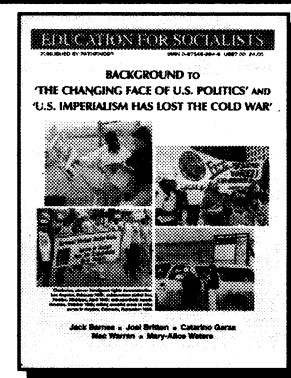
Step by step, U.S. imperialism is preparing, with cold-blooded awareness, for what it is convinced must eventually be done. What was opened by the October 1917 revolution in Russia cannot be finessed out of history. Capitalism can only be established in those lands through bloody counterrevolution. The toilers in the former USSR will have to be taken on directly. Though weakened and betrayed by decades of misrule of the bureaucratic caste of opportunists, assassins, and other anti-working-class parasites, now shattered into countless warring camps, the state power of the working class must still be overthrown by military might.

As the resolution affirms, “The workers states and their proletarian property foundations have proven stronger than the castes.”

• In August 1990 the skeletal forms of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics still existed. Mikhail Gorbachev was president of the Soviet Union and general secretary of the Communist Party. The Moscow regime still sought to justify its legitimacy by claiming to represent the continuity of the Bolshevik-led October 1917 revolution. None of that remains the fact today.

The disintegration of the bureaucratic castes, abandoning all pretense to speak for communism or represent the interests of the working class and its allies internationally, has removed an enormous roadblock that for decades stood in the way of revolutionary fighters finding their way to Marxism. Millions were diverted instead onto a

### Background to “The Changing Face of U.S. Politics” and “U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War”



JACK BARNES, JOEL BRITTON, AND MARY-ALICE WATERS

Reports and resolutions of the Socialist Workers Party on trade union policy, proletarian leadership versus clique functioning, the poison of race baiting in the workers movement, and the membership norms of the revolutionary party. A companion to *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics* and to “U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War,” the 1990 SWP political resolution featured in *New Internationalist* no. 11. An Education for Socialists booklet. \$7.00

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course that was in reality a counterrevolutionary negation of what the historic leaders of the modern working-class movement, including Marx, Engels, and Lenin, fought for. But today neither tottering Russian president Boris Yeltsin and his collaborators nor their factional opponents — to say nothing of imitators throughout the various former Soviet republics — have the capacity to influence and disorient any revolutionary fighter anywhere in the world.

Gone with the roadblock is also the glue that for decades served to structure the milieu broadly referred to as “the left” throughout the world. Since the Stalinist initiation of the Popular Front “strategy” of class collaboration in the mid-1930s, “the left” has derived its political line and coherency, and often its resources, from identification with and loyalty to the actually existing castes that dominated the workers states. The attractive power of the existing fact was enormous — hence the crisis of “the left” that swept ’round the world when, as Cuban President Fidel Castro put it, “one day the sun did not rise at 6:00 a.m., nor at 7:00 a.m., nor at 10:00 a.m., nor at noon.”<sup>3</sup> The mettle of all those calling themselves socialist or communist began being tested anew — a test that is deepening and broadening today.

Currents claiming to be revolutionary no longer have any power in the workers movement outside themselves to blame, or to credit, for whatever they prove capable of doing, leading, and becoming.

• At the beginning of 1990, the superinflated Japanese stock and real estate markets had just collapsed. That this marked the opening of a world deflationary crisis is only today — belatedly, and in more and more panicky tones — beginning to be acknowledged in certain quarters of bourgeois public opinion. Contrary to expectations, the recovery never occurred. The crisis has only continued to deepen.

Eight years later, as the “Asian crisis” spreads and the international collapse of capitalism’s banking system looms threateningly on the horizon, no one yet knows if

## “Currents claiming to be revolutionary no longer have any power in the workers movement outside of themselves to blame, or credit, for whatever they prove capable of doing.”

we are in fact already living through what will soon be universally recognized as the first year of a new world depression. Will 1998 be looked back on as a new 1929? Yes or no, the answer changes little. What is incontrovertible is that we are witnessing the last desperate and feeble efforts of the capitalist rulers to stave off the inevitable.

And what is coming will be more devastating for the world’s toilers than the aftermath of 1929. This time it will be of truly global dimensions.

During the world depression of the 1930s, capitalist social relations were marginal throughout most of colonial Asia and Africa — and even parts of Latin America. For the huge peasant majority under colonialism, the economic and social consequences of colonial superexploitation meant life on the knife’s edge. But subsistence and survival took place largely outside the reach of the world capitalist market, and conditions of life for the majority of the world’s toilers were often not qualitatively worsened by the Great Depression. Today, capitalism has penetrated agriculture more deeply in most of these countries, and an industrial working class of wage-labor that is not always small has developed in many of them.

The peoples of the Soviet Union, protected in the 1930s from the ravages of world depression by the revolutionary conquests of October that laid the economic foundations of nationalized property and a planned economy, are now infinitely more vulnerable.

The fate of the toilers everywhere has been drawn much more tightly into the workings of the world capitalist market. Hopes for a better tomorrow are just beginning to be dashed.

This world of the twenty-first century, born prematurely in the closing hours of the twentieth, may be rudely disorienting for many whose lives and consciousness were shaped by the upheaval and consequences of World War II. For the generation coming to political life today, however, this is the only world they have ever known. For all of us, “U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War” implies practical tasks and perspectives that fit well today’s growing working-class resistance and puts in political relief the forces that will shape the titanic battles that are approaching. Above all, it explains to us why — bourgeois propaganda notwithstanding — the historic odds in favor of the working class internationally have been strengthened, not weakened.

<sup>3</sup> Speech to the congress of the Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba (UNEAC), November 1993. See “Defending Cuba, Defending Cuba’s Socialist Revolution” by Mary-Alice Waters in *New Internationalist* no. 10, p. 30.



Militant/Megan Arney

“Signs of renewed defensive action are all around us — more numerous strike actions reflecting the tenacity and resistance of the embattled ranks; a noticeable growth in the confidence and determination of women in industry; the increased weight of Black leadership in labor battles and struggles of working farmers; an upswing in the Puerto Rican independence movement and in actions in defense of immigrants’ rights. These developments prepare the strengthening of working-class leadership in these struggles and increase the potential of the unions ‘to act deliberately as organizing centers of the working class in the broad interests of its complete emancipation.’” Above, members of Communication Workers of America rally, preparing for strike against Bell Atlantic in New York, August 1998.

“A Havana-Washington axis of conflict will be at the center of world politics in the 1990s. It is the most direct manifestation of the international conflict between imperialism and the dictatorship of the proletariat.”<sup>4</sup>

With the implosion of the bureaucratic castes, regimes, and parties of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, the U.S. imperialist rulers hoped the government of the workers and farmers of Cuba would become easier pickings. They failed to understand — as they have from the days of the revolutionary war against the Batista dictatorship — that the leadership of the revolution in Cuba is not a tropical variant of Stalinism, but a truly revolutionary internationalist party that is blood and bone of the Cuban toilers.

The U.S. rulers anticipated that the sudden, brutal slashing of the standard of living in Cuba — the result of the abrupt end in 1990–91 of preferential trade agreements with the Soviet Union and Eastern European workers states, accounting for 85 percent of Cuba’s foreign trade — would starve Cuban working people into submission, or at least create fertile conditions for the overthrow of the revolutionary government.

The world political perspective presented by Cuban Communist Party leader José Ramón Balaguer in “Socialism: A Viable Option,” published in this issue, confirms the error of this view. “In the present international conditions, we reaffirm that socialism is a necessity,” Balaguer told participants in the international conference on “Socialism on the Threshold of the Twenty-first Century,” held in Havana, October 21–23, 1997. “Not only is it the logical result of the development of the productive forces on an international scale, it is the only alternative to guarantee the survival of humanity.”

Referring to the “collapse of socialism in Eastern Europe and the USSR,” Balaguer noted “it is not socialist truth that failed.” Rather, what occurred there was “the crumbling of a dogmatic and vulgar type of Marxism, which in those countries was raised to the status of official theory, burying many of the central principles of our classics and elevating to the position of universal law certain doctrines that served only to rationalize political positions and had virtually no scientific basis.”

The international conference of representatives of political parties at which Balaguer spoke, and in which some of the editors of *New Internationalist* participated, including the authors of this article, was hosted by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba. It was one of several events over the past two years that confirmed the Cuban revolution has conquered the worst days of what they refer to as the Special Period — the economic

<sup>4</sup> From part 2 of “U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War.”

and political crisis precipitated by the abrupt disintegration of the governments and parties with which they had maintained the closest ties for more than a quarter century. A crisis deliberately compounded, of course, by intensified economic warfare waged against Cuba by the U.S. rulers.

Others events have included:

- The fifth congress of the Communist Party of Cuba, held in Havana, October 8–10, 1997, which reaffirmed the political course of the revolution, knitting the lines of continuity between the rectification process begun in the mid-1980s and the policies of the Special Period. Among other decisions by the delegates, the congress strengthened the party leadership, resolutely cutting the size of the Central Committee from 225 to 150 members, while incorporating some 50 new members from the younger generations bearing the direct weight of day-to-day leadership in every arena. The congress registered the reality that the transition in leadership in Cuba, the topic of much speculation by the revolution’s enemies abroad, lies not in the future, but is ongoing in the present.
- The commemoration in the fall of 1997, and throughout that year, of the thirtieth anniversary of the revolu-

## Celebrating the Homecoming of Ernesto Che Guevara’s Reinforcement Brigade to Cuba

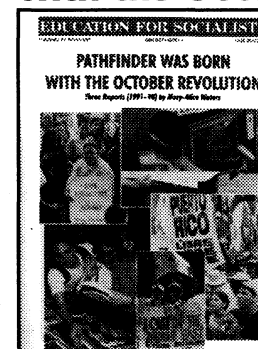
Articles from the 30th anniversary celebration of the combat waged in Bolivia by Che and his comrades

Reports on:

- International conference in Havana on “Socialism on the threshold of the 21st century”
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## Pathfinder Was Born with the October Revolution

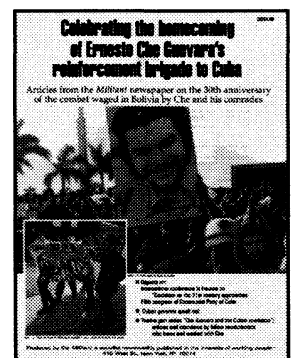


Three reports by Mary-Alice Waters

- Transforming Pathfinder production and ourselves as we respond to growing workers’ resistance (Toronto, April 1998)
- Pathfinder was born with the October Revolution (Havana, February 1998)
- Extending the arsenal of communist propaganda and reconquering the apparatus through revolutionary centralism (the “turtle” report, adopted by Socialist Workers Party convention, Chicago, June 1991)

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tionary campaign waged by Ernesto Che Guevara and his comrades in Bolivia, reaffirming the proletarian internationalism that has been and remains the heart and soul of the Cuban revolution.

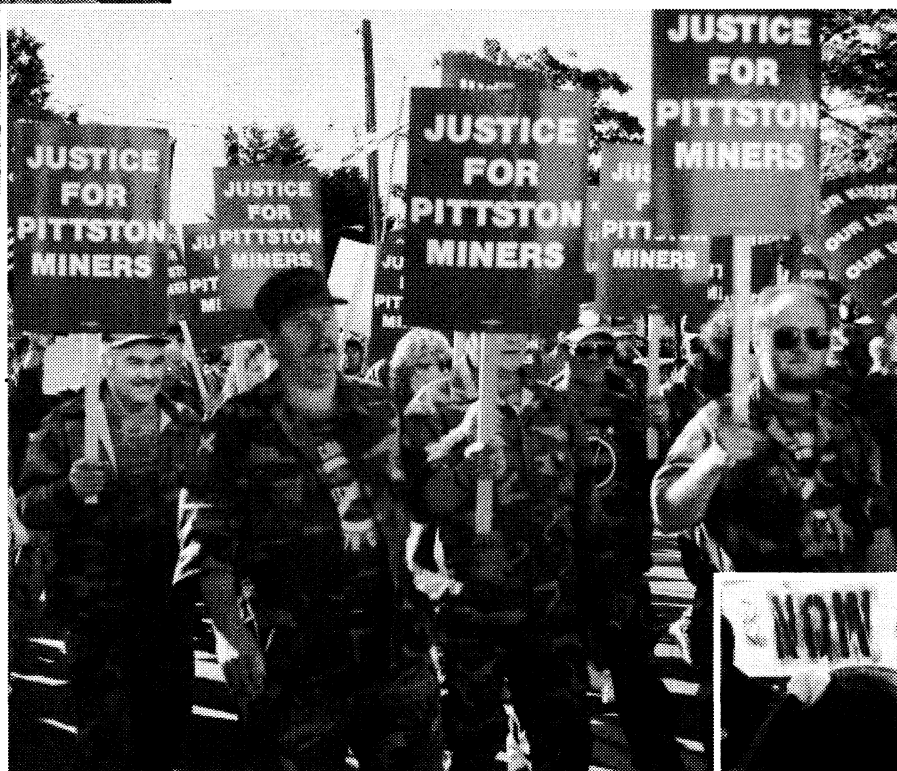
- The solemn and unifying welcome home given what Cuban president Fidel Castro in October 1997 called Che's reinforcement brigade, as the mortal remains, along with the "immortal ideas" of Che and his comrades returned to Cuba "to reinforce us in this difficult struggle we are waging today to save the ideas for which you fought so hard, to save the revolution, the country and its socialist conquests — the part of your dreams that have been fulfilled."

- The hosting in August 1997 of the 12,000-strong World Festival of Youth and Students by the Union of Young Communists and other youth organizations of Cuba, as part of the political battle to reach out and find the new generation of fighters around the world attracted to the example of the Cuban revolution.

- The "Declaration of the Mambises of the Twentieth Century," initiated in February 1997 by the generals of the Revolutionary Armed Forces and signed by 250,000 FAR officers and troops, as well as, over the next few months, by more than 5 million other Cubans. Linking up with the continuity of the Mambises — the Cuban independence fighters of the late nineteenth century who fought Spanish colonial rule — the declaration repudiates the crude and insulting attempts of U.S. president William Clinton to foment divisions among the officers and ranks of the military with offers of aid in return for overthrowing the revolutionary government through which Cuba's workers and farmers exercise their political power.

- The welcome extended to Pope John Paul II on his state visit in January 1998, during which the revolutionary leadership set an example for working people the world over of courtesy towards religious believers and nonbelievers alike — while taking the moral high ground for the proletariat and speaking the truth to the world about the historical role of the Catholic Church hierarchy as an instrument of scientific obscurantism, racial prejudice, oppression of women, colonial conquest and slavery, and reaction in all its forms. The pope's visit was an event from which the working people of Cuba emerged more confident in themselves and their leadership, and more certain that their class, not the representatives of capitalism or feudalism, will be the bearers of culture in the forward march of humanity.

- The seventeenth congress of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC), held April 27–30, 1996, which registered the confidence of the working class in Cuba as it brings its direct weight to bear in determining the future of the revolution, and its capacity to surmount the enormous obstacles to increasing production under the conditions imposed by



Militant photos: Mark Satinoff (above), Charles Ostrofsky (right) **Hard-fought labor battles against Eastern Airlines and Pittston coal company in 1989–90 prepared communist workers for the test of imperialist war in early 1991, as Washington launched its deadly assault on the people of Iraq. Top left, results of U.S. bombing of fleeing Iraqis on road to Basra at end of Gulf War. Above, September 1989 rally in solidarity with Pittston strikers in Greenwich, Connecticut. Right, campaigning against imperialism and war, January 1991, Washington, D.C.**

the Special Period. As the theses adopted by the delegates expressed it, the organized working class of Cuba met to determine what they could do "to assure, under whatever circumstances, the revolutionary power of the workers, by the workers, and for the workers."

"One day we may have to erect a monument to the Special Period!" Fidel Castro noted in remarks to congress delegates. In meeting the challenge of the most difficult years of the revolution, the Cuban working class has emerged stronger and more self-confident than at any time since the Special Period began.

Each of these events required substantial material and leadership resources that would have been impossible to muster in Cuba during the darkest hours (literally as well as metaphorically) of the Special Period. Taken together, as Cubans jokingly remark, they clearly demonstrate that the revolution is now out of the intensive care unit — that it is no longer necessary to devote every fiber of being to

the battle for survival alone. Cuban working people can now enjoy the luxury of directing some energy to thoughts of recovery and how to advance the international revolutionary struggle in today's world.

"Socialism on the Threshold of the Twenty-first Century" was perhaps the most important such gathering to take place in Havana in more than thirty years — since the international leadership initiatives in the 1960s that culminated in the Tricontinental conference in January 1966 and the OLAS (Organization of Latin American Solidarity) gathering in August 1967.

Political conditions were vastly different then, of course. The heroic example of the Vietnamese national liberation struggle was galvanizing millions into action worldwide, as hatred for U.S. imperialism's murderous war against the Indochinese peoples deepened and spread. A wave of anti-imperialist struggle was rising throughout Latin America, borne on the crest of the Cuban revolution. Support for the Palestinian people and their struggle against dispossession by the state of Israel was exploding throughout the Arab world. The forces attracted to Havana's initiative then were substantially larger. In their big majority they were



young and ready for action. Despite the political disparities, however, the objective place and weight of the leadership initiatives taken thirty years apart are similar: to reach out around the world and find the forces ready to chart a revolutionary strategy to move forward and to apply it.

In Balaguer's opening presentation to the delegates, there was no talk of tragedy having befallen Cuba or other revolutionary forces in the world. There was no bemoaning globalization, nor cowering before the relationship of class forces that has allowed the implementation of neoliberal policies throughout Latin America. Instead, there was a scientific examination of the world class struggle in the closing years of the twentieth century — with eyes fixed on the coming battles being born of the imperialist reality — and a program that constitutes a necessary and sufficient starting point for revolutionary action:

- No, to any variant on theories of globalization and superimperialism that lead to undervaluing the struggle for state power against our own bourgeoisies. "Socialism will not appear on the historical scene through a modernization of present society, but through a revolutionary transformation of its dominant structures. In this sense, the question of the seizure of power remains a basic requirement. . . ."

- Yes, to the political course of rectification and the Special Period, as opposed to the "model of economic management copied, in large measure from the Soviet experience . . . that diverted the construction of socialism onto paths that had nothing to do with being revolutionary."

- No, to any policy of alliances that is not built "from, by, and for the ranks," or that demands revolutionaries renounce "conviction and firmness of principles."

- Yes, to the fight to take the moral high ground, to "show not only the possibility and viability of socialism but also its desirability. . . . For us, socialism is the only possible, the only valid option for placing social relations on a moral footing," said Balaguer. "We cannot relax our efforts to demonstrate — on a theoretical level, and on a practical level — its clear superiority in shaping the highest of human values: justice, equality, fairness, freedom, democracy, respect for human rights, national sovereignty, solidarity. This socialist society continues to be a clear alternative not only to capitalism, but also to the failed experiences of Eastern Europe and the USSR."

The Socialist Workers Party resolution, "U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War," underscores that "the leadership of the Communist Party of Cuba is the first since the Bolsheviks to give communist guidance to the development of a workers state." At the helm of the Cuban government, and in the face of U.S. imperialism's unre-



"The objective weight in world politics of the only living example of a fighting, confident dictatorship of the proletariat has grown, not diminished," since 1990. Commemorations last year of the 30th anniversary of the revolutionary campaign waged by Ernesto Che Guevara and his comrades in Bolivia reaffirmed the proletarian internationalism that remains the heart and soul of the Cuban revolution. Above, Cubans gather in Havana, October 1997, to celebrate return to Cuba of the remains of Che and other Cuban, Bolivian, and Peruvian revolutionaries who fought with him.

lenting economic, political, and military pressures, they have maintained a revolutionary course for forty years. "This 'subjective factor' — the genuinely internationalist character of the proletarian vanguard guiding the workers state in Cuba — is the most important objective outcome and contribution of the Cuban revolution."

This is even more true today than it was in 1990. The objective weight in world politics of the only living example of a fighting, confident dictatorship of the proletariat — one with a seasoned combat leadership that has proven its capacity year after year for more than four decades — has grown not diminished. For revolutionary fighters the world over, it is not enough to recognize that imperialism really has lost the Cold War. That alone does not allow revolutionists to chart a way forward. They need the living example of Cuba, as well.

This is just as true for new generations of revolutionary-minded fighters inside Cuba as for young people elsewhere in the world. The real history of the Cuban revolution — the stories of the men and women who overthrew the Batista dictatorship, stood down the Yankee empire at the Bay of Pigs and during the October "missile crisis," and served in volunteer internationalist missions from Latin America, to Africa, Asia, and the Middle East — is a vital link in the revolutionary continuity that must be traced.<sup>5</sup>

A strategy of attempting to build socialism in one country — even in a country as vast and rich in resources as the Soviet Union, let alone a Caribbean island with a his-

## "There are rising opportunities for communist workers to turn toward mass work on a level that was not possible for a number of years."

torical legacy of centuries of colonial and imperialist domination — can only mean the abandonment of proletarian internationalism, the demoralization and demobilization of the fighting vanguard of the toilers, and certain defeat. But communist workers assume no a priori limits on the capacity of Cuban working people to resist and survive, to hold off the imperial enemy until reinforcement brigades of the international class struggle arrive, to maintain the foundations of their state power, and to keep strengthening their internationalism and advancing their class interests.

That is a practical question, not an analytical one, where the example of Cuba itself weighs heavily in the balance.

"A more than ten-year offensive by the employers has failed to drive the labor movement from the center stage of politics in the United States."

Those opening words of "U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War" place in historical perspective the growing resistance in 1989-90 by workers in the United States to the bosses' union-busting drive that marked the period when the resolution was drafted. The high point of those defensive battles were two overlapping and interlined strikes — the twenty-two-month strike by the International Association of Machinists against Eastern Airlines that began in March 1989, in the course of which the ranks successfully forced the hated boss Frank Lorenzo into bankruptcy and then liquidation, rather than allow his carrier to operate nonunion; and the eleven-month strike against Pittston, settled in February 1990, that set back the coal barons' drive to break the United Mine Workers of America in the eastern coalfields.

Those hard-fought conflicts — in which the ranks put their stamp on the strikes' leadership — and the example they set for the entire labor movement, foreshadowed big-

<sup>5</sup> For a powerful example, see *Secrets of Generals*, interviews by Cuban journalist Luis Baez with forty-one top officers of the Revolutionary Armed Forces (Havana: Si Mar, 1996), distributed by Pathfinder.



**Six-story Pathfinder Mural, celebrating the past, present, and future of the struggles waged by the modern working class and its allies on the road toward emancipation. It was unveiled in downtown Manhattan just days after the Berlin Wall came down, as the capitalist masters tried to convince everyone they had emerged victorious against the toilers of the world.**

Militant/Eric Simpson

ger class battles to come at the beginning of the 1990s. Communist workers organized in industrial trade union fractions of the Socialist Workers Party — who had participated in and been transformed by the Eastern and Pittston struggles — confidently looked forward to the opportunities to respond as new tests developed, better prepared as a fraction of the fighting vanguard of the working class.

As the resolution notes, the end of the third "dog days" in the history of the communist movement in the United States seemed to be in sight. Those days had begun with labor's retreat in the wake of the deep 1981-82 recession. They extended through the all-out rout that began to be reversed only with the resistance mounted by packing-house workers in the Midwest in 1985-86. They coincided with the heavy blows dealt by imperialism against revolutionary advances in Nicaragua, Grenada, and elsewhere.

Contrary to expectations when the resolution was adopted in 1990, however, the dog days for the working class in the United States (and the majority of other imperialist countries) lasted for another half-dozen years. The U.S.-organized military buildup and murderous war against Iraq between August 1990 and March 1991 marked all of politics for more than a year. The outcome of the war was a debacle for Washington, but the patriotism and triumphalism promoted by the U.S. rulers before, during, and after the largely uncontested assault on Iraq dampened working-class combativity for a period longer than the war itself.

The U.S. capitalist economy went into recession during the eight months of the buildup and war. The subsequent upswing in the business cycle was so sluggish that official unemployment continued rising during the first year of the "recovery." Evidence grew that a world deflationary crisis for capitalism was looming.

Labor was pushed toward the wings; the retreat was extended.

The Eastern and Pittston battles, it turned out, prepared communist workers in the immediate period not for bigger defensive strikes and other labor battles, but for the test of imperialist war. *New International* no. 7, "Washington's Assault on Iraq: Opening Guns of World War III," documents how well that test was met by communist organizations around the world, as they carried out a disciplined, centralized campaign, on the job, in working-class neighborhoods, in the unions, and on the campuses against the brutal war orchestrated by Washington.

In the aftermath of the Iraq war, communist workers rose to the challenge of applying in practice their understanding of the world that was coming into being. The war in Yugoslavia, the Mexican "peso crisis," the political rise of Patrick Buchanan and character of his incipient fascist current in the United States, the challenge of building communist youth organizations as the first signs of renewed struggle by young people appeared on the horizons — all were among the elements of the political reality that unfolded in the half decade following adoption of the resolution presented here. They are dealt with in Pathfinder Press's forthcoming book, *Capitalism's World Disorder*.<sup>6</sup>

Since early 1997 the evidence has grown that the dog days are now indeed receding. Signs of resistance, from Caterpillar to the airlines, from the United Parcel Service workers strike in 1997 to the five-week strike by General Motors workers in 1998, changes taking place among coal miners, organizing efforts by the United Farm Workers in the fields of California, and new forms of leadership initiative

by workers who are Black and by women in the plants — all attest to rising opportunities for communist workers to turn toward mass work on a level that was simply not possible for a number of years.

The opening section of the 1990 resolution, entitled "Labor Movement Remains at Center Stage," can now be read, not with disclaimers that conditions are different, that much of what is written there may not be a useful guide to action today, but with confidence that the opposite is more and more true.

The six-story high Pathfinder Mural, a reproduction of which appears on the cover of this issue, was unveiled in November 1989 in downtown Manhattan, a few blocks from the world financial center of U.S. imperialism. Only days after the Berlin Wall came down, and the capitalist masters of the world were trying to convince us all that they had emerged victorious in a historic battle against the toilers of the world, the ribbons were cut on that work of art celebrating the past, present, and future of the struggles waged by the modern working class and its allies on the road toward emancipation. That timing was an accident of history, but the symbolism could not have better captured the reality of our times. What the Pathfinder Mural depicts is the theme of this issue of *New International*.

Ours is the epoch of world revolution.

September 1998

<sup>6</sup> Available December 1998, by Jack Barnes.

## New International

A MAGAZINE OF MARXIST POLITICS AND THEORY

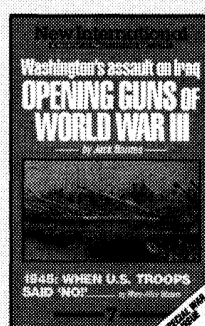
"There will be new Hitlers, new Mussolinis. That is inevitable. What is not inevitable is that they will triumph. The working-class vanguard will organize our class to fight back against the devastating toll we are made to pay for the capitalist crisis. The future of humanity will be decided in the contest between these contending class forces."

Jack Barnes

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### "Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's Assault on Iraq" JACK BARNES

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# Working farmers build support for fights at N.Y. forum

BY NANCY ROSENSTOCK

NEW YORK — Eighty people attended a lively Militant Labor Forum here August 28 titled "The Crisis Facing Family Farmers Today." The panel of speakers featured Gary Grant, president of the Black Farmers and Agriculturists Association in Tillery, North Carolina; John Bender, a vegetable farmer from upstate New York and a member of the Empire State Family Farm Coalition; Ken Dibbell, a dairy farmer from upstate New York and a member of the National Family Farm Coalition; Ira Dworkin, a young farm solidarity activist; and Wendy Lyons, Socialist Workers candidate for New York attorney general and a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees.

Dibbell stated that the problems facing dairy farmers in upstate New York stem in large part from what he called "a failed and flawed Federal pricing system." He circulated a letter to the audience that he wrote to the speaker of the New York State Assembly, which says that "in excess of 11,000 dairy farms in this state have been idled since 1980 and most of them are sitting idle to this day."

The letter urged the state legislature to sign on to the Northeast Interstate Compact, a regional trade pact he argued is needed to "put a floor on the farm-gate milk price." Dibbell said in his presentation at the forum that the compact would prevent total collapse for family farmers. Over the last 15 years, milk prices to consumers have continued to go up while the price to the family farmer has gone down, Dibbell said, and the processors are "patting their pockets."

Common actions, including protests and lawsuits, have helped galvanize Black farmers in Tillery, North Carolina, in the fight to defend their land, along with others throughout the South, Grant said in his presentation. He urged participants in the meeting to take literature from the Black Farmers and Agriculturists Association to help get out the word on the plight of Black farmers.

The statistics speak for themselves: between 1920 and 1992, the number of Black farmers in the United States declined from 925,710 to 18,816. In 1984-85 the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

lent \$1.3 billion to farmers nationwide to buy land. Of the almost 16,000 farmers who received those funds, only 209 were Black.

Grant explained that Black farmers are involved in a \$2.5-billion class action lawsuit against the USDA for stolen land. He announced a September 10 prayer vigil in Washington, D.C. in support of this fight.

Dworkin, a young activist from New York who spent time working in Tillery with Black farmers, outlined the discriminatory loan policies in effect for Black farmers.

John Bender spoke in solidarity with the Black farmers. Making the point that all farmers are in the same boat and need to support each other, he compared the plight of all farmers, Blacks in particular, to a sinking vessel. A trap for white farmers is thinking, "I'm glad I'm not on *that* side of the ship," he said.

The capitalist system is in real crisis, said socialist candidate Lyons, and that is what is fueling the crisis facing family farmers. The true nature of capitalism is revealed as people go hungry while farmers are being driven off the land. She pointed to the favorable conditions today to begin forging



Militant/Stu Singer

Gary Grant (center, baseball cap) and farmers from Tennessee protest discriminatory treatment of Black farmers at a September 10 rally in Washington, D.C.

an alliance between workers and farmers, as the labor movement begins to fight after years of taking concessions.

Industrial and other workers have a great interest in preventing working farmers from being driven off the land and in ending racist discrimination against Black farmers, Lyons said. An action program that could unite working people is needed, which would include demands for a moratorium on farm foreclosures, immediate disaster relief, guaranteed use of the land, low-interest credit with preference for those who need

it most, and price committees that would be made up of workers and farmers. Supporting legislation that pits farmers in one part of the country against another, as the dairy compact does, is not a solution that advances the interests of working people.

An animated question and answer period followed the presentations. Several of the forum participants attended the meeting after hearing an announcement on a local radio station.

Nancy Rosenstock is a member of the International Association of Machinists.

## New Jersey photo exhibit of Catholic children in Belfast is arsoned

BY KATHLEEN FITZGERALD AND MAURICE WILLIAMS

JERSEY CITY, New Jersey — In the early morning hours of September 13, the Cooper Gallery here was broken into, the smoke detectors disarmed, and a devastating fire set. The gallery is presently exhibiting "Faces of War: Children of Belfast" featuring photographs of children from the Catholic community of West Belfast by Pulitzer nominee Michael Schwartz.

The official opening of the photograph exhibition was scheduled the day of the arson attack. The walls in the gallery have been singed black, office files were destroyed, and all 23 of the photographs of children in the British-occupied part of Ire-

land have been ruined.

According to the exhibition director Ahn Behrens, the arsonists entered through another gallery next door, disabled the smoke alarm system and smoke detectors, made a pile of combustible material in the director's office, and started the fire. Behren said nothing of value was taken from the gallery.

The attack was clearly political. One of the photographs shows children dressed as Irish Republican Army volunteers, another shows a child mocking British troops.

As of press time, no arrests had been made nor had anyone claimed responsibility. Jersey City cops initially said the arson attack was political. By the next day, however, police dismissed the possibility. They told the

press it was a routine burglary and arson, pointing to the absence of any notes or phone calls indicating political hostility. By September 15 investigators, including the Jersey City fire and police department as well as the FBI, seized the gallery's computer. They now are attempting to get a warrant to search the computer files, according to the *Jersey Journal*.

"This is our first overtly political show," Behrens said. "We've never had any trouble whatsoever before. I knew there were white supremacists in this country, but I never knew anything like this about Ireland [to happen] here." Behrens said the gallery promoted the show for the past three months sending out press releases to various publications and other media. Schwartz's show was reviewed in the September 13 issue of *The Jersey City Reporter*.

Behrens talked to reporters in the backyard sculpture garden where the opening reception for the show went on as planned. People passed through the smoke-damaged gallery with destroyed photos and paintings still piled on the floor to offer support.

"We held the opening reception anyway because people should see this," Behrens said. "We're not taking the show down, even if we have to sleep in the gallery."

Maurice Williams is the Socialist Workers candidate for Congress in the 10th CD in New Jersey.

## Birmingham: Militant Labor Forum speakers condemn racism, cop brutality

BY KRISTIN MERIAM

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama — Two dozen opponents of police brutality participated in the Militant Labor Forum here August 21 titled, "Stop Racist Attacks! Stop Police Brutality!"

The speak-out followed a march of 1,000 in Talladega, Alabama, the previous week-

end to protest the July 31 police slaying of Donald "Bruno" Nabors.

Rev. Henry Sterling, state coordinator of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and a central organizer of the march, addressed the forum. He emphasized that the march had been built through door-to-door outreach in Talladega. He pledged

protesters will "stay visible throughout the investigation" by the police department into the shooting. "We will be in the street, protesting, rallying, picketing, and boycotting. If Talladega goes unchallenged, the same thing's going to happen all over Alabama. If you're a lover of freedom, if you're a lover of justice, we invite you to come join our struggle."

George Williams, a member of the United Auto Workers (UAW) and the newly announced Socialist Workers nominee for lieutenant governor of Alabama, spoke at the Talladega march and at the forum. He recounted a conversation he had with a man at the march from Sylacauga, Alabama, who was critical of some of the comments by speakers at the march who were appreciative of "good police."

"I lived up North and I lived in Alabama and everywhere cops are the same," the man said.

"He hit the nail on the head," said Williams. "A cop is a cop is a cop. Cops are not neutral. They are agents of our class enemy. Cops are paid to protect capitalist rule and defend capitalist social relations."

Also speaking at the forum were Jamila Williams of the Young Socialists and Terri Smith, who told of her personal experience with cop brutality. Smith urged all victims of police brutality to unite in "one big fight."

Kristin Meriam is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 12014.

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### Militant Labor Forum is platform for fighters

The Militant Labor Forum takes place every week in more than 25 cities around the world. It offers a platform for working-class fighters and those involved in the fight for Black liberation, women's rights, farmers defending their land, and national liberation struggles to discuss how to advance these struggles.

To find out about the Militant Labor Forums in your area, see the calendar announcements on page 16, or contact your local Pathfinder bookstore (also listed on page 16).

The deadline for Militant Labor Forum listings and other calendar items is Wednesday at noon Eastern Standard Time, at least a week before the event.

# Nat'l actions: free Puerto Rican prisoners

Continued from front page

dependence movement, especially the use of the FBI, CIA, grand juries, and police brutality; and for the self-determination of all oppressed peoples and freedom for all political prisoners.

The meeting also voted to hold protests at the 11 prisons where the political prisoners are interned as part of the buildup to the December 10 actions. A U.S. speaking tour of Puerto Rican independence fighter Lolita Lebrón is also projected for November 28 through December 10. Lebrón was one of five Puerto Rican Nationalists who spent a quarter-century in U.S. prisons for their actions against Washington's domination of their country.

Participants in the September 5 meeting celebrated the removal of Puerto Rican political prisoner Oscar López Rivera from solitary confinement in Marion, Illinois, where he had been held for 12 years, and his transfer to the general prison population at the U.S. penitentiary in Terre Haute, Indiana.

In a welcoming address, José López, the executive director of the Puerto Rican Cultural Center in Chicago, detailed the ongoing government attacks against the Puerto Rican independence movement. "We have investigations into several organizations in the Puerto Rican community by the IRS [Internal Revenue Service], the Illinois Department of Employment Services, the Illinois Department of Revenue, six hearings around government accusations of mismanagement of funds at Clemente high school and two grand juries.... But they can never stop us. Everything you do, from a letter to a protest, is important and can come together

to force a qualitative change in the release of our prisoners," he said.

The campaign to free the prisoners "has to be reinforced right now," said Angelo Negrón of the Orlando, Florida, chapter of the National Committee, pointing to the importance of the December 10 actions. "One of the reasons Oscar López was released from solitary confinement was the July 25 demonstration [in Washington D.C.]"

Over the past year, a number of cities have held meetings to commemorate 100 years of resistance against U.S. imperialism since the United States government seized Cuba, the Philippines, Puerto Rico and other nations in 1898. Activists at the meeting reported on other events that are in the works. The committee in Philadelphia reported they are touring longtime independence fighter Rafael Cancel Miranda October 19-24.

In the San Francisco Bay Area two meetings will be held at the end of this month. On September 24 Cancel Miranda and José López will speak at a Grito de Lares celebration, marking the anniversary of the 1868 uprising that fought for Puerto Rican independence from Spain.

Cancel Miranda will also speak at a conference at the University of California at Berkeley, September 25-27 entitled "Critic-



Militant/Margrethe Siem  
During July 25 pro-independence actions in New York and Washington, D.C., above, thousands of people signed petitions and cards demanding the release of Puerto Rican political prisoners.

cal Resistance: Beyond the Prison Industrial Complex."

On September 6, the day following the national meeting, activists from around the country pitched in to help independence fighters in Chicago publicize the fight to free the Puerto Rican political prisoners at the annual Fiesta Boricua.

Hundreds of people at the fair signed petitions to President William Clinton de-

manding he grant amnesty to the prisoners and release them unconditionally. Activists also distributed hundreds of copies of *Libertad*, the magazine of the National Committee to Free the Puerto Rican Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners.

For more information about the December 10 protests and other upcoming actions, call (773) 278-0885 or visit the web-site at [jornada98@aol.com](mailto:jornada98@aol.com)

## Illinois miners strike for health benefits

Continued from front page

mines. The old contract, signed in 1993, expired Aug. 1, 1998.

Members of UMWA Local 1969 picketing the Crown No. 2 mine said the company announced in July that it might not provide health coverage for miners who retire after August 1 of this year.

"The issues here are like those in Pittston," David Yard, a strike captain for Local 1969, told the *Militant*. He was referring to the 1989-90 UMWA strike against Pittston Coal Co. in southwestern Virginia, which won broad support from miners and the rest of the labor movement. "Only this time I won't have to drive 12 hours one way to get there," he added.

Miners on the picket lines at both Crown mines wore camouflage shirts and hats, many with slogans from the Pittston fight or the 1981 UMWA strike at A.T. Massey.

After the UMWA contract with Freeman expired, the local began operating on a day-

by-day extension of the contract. After two weeks the UMWA and Freeman agreed to a 10-day extension, which ended on August 31.

On September 10, the UMWA International in Washington, D.C., sent out a press release underlining the importance of the strike. "Freeman United has decided it no longer wants to guarantee its retirees' health-care coverage," said Cecil Roberts, UMWA international president. "The UMWA is more than prepared to fight this battle for as long as it takes."

In a statement issued by Freeman after the strike began, company president Walt Gregory said Freeman had made a number of "innovative proposals" that he claimed would make the mines more efficient and protect jobs.

"Freeman United has to find ways to control costs and remain competitive with low-sulfur coal shipped primarily from Western states. We can do this, and continue to em-

ploy hundreds of people, only through a new agreement with the UMWA," he said. "We believe our situation is significantly different from other coal companies," Gregory added, asserting that this is why the company did not sign the national agreement.

Pickets are being organized in three shifts, 24 hours a day, at the two Crown mines. There are more than 10 entrances to the small strip mine in Industry, near Macomb, where the UMWA is also organizing picketing. There are 130 miners at Crown No. 3, 175 at Crown No. 2, and 42 at the Industry mine.

In an indication of their fighting spirit leading up to the walkout, miners at the Crown No. 3 told the *Militant* that when the company asked them to work during their vacation in July, all the union members refused.

Coal is hauled out of the Crown mines by the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe railroad and the Curry Trucking Company. Strikers reported the rail workers, who are members of the United Transportation Union, said they wouldn't cross the picket line. Some Curry truck drivers told the strikers they had told the company they would

not drive on the mine property of a struck mine. Curry then threatened to fire them.

Pickets said Curry hauled 65 loads of coal out of Crown 3 during the first weekend of the strike, and they were expecting more.

A UMWA strike headquarters has been set up in Farmersville. On the main road driving into town a prominent lighted sign on the side of the road says "UMWA Strike Headquarters" on one side and "UMWA United We Fight" on the other. Before the strike the sign was located in front of the Crown 3 mine on a local farmer's property.

Freeman United bought the land from the owner, for double the market price, in order to force the sign's removal. Miners moved it to Farmersville and added the words "UMWA Future Strike Headquarters," which they updated once the walkout began. Signs in support of the strike are starting to go up in front of houses and businesses in the area.

*Alyson Kennedy is a member of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 7-507 in Chicago. John Studer is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 1011 in East Chicago, Indiana.*

## Paris tries Algerian immigrants

Continued from Page 20

police had blank warrants to which they added names after people were arrested.

These two defendants said that their lawyers did not even come to the trial. "They knew," Mohamed said, "that this trial was lost in advance." The court then appointed Mohamed and Rabah lawyers, who will be paid less than \$126 for their services during the two-month trial.

In addition, according to newspaper reports, defense lawyers do not have access to the sections of the trial dossier concerning their clients. The dossier is 74 volumes, totaling about 50,000 pages.

Mohamed in particular denounced the support given by Paris to the dictatorship of Algerian president and general Liamine Zeroual. He explained how today workers in Algeria are owed months of back pay because of the economic crisis. Two Algerians who were recently expelled from France were assassinated and a third "disappeared," he said. "If you return, you die."

The League of Human Rights, the daily *Le Monde*, the judges union, the order of Parisian lawyers, the Algerian fraternity in France, and a group of 54 intellectuals and artists have denounced the way in which the trial has been organized. After a week, even the conservative daily *Le Figaro*, a generally faithful mouthpiece of the French ruling class that had supported the trial, spoke

of a "fiasco" in an editorial titled "Stop the damage."

Most of these statements are within the context of overall support to the government's "antiterrorism" campaign. The League of Human Rights, for instance, declared, "The trial should be ended, the procedure for judging the defendants should be reorganized, and they should be judged with firmness but in a serene atmosphere that is more becoming of a strong democracy that is sure of itself."

The defense lawyers have appealed the courts refusal to release those defendants who remain imprisoned. Some have asked a higher court to suspend the trial in view of the partiality of the judges. A third group of lawyers has filed an appeal with the European Commission of Human Rights. This procedure, however, will not be acted on until the year 2001 or 2002. It has no legal standing so any judgment would have only symbolic value.

Communist workers and youth, supporters of the *Militant* in France, have denounced the frame-up against the 138, demanded that all charges against them be dropped and all the prisoners be released, and condemned the role of French imperialism in Algeria.

*Florence Duval is a member of the Young Socialists in Paris.*

## Outrage erupts over N.Y. cop, firemen riding in racist float

BY BRIAN TAYLOR

NEW YORK — New York-area residents, Black politicians and religious leaders, and others marched in Far Rockaway, New York, September 12 to protest two New York firefighters and at least one city cop who rode a racist Labor Day float in Broad Channel, Queens, September 7. The Council of Black Elected Democrats and others also held a press conference that day to protest.

Broad Channel is a small island town near Kennedy airport with 1,620 residents, 99 percent of whom are white. According to a 1990 census report, only 23 Latinos reside there, with no Blacks or Asians.

During the event, sponsored by the Broad Channel Volunteer Fire Department and Ambulance Corps, about a dozen men in blackface rode in a float with the banner "Black to the Future,

Broad Channel 2098." They chained one man to the back of the float, mocking the Jasper, Texas, lynching of James Byrd in June.

The city administration suspended the two firemen and one cop with no pay. Police officials acknowledged one or two other cops may have also taken part in the incident.

Mayor Rudolph Giuliani quickly condemned the act, receiving critical praise from Black Democrat Alfred Sharpton, Rev. Calvin Butts, and State Senator David Paterson. Lawyers for the suspended city employees are challenging the disciplinary action.

A September 15 *New York Post* article reported that Gov. George Pataki and Rep. Charles Schumer had joined previous Broad Channel parades, which are infamous for floats insulting Jews, Asians, gays, and others.

# Pornographication of bourgeois politics

## Continued from front page

White House to conceal those earlier abuses. About the same time Clinton faced a suit by Paula Jones, who accused him of sexual harassment while he was governor of Arkansas. A federal judge threw out the suit earlier this year, but Jones has appealed and the case remains alive.

*Primary Colors*, a novel published a couple of years ago, came very close to giving an accurate, if fictional, portrayal of the character, offensive behavior, and abuse of power endemic among officials of this administration — though not unique to Clinton's White House. What's at the heart of this scandal, however, is not the president's personal weaknesses.

## Instability of world capitalist order

The growing vulnerability of Clinton to scandals is a reflection of the instability of the world capitalist system — which has become increasingly apparent since he was first elected — and the concurrent decline of confidence in its leading personnel among those who profit from the imperialist order and among millions of working people.

In a commentary published in the August 29 *New York Times*, columnist Thomas Friedman said that "the basic pillars that have stabilized the post-cold-war world are all either shaking or crumbling." These included the notions that Russia "had made the irreversible leap from Communism to free-market capitalism," that Washington defeated the Iraqi regime in the Arab-Persian Gulf war, and that the "American economic model" would sweep the world.

"Which brings us to the fourth shaky pillar, the leaders who made this post-cold-war world. They are vanishing: Yitzhak Rabin was shot. Bill Clinton shot himself," Friedman stated, referring to the president's conduct in the recent scandal. "Helmuth Kohl lost his mandate. Japan is home alone."

The crumbling of the liberal columnist's illusions in these so-called pillars of capitalist stability was accompanied with a degree of panic. "That's scary," Friedman said.

This dread is expressed today by a growing layer of bourgeois pundits and is especially characteristic among middle-class layers. Bourgeois politicians, mostly rightists, are taking advantage of this kind of panic to intensify scandalmongering and drag working people into the trap of thinking that their main problem is corrupt and immoral individuals among the ruling "elite."

## Ultraright, the main beneficiary

The ultraright is the main pusher and beneficiary of these exposés.

In a syndicated column published August 22, ultrarightist politician Patrick Buchanan praised Clinton for ordering a cruise missile attack on Sudan and Afghanistan.

"But as the president returns to Martha's Vineyard," Buchanan continued, "the darkening cloud that hangs over his presidency has not lifted — and indeed the sad end to this presidency is coming into view." Buchanan was referring to the island off the Massachusetts coast where Clinton was vacationing after an August 17 speech in which the president admitted he had a relationship

with Lewinsky, but claimed his earlier denials under oath were not lies, legally.

Referring to another scandal that led to the resignation of Clinton's former campaign manager, Richard Morris, two years earlier, Buchanan wrote: "Which is worse, a weak man paying a professional prostitute for cheap love and confessing his weakness — or the president using the Oval Office to seduce and exploit for his gratification a 21-year-old girl, and then looking the American people in the eye and lying about it?" In a September 13 column Buchanan predicted the Democrats will suffer "a crushing defeat" in the November elections because of the scandal.

Most of the small street protests demanding Clinton's resignation that have taken place across the country so far are clearly dominated by right-wingers. At one such demonstration of several dozen during Clinton's visit to Cincinnati, Ohio, September 17 many of the signs read: "Repentance needs no lawyers," "Resign, have mercy on us; and God will have mercy on you" painted on a white cross, and "Bill Clinton: the abortion president."

The attempts by liberal politicians to either defend Clinton or take their distance from him, and even condemn his conduct and character, have also put wind in the sails of the rightist "culture war" demagoguery.

In a highly publicized speech on September 3, Democratic senator Joseph Lieberman

said the president's behavior was "immoral" and claimed Clinton's actions "not only contradicted the values he has publicly embraced over the last six years, it has, I fear, compromised his moral authority." Since then, and especially since the release of Starr's report, it has become fashionable for Democratic Party politicians to attack Clinton. Liberal critics have included the presidents' former labor secretary, Robert Reich, who wrote a column in the September 14 *Wall Street Journal* titled "Mr. Clinton has no presidency to defend," and Leon Panetta, Clinton's chief of staff from July 1994 to January 1997, who called for censuring the president in a September 17 *Washington Post* column.

Many of the liberals who continue to defend Clinton, including Hillary Clinton, push the theory that behind the scandal is a right-wing conspiracy to railroad, politically destroy, and unseat the Democratic president.

This notion is echoed by many groups on the left. A front-page article in the August 22 *People's Weekly World*, the newspaper of the Communist Party USA, is one such example. Pointing to opinion polls indicating a majority of respondents approved Clinton's performance in the White House and a minority thought he should be impeached or resign, the article said: "The poll results suggested that the people recognize that Starr's probe of Clinton is a politically inspired witch hunt. Unable, after four years

of digging, to unearth grounds for a criminal indictment of Bill and Hillary Clinton in the Whitewater real estate transaction, Starr seized first on a series of lurid accounts of Clinton's sexual peccadilloes to 'get' Clinton."

## No parallel with Nixon resignation

Other bourgeois commentators have tried to draw groundless parallels to the events that led to the Watergate scandal in 1973-74, impeachment proceedings against then-president Richard Nixon, and Nixon's subsequent resignation. Pointing to the first worldwide economic recession since World War II and rising inflation at that time, Floyd Norris wrote in an editorial opinion article in the August 31 *New York Times*, "To return to 1998, the American economy and the President's poll ratings have been doing very well. But economists have been surprised by the depth and the duration of the Asian problems, and financial markets are worried that they will spread to Europe and the United States. The collapse in Russia has unnerved investors, as soaring oil prices did a generation ago."

What this and similar articles miss entirely is that it was the defeat of U.S. imperialism by the Vietnamese people a quarter century ago, and the rise of the Black struggle in the United States which preceded it, that led to the Watergate crisis and Nixon's resignation. There is no similar basis for the current scandal.

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**Union Struggles in the Airline Industry.** Panel discussion. Fri., Sept. 25, 7:30 p.m. 230 Auburn Ave. Donation: \$4. Tel: (404) 577-7976.

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**The Deepening Dilemma for World Capitalism and New Opportunities for the Working Class.** Speaker: Doug Jenness, Socialist Workers Party, and member of United Steelworkers of America Local 9198. Fri., Sept. 25, 7:30 p.m. 2490 University Ave. W. Donation: \$4. Tel: (651) 644-6325.

### NEW YORK

#### Brooklyn

**Celebrate 150 Years of the Communist Manifesto.** Speaker: Sara Lobman, business manager of Pathfinder Press. Fri., Sept. 25, 7:30 p.m. 59 4th Ave. (corner of Bergen). Donation: \$4. Tel: (718) 399-7257.

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**Foreign Troops Out of Cyprus!** Speaker: Antonis Partasis, Communist League. Fri., Sept. 25, 7 p.m. Upstairs at 60 Shudehill. Donation: £2. Tel: 0161 839 1766.

### CANADA


#### Vancouver

**Revolutionary Cuba — the Socialist Alternative for Humanity.** Speaker: John Steele, Communist League delegate to the recent First Cuba-Canada Meeting of Friendship and Solidarity held in Havana, Cuba, and member of International Association of Machinists. Sat., Sept. 26, 7:30 p.m. 3967 Main St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (604) 872-8343.

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## Corrections

There was a misspelling in a letter to the editor by Bea Bryant in the September 14 *Militant*. The Dene Natives were called "coolies," not cookies.

In the same issue, in the article titled "Workers in Canada discuss court decision on Quebec," Alphonse Beaudoin's name was misspelled.

## CALENDAR

### CALIFORNIA

#### Los Angeles

**"John Coltrane and the Jazz Revolution of the 1960s."** Celebrate the publication of Frank Kofsky's new book by Pathfinder. Panel discussion including Dr. Art Davis, bassist, played with Coltrane 10 years; Ken Borgers, program director, KLON-FM; and Ollie Bivins, longtime activist in fight for Black rights. Sun., Sept. 27, 6:30 p.m. Buffet 5 p.m. *Pathfinder Bookstore*, 2546 W. Pico Blvd. Donation (1 1/2 blocks west of Vermont Ave.) Program: \$5. Buffet: \$5. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

**Cops at work** — Rafael Navarro, a Los Angeles-area grocer, saw a sheriff's deputy ticketing an employee and impounding the store's truck. He went out to inquire,



Harry Ring

and the cop spit out a racist epithet. Navarro responded angrily but, sensibly, returned to the store when the cop drew his gun and threatened to kill him. Keep reading.

Next they bomb the gro-

**cery?** — Witnesses said the cop summoned two others and, after chatting for several minutes, they entered the grocery. They beat and choked Navarro and smashed his head through a wall — all in the presence of his wife and small children. Navarro was arrested on suspicion of making a "terrorist" threat. Plus the usual "attacking a cop," etc. He was released on \$100,000 bail.

**What a novel idea** — During July and August, Merrill Lynch, the top U.S. brokerage, lost \$135 million in bond trading. The biggest hit was from Russian securities, with the rest from Latin American and U.S. corporations. A spokesperson said the losses will prompt "selective expense reductions." These, he

added, may include job cuts.

**'Never had it so good'** — Last year, workers getting the median wage were earning 3.1 percent less in real wages than in 1989 — that is, with inflation factored in. But executive pay doubled, jumping to "116 times that of the average worker," according to the Economic Policy Institute.

**Still naive** — Wise in the ways of the capitalist world, we assumed the water sold from vending machines outside supermarkets was simply tap water. Now we learn it's worse. Los Angeles County health officials report the vending machine water has a far higher bacterial count, resulting mainly from poorly

maintained machines with dirty spigots, and filters so outworn they don't remove contaminants.

**A picnic** — In England, the Consumers' Ass'n tested beaches for contamination. They dropped buttered bread in the sand at Blackpool and other beaches. A high percentage picked up E coli bacteria that causes food poisoning. "The most likely source of the bacteria," a spokesperson said, "is sea water polluted with sewage."

**'Shrink the payroll, water the soup'** — In the last quarter of '98, Campbell Soup enjoyed an 11 percent increase in profits despite a 4.6 percent drop in sales. The success was achieved by cost cutting.

**Hope they're Havanas** — According to media accounts, New York's priciest restaurants have yet to be affected by the stock market gyrations. That includes the Patroom which, for an after-dinner treat, features \$300 cigars.

**'Leave the Conniving to Us'** — Complying with the 1990 (that's right, 1990) Americans with Disabilities Act, Greyhound Bus says that in 13 months all its stations will be wheelchair accessible. And 80 of its 2,100 buses will have wheelchair lifts. A rights advocate said more than 300 buses with lifts are needed. The token step is the fruit of a court order requiring the feds to issue rules for bus companies to comply with.

## The pit of sex scandals and politics of resentment

The following excerpt is from "Imperialism's March toward Fascism and War" by Socialist Workers Party national secretary Jack Barnes. This report was discussed and adopted by the SWP's August 1994 national convention and published in *New International* no. 10. Copyright © by 408 Printing and Publishing. Reprinted by permission. Sub-headings are by the *Militant*.

BY JACK BARNES

The workers movement can and must fight to defend and extend democratic rights when they come under attack by rightist movements and by the capitalist government. Doing so, and drawing broad layers

### BOOK OF THE WEEK

of the population into the fight, is part of the process of mobilizing opposition to rising fascist currents and building a communist vanguard of the working class.

During periods like we live in today — when a capitalist social crisis is deepening but a communist leadership is not yet growing out of rising mass workers struggles — demagogues get a hearing not only in the middle class but also in the labor movement. If no solutions are being advanced on any mass level to the burning problems created by the decline of capitalism and liberal democracy, then growing numbers reach out for radical, "decisive," and "popular" answers, regardless of their scientific value and ultimate class implications. Growing numbers become susceptible to crank ideas, conspiracy theories, and a variety of reactionary explanations of why society is gripped in a deepening crisis and what can be done to "restore order."

It is from this vantage point that communist workers must judge how we respond to, and politically explain, the interlaced sexual and financial scandals involving ruling-class figures in many of the imperialist countries. Headlines are being grabbed by exposés involving President Clinton and Hillary Clinton in the United States, Prince Charles and

members of Parliament and cabinet ministers in the United Kingdom, prominent bourgeois politicians in Germany, Italy, Spain, and other countries.

The reason that political figures seem more vulnerable to scandals today is not that such conduct is something new in ruling circles over the history of capitalism or class society. Whatever the facts about Clinton's libido, lechery, and all-around offensive behavior, he is certainly not unique among U.S. presidents — including hallowed liberal icons like Franklin Roosevelt, let alone John Kennedy. Nothing that comes out about the current royal family in the United Kingdom can approach King Henry VIII more than four hundred years ago and many of both sexes who followed him. The greater vulnerability to scandals today is a reflection of the instability of the world imperialist order and the growing lack of confidence in this system and its leading personnel expressed both by its beneficiaries and by millions of others.

Of course, most workers justly despise the hypocrisy, the pretenses, the sanctimonious sermonizing of bourgeois politicians in both parties. We despise the "humane" excuses they give for degrading social brutality and racist abuse. We detest the way hired scribblers of the parasitic classes write off entire layers of our class as lazy or self-indulgent. We're sickened by their gall in demagogically railing against "the greed of the eighties," while they themselves have actively engaged in, and profited handsily from, the same greed-inspired conduct.

#### Politics of resentment helps ultraright

But the working-class vanguard must not fall into the trap of thinking that simply "exposing" the dissoluteness and corruption of bourgeois politicians helps the workers movement. It's barking up the wrong tree. The problem with the capitalists and their political representatives is not that they are immoral, hypocritical people as individuals. The scandal mongering is an effort — organized from within bourgeois politics, largely by its ultraright wing — to exacerbate and profit from middle-class panic and to drag workers along with the declining class itself down into the pit of resentment and salacious envy.

This "pornographication of politics," as we might call it, is part of the politics of resentment that benefits the ultraright, not the working class. It is demagogues like the Buchanans who raise the banner of "the culture war" and "the religious war" and rail against the degeneracy of "the elite" who set a bad example for the working class. This became a stock-in-trade of the Nazis in the 1920s and early 1930s as they decried the "filth" and "degeneracy" of the Weimar Republic and its dominant bourgeois parties, politicians, and moneyed beneficiaries. This was how the Nazis explained Germany's increasingly desperate economic and social conditions to small shopkeepers and other petty-bourgeois sectors, to housewives and women in the countryside, and to layers of workers as well.

From the standpoint of the working class, it's much better when every worker could care less about the sex life of Clinton, or Kennedy, or Prince Charles —

or of any other public figure. It's an enervating diversion, one that gets swept aside in times of ascending class battles.

What the working class needs is not exposés of bourgeois politicians and their personal weaknesses. We need to be able to explain politically why the working class has no common interests with the class these bourgeois politicians speak for. We need to spotlight every form of abuse of power by them, individual or corporate, including the so-called "Whitewater" revelations of how Bill and Hillary Clinton used the Arkansas state house to enrich themselves and promote big-business interests at the expense of working people and the unions — and then used the White House to cover up those earlier abuses. We need to advance a class understanding of politics and help our class forge an independent proletarian political organization that can lead a fight for a social and political program to advance the interests of the oppressed and exploited.

#### Workers must take moral high ground

Until resistance grows to the point that workers begin generalizing lessons stimulated by sharp struggles and swelling the ranks of a communist party, the ideology of the ruling class — including its unctuous and hypocritical official moralism — will continue to shape the ideas and values of all but a small vanguard of the working class. But communists and other thinking workers must always fight for our class and its organizations to take the moral high ground and chart our own course independent of the bourgeoisie, its opinion makers, and the middle-class layers they set into motion. The workers movement strives to develop our own values, collectively, out of working-class political practice.

Deepening political polarization is inevi-

table in today's world. This does not mean, however, that the gains our class has won through decades of struggle are destined to be reversed. The workers movement must take the lead in defending every inch of ground our class and its allies have conquered.

Vanguard workers, for example, welcome the historic fact that anti-Semitism in the United States has declined and continues to decline among workers, of all skin colors. At the same time, we recognize that growing rightist movements, in the course of broader class confrontations, can initiate relatively sudden surges of anti-Semitic activity that have an impact on bourgeois public opinion and reinforce Jew-hatred in sections of a more and more resentful middle class and in the broader population. That underlines the importance of communist workers explaining to co-workers why anti-Semitism is a deadly trap for the working class. We must explain that anti-Semitism is based on gross and unjust falsehoods and why the labor movement must not only oppose it but also take the lead in mobilizing opposition to every manifestation of such bigotry, whatever its source.

The workers' movement must stand at the head of the fight to defend affirmative action gains, abortion rights and other advances for women's equality, school desegregation, and a broad range of democratic rights and freedoms. The liberals and middle-class radicals, of all political stripes and all nationalities, shrink in fear from the reality of what growing fascist movements will do. Despite their democratic pretensions, they are utterly incapable of defending democratic rights. But none of the assaults by the right need succeed if the working-class movement resists effectively and strengthens a communist leadership in the process.

## —25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

25 CENTS  
**THE MILITANT**  
A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE  
September 28, 1973

On a cross-country trip today you might pass, or be passed by, one of more than 22,000 women truck drivers. The number of women truckers is growing so fast a National Women's Trucking Association has been formed and truck stops have been forced to expand their facilities to accommodate the women drivers.

There would probably be a lot more women drivers but executives of trucking firms are still reluctant to accept women. Their excuse is usually that the work is "too hard" for women, which the women drivers are proving a lie.

One executive, however, admitted to the *Wall Street Journal* that he was against women drivers simply because he still likes to think of trucking as "a man's world." He hastened to add that he didn't want to be identified for fear he'd get "all those libbers on my back."

But many of the men who work with the women truckers have a different opinion. They can evaluate the work these women do firsthand and have developed a new respect for them. A dispatcher for Leonard Brothers Trucking Company was asked by

the *Dallas Morning News* if he felt the women could do the job. "You'd be amazed," he said, "these gals can handle a rig better than a lot of men. It'd blow your mind."

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

September 27, 1948

RICHMOND — Calif. Sept. 15 — In a pitched battle against tear gas-hurling police, and in defiance of a court injunction, some 3,000 massed pickets and sympathizers of the CIO Oil Workers Union yesterday called a halt to fink-herding and picket-line-crashing in this oil workers' town just across the bay from San Francisco.

They turned back a motor caravan of finks that tried to enter the Standard Oil Refiners here under escort of 150 steel-helmeted police. For more than an hour, the striking workers and their supporters, led by experienced war veterans and battling from behind barricades, fought off the tear-gas assaults of the heavily armed cops.

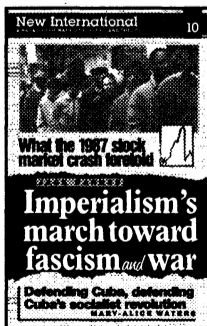
One hour and ten minutes after its erection, its purpose fulfilled, the pickets allowed the barrier to be torn down and held a victory meeting on the spot, right outside their union hall.

**New International**  
A Magazine of Marxist Politics and Theory

### Imperialism's March toward Fascism and War

Jack Barnes

How the working class and its allies respond to the accelerated capitalist disorder will determine whether or not imperialism's march toward fascism and war can be stopped. In *New International* no. 10. \$14.00



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# Support Illinois miners strike

The 350 members of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) who just walked off the job in Illinois deserve the support of the entire labor movement in their fight against demands by Freeman United Coal Mining Co. to gut medical benefits for retired miners.

Health care, a basic right for all working people, is something that the UMWA has fought many battles to win and maintain.

Freeman United Coal Mines, owned by General Dynamics, has made a decision to take on the UMWA in central Illinois. They dropped out of the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA) in June 1997, and are demanding to negotiate a separate, more "competitive" contract with the union.

Because of the issues involved, and because of Freeman's intent to inflict deeper cuts than the BCOA attempted in national negotiations, this strike takes on important implications for the miners union as a whole. These UMWA strikers deserve support from unionists across the country and from workers everywhere who face similar attacks from the employers and the government.

The strikers at Freeman's three mines understand that the issue of health care is a life-and-death question for mine workers. The miners union has been in the vanguard of labor's battles for years. UMWA members carried out a revolution in the early 1970s to democratize their union as part of forging a fighting instrument to resist the attacks by the coal operators. A central issue in this trans-

formation was also the fight for black lung benefits and against the mine owners' attacks on health and safety.

In 1978 the UMWA negotiated contracts with the coal operators guaranteeing lifetime health benefits for all retired miners, including those whose employers had gone out of business. In 1992 Congress enacted a law, known as the Coal Act, that extended this agreement to companies that had previously signed contracts with the UMWA before 1978. Recently, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down this law in a further attack on the mine workers.

The fight that has developed between the UMWA and Freeman takes place as working-class resistance to the bosses is on an upswing. Earlier this year members of the United Auto Workers at General Motors, Case, and Caterpillar decided to fight rather than roll over and accept cuts in their living and work conditions. Workers at Titan Tire in Des Moines, Iowa, members of the United Steelworkers of America, have been on strike for more than four months. And a sister local of the UMWA in Hazleton, Pennsylvania, has been on strike for almost six months.

From telephone workers here and in Puerto Rico to workers in mining, auto, steel, and the airlines, there are lots of opportunities to join in struggle and organize solidarity with those who want to fight.

Working people should follow this strike closely, bring it to the attention of co-workers and others, and prepare to respond to any call for solidarity with the UMWA members on strike against Freeman.

# Free Puerto Rican prisoners

Working-class fighters should throw their support behind the December 10 national day of protests to demand the release of 15 Puerto Rican political prisoners held in U.S. jails. All defenders of democratic rights, regardless of their views on Puerto Rico's status, should endorse the campaign to free the *independentistas*. Washington denies it holds political prisoners. But facts show otherwise.

None of the Puerto Rican patriots had a criminal record prior to their incarceration, yet they were given maximum sentences — up to 105 years. These prison terms are among the longest in the world, which underscores their political character. Their imprisonment has been a marked by physical abuse, denial of medical treatment, restricting physical contact with relatives, and frequent transfers — making visits by family members almost impossible. Many have served years in solitary confinement.

Oscar López Rivera spent the last 12 years in solitary confinement. He was kept in a bathroom-sized cell 22 hours a day and could only talk to his visitors through Plexiglas and a telephone. His only crime was acting on the conviction that Puerto Rico is a nation and its people should decide their own destiny — not Washington, which seized Puerto Rico at gunpoint in 1898. He and the other Puerto Rican fighters refuse to give up their ideas.

His recent transfer to the general prison population at the U.S. penitentiary in Indiana was a victory in the campaign to free all 15 independentistas. Thousands of people had sent letters demanding his transfer.

Workers in the United States have a fundamental interest in backing the struggle to free Puerto Rico. Washington's colonial domination of the island nation reinforces racism, national chauvinism, anti-immigrant prejudice, and other divisions among workers that serve the interests of the employers. Working people in the United States can never be free as long as their brothers and sisters in Puerto Rico remain chained by Yankee domination.

Puerto Rican independence fighter Rafael Cancel Miranda remarked in a recent interview how he and other Nationalists walked out of the U.S. prisons "standing, not on our knees," after more than 25 years' incarceration. Their refusal to buckle to Washington's dictates is testament of working-class resistance to imperialist oppression and of the broad campaign that won their freedom.

Supporters of Puerto Rican rights have a new tool to reach out to other fighters and explain the stakes in this struggle. The Pathfinder pamphlet *Puerto Rico: Independence is a Necessity — Rafael Cancel Miranda on the Fight against U.S. Colonial Rule*, is hot off the press.

Opportunities are open to win broader support for the Puerto Rican political prisoners in the labor movement. A range of public figures have signed petitions calling for their release. Supporters of the campaign can use this to help build the December 10 national day of protests actions among co-workers, at actions against cop brutality, on college campuses, in working-class communities, at political events, and on picket lines.

# No to scandalmongering trap

*"The working-class vanguard must not fall into the trap of thinking that simply 'exposing' the dissoluteness and corruption of bourgeois politicians helps the workers movement. It's barking up the wrong tree. The problem with the capitalists and their political representatives is not that they are immoral, hypocritical people as individuals. The scandalmongering is an effort—organized from within bourgeois politics, largely by its ultraright wing—to exacerbate and profit from middle-class panic and to drag workers along with the declining class itself down into the pit of resentment and salacious envy."*

Jack Barnes  
*Imperialism's March Toward Fascism and War*

There is nothing good for the working class in the current saga around the sex scandal threatening Clinton's presidency. Only the ultraright and those pushing fantastic conspiracy theories benefit from it.

Class-conscious workers need to remind fellow unionists and others that decrying the filth and degeneracy of the ruling elite became the stock-in-trade of Hitler's Nazis in the 1920s and '30s.

The latest scandal is not a well-orchestrated right-wing plot. The pornographication of bourgeois politics, set in motion as capitalism's world disorder grows, has unleashed a process that is not under the control of any of its promoters. What will happen to this president is not a given. But working people need to reject the notion that the talk of impeachment represents the use of democratic institutions to deal with misdeeds of elected officials.

The United States, as all other imperialist democracies, is run by a tiny aristocracy of bankers, industrialists, and landlords who profit from the wars and from the class exploitation and racism and sexism of the capitalist system. This small minority controls both the Democratic

and Republican parties — from the corrupt politicians in city halls across the country right on up to the equally corrupt "statesmen" in Washington.

The cries for Clinton to resign or be impeached for lying about an affair cover up the real problem — the system of *class rule*, a system that is by necessity built on corruption, on secrecy, and on lies. Virtually every single Democratic and Republican politician — from those who sit on the congressional judiciary committee debating how and when to publicly release yet another salacious piece of material to those across the nation defending "family values" — is guilty of conduct similar to Clinton's.

Against this "family values" twaddle it's important to remind ourselves of the clarity of Marx and Engels in *The Communist Manifesto*. "On what foundation is the present family, the bourgeois family, based?" the founders of scientific socialism ask. "On capital, on private gain. In its completely developed form this family exists only among the bourgeoisie.... The bourgeoisie sees in his wife a mere instrument of production.... Our bourgeois, not content with having the wives and daughters of their proletarians at their disposal, not to speak of common prostitutes, take the greatest pleasure in seducing each other's wives."

As working-class resistance to the bosses' offensive on working people's standard of living and democratic rights continues to spread, class-conscious workers will have more openings to convince broader layers of our class and its organizations to chart our own course independent of the bourgeoisie and its opinion makers. To develop our own values built on human solidarity out of collective working-class political practice. And to build proletarian organizations that can lead the toilers to take power out of the hands of the ruling wealthy minority and end once and for all the system of class exploitation that oils its wheels with corruption, lechery, and deceit.

# Impeachment: part of upholding capitalist rule

Below are excerpts from an article published in the Aug. 2, 1974, *Militant* under the headline "Behind the rulers' impeachment 'solution' to Watergate." This portion deals with how the impeachment mechanism in the U.S. constitution was part of the foundations of capitalist rule and has nothing to do with any right by the toiling majority to check abuse of power or other misdeeds by elected officials. The original article was one of a four-part series in the *Militant* in the summer of 1974 that explained what was behind the Watergate scandal and Nixon's resignation and outlined a working-class course in response to those events.

BY LARRY SEIGLE

A look at the Constitution itself, and the origins of the impeachment mechanism, shows clearly that impeachment is no more democratic than the other "institutions of the Republic" that form the basis for capitalist rule in America. The American Constitution, which went into effect in 1789, set up a federal government founded on the twin principles of protection of private property and rule by the wealthy minority. With the exception of the Bill of Rights, which was appended only after mass pressure from the American people, there is precious little democracy in the Constitution.

The complicated system of "checks and balances," of which impeachment is one device, was created not to guarantee majority rule, but precisely to prevent it. The progressive liberal historians Charles and Mary Beard in their book, *The Rise of American Civilization*, summed up the views of the delegates to the constitutional convention in Philadelphia:

"Almost unanimous was the opinion that democracy was a dangerous thing, to be restrained, not encouraged, by the Constitution, to be given as little voice as possible in the new system, to be hampered by checks and balances." The Beards report that James Madison, "discouraging on the perils of majority rule," stated that the object of the Constitution was to "secure the public good and private rights against the danger of such a [majority] faction and at the same time preserve the spirit and form of popular government."

The "Founding Fathers" were divided between the merchants of the North and the slavocracy of the South. To rule together they had to devise a system that would allow them to share power through flexible forms of government. At the same time, they needed to guarantee that the majority of the population, the small farmers, would be excluded from the decision-making body. (Women were given second-class status by the Constitution; slaves and Indians were denied all citizenship rights.)...

## Private property excludes majority rule

The delegates to the Philadelphia convention first proposed imposing stiff property qualifications, so only the wealthy could vote and run for office. The Beards report:

"Though the suggestion was warmly received a number of capital obstacles were pointed out in the course of the debate. If each voter or officer was required to possess a large amount of personal property, such as stocks or bonds, then the existing voters, two-thirds of whom were farmers, would not ratify an instrument that disfranchised them.

"A landed qualification was, therefore, the only alternative but bitter experience had showed that it was the farmers who sent radicals to the state legislatures and waged the war on money lenders, merchants, and other holders of personal property....

"Finding that course barred, the delegates chose another way of dissolving the energy of the democratic majority. They broke its strength at the source by providing diverse methods for electing the agencies of the new government and threw special barriers in its path by setting those agencies, with their several ambitions, prerogatives, and insignia at cross purposes. In short, the Fathers created a system of 'checks and balances,' dividing the power of the government among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches with confused and uncertain boundaries...."

The three branches preserved, as Madison had explained, "the spirit and form of popular government," but not the essence. At the same time, the Constitution provided mechanisms, including the impeachment provision, for mediating and resolving competing interests among the rulers.

Thus impeachment was carefully written into the Constitution as an alternative to any form of popular recall or democratic expression of popular will. It was no accident that the "Founding Fathers" gave the population no voice in the decision of whether to remove a president from office before the end of four years. Jealously reserving for themselves the right to resolve such questions, they had no intention of sharing this powerful weapon.

In the course of the massive expansion of U.S. imperialism and the growth of the powers of the executive branch, the ruling class has since refined the procedures for choosing successors to the presidency in the event of a vacancy in the office. These have included constitutional amendments and presidential succession acts passed by Congress. But not a single one of these refinements has given the American people any say in the matter.

# Tennessee miners strike for better wages, pensions

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

working for tobacco farmers in this rural area about 50 miles east of Nashville. A number of the local members raise tobacco themselves or have small cattle herds. The company got a surprise when

rooms. In the case of one worker the company refused to pay him 11 hours of overtime because he forgot to punch out at the end of the day. The unionists have also faced intimidation on the picket line.

The strikers are trying to stop the dozen or so scabs the company is bringing in daily. Five cops and for police cruisers were at the picket line on the morning of September 14 to ensure scabs got through. Strikers explained to visiting members of CAW Local 1285 that the cops are at the pickets every day. Unionists have reached out to other locals for support and have extended solidarity to two other strikes in the area. These include the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers (CEP) on strike at W. Ralston, in Brampton, Ontario; and Brampton Catholic high school teachers who walked out September 1, protesting the provincial government's plan to impose increased teaching time. Striking teachers and members of CAW local 1285 at Chrysler's car plant in Bramalea have visited the picket line. And the Gill strikers have joined the CEP picket in Brampton.



Militant/Susan LaMont  
Zinc miners in Gordonsville, Tennessee, members of USWA Local 8413, have been on strike since August 3, demanding better pensions and higher wages.

## ON THE PICKET LINE

short items to this column as a way for other fighting workers around the world to read about and learn from these important struggles. Jot down a few lines about what is happening in your union, at your workplace, or other workplaces in your area, including interesting political discussions.

GORDONSVILLE, Tennessee — Some 200 members of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 8413 went on strike here August 3 at Savage Resources' zinc mine. Strikers are fighting for an improved three-year contract, after voting three-to-one to reject the company's latest offer. Local 8413 members are miners who work 1,400 feet underground to extract zinc and other minerals for Savage Resources Limited. Savage is an international mining and exploration firm that is one of Australia's 150 top-listed public companies.

The mine opened about 25 years ago and workers voted to join the USWA shortly after. Savage's non-union zinc refinery in nearby Clarksville, Tennessee, is still working.

The main issues in the strike are about retirement benefits, bonus pay for the value of minerals extracted, and wages. Miners start out at only about \$8 an hour and top out at around \$13. The company is offering increases of only 30 cents an hour for each year of the contract.

Miners are also paid bonuses, based on company sales, on top of their hourly wage. One of the biggest issues for strikers is that Savage has been paying miners only 25 percent of what they're owed from the sale of mineral specimens extracted by a contractor. Local members also demand an improvement in the pitiful pension plan and a return to cost-of-living pay increases.

The mood on the picket line is confident and upbeat. Miners are determined to hold out long enough to force Savage offer a better contract. The last strike was in 1984.

James Duke, a mechanic with 23 years at Savage, and Sammy Overstreet, a construction repairman with 25 years, told the *Militant* that the strikers have been getting lots of support from working people here. Most strikers have easily been able to find other jobs, including

the younger miners voted to strike right along with the majority of local members who have been there for many years. About half a dozen nonunion miners employed by Cowin mine construction company crossed the picket line when the strike started. Cowin has since pulled them out, according to striker Ronnie Gentry, who has worked at Savage for 22 years.

When the strike started, the company got an injunction restricting pickets to one of three mine entrances. It allowed only four pickets to be present, two of whom had to be moving at all times, and barred the picketers from talking to anyone approaching the mine. The union went to federal court and was able to have that injunction lifted. Strikers have set their signs in the middle of the road leading to the mine and maintain a visible and vocal picket 24 hours a day.

Pickets report that striking United Auto Workers at Peterbilt truck plant in Nashville have visited them.

### Machine workers in Ontario strike for contract

MALTON, Ontario — More than 40 members of Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) Local 252 struck Gill Machine Works September 3 to win their first contract. The company produces customized machine parts. The strikers marched in Toronto's Labor Day parade on September 7 to gain support for their struggle. Most of the workers are Punjabi and this is the first strike they have been a part of.

They are fighting against discriminatory practices by the company on wages, job classifications, and health benefits. The history of the company's discrimination includes hiring the bosses' relatives in the plant, most of whom under the contract offer will receive higher pay raises. Wages in the plant range from CAN \$7.75 (CAN \$1 = US \$1.66) per hour starting pay for general laborers to CAN \$16-20 per hour for machine operators.

The strikers described to *Militant* reporters the acts of intimidation they faced when they signed their union cards. Verbal abuse by the boss increased, their breaks were shortened, and the company did not provide adequate toilet paper, soap or paper towels in the bath-

### Ontario plastics workers walk out on first strike

BRAMPTON, Ontario — "They want to get rid of our union, but we are going to stand strong," said picket captain Annette Gallant, a packer for eight years at the W. Ralston plastics plant in Brampton near Toronto. Gallant is one of about 70 strikers, members of amalgamated Local 819 of the CEP who walked September 4 over wages, benefits, and working conditions.

Strikers have set up a 24-hour picket line. At the two plant entrances they have skids to burn in barrels to keep warm at night.

They have hired a security outfit to intimidate the strikers — taking videos each time they try to hold up trucks coming in and out of the plant. The company got the fire department to force the workers to pay \$20 a week for a permit to burn firewood and is trying to get the city to move the trailer that stands on municipal property. On September 15 the company is going to court to get an injunction limiting the number of pickets and reducing the time they hold up trucks from 20 to three minutes. A couple of nonunion plants are producing plastic bags to fill the orders of Ralston's main customer, Price Club.

Average wage is CAN \$14.20 an hour (US \$ 9.37). The workers are demanding a 40 cent increase in each year of a two-year contract. The bosses have offered 20 cents a year over a three-year contract, and virtually nothing on the meager benefits the workers now have.

This is the first strike at the plant. The workers voted 45 to 15 to carry out the action. The company is trying to maintain production with supervisory and office staff. So far only two union members have crossed the line under the pressure.

Machine operator Raj Swinarine, who has worked at the plant for 12 years, and other pickets described the working conditions. "When it's 60 degrees outside it's 90 degrees inside the plant," said Swinarine. "There are not enough fans or ventilation." The plant is a seven-day operation on two 12-hour shifts.

Workers in the area have brought skids for firewood, soda, and food. Strikers at the nearby Gill Machine Works have dropped by to show solidarity. And truckers and others driving by honk in support.

On September 14 the workers voted 39 to 19 to accept a company offer and return to work. The agreement includes a 35 cent annual raise for the duration of the three-year contract, retroactive to April 3 when the last contract expired.

### Striking paperworkers in Canada keep up pickets

SHAWINIGAN, Quebec — Morale was high on the picket line outside the Abitibi-Consolidated paper mills in Shawinigan and Grand-Mère when two *Militant* reporters visited August 22. The company

had refused to negotiate a single contract with all 11 plants as had been done in the past. Denis Houde, a instrumentation technician in Grand-Mère, explained workers had walked out because "negotiating one mill at a time weakens you." The contract negotiated with Abitibi would then be used to set the pattern for all paperworkers east of Manitoba. Workers at one of the 11 mills recently voted to go back to work following an intense campaign by the company threatening to permanently close the mill.

The strike by more than 4,000 members of the Communication, Energy and Paperworkers is having an impact. An article in the *Globe and Mail* reported that the newsprint giant's third-quarter profits are expected to be severely depressed. It quoted Jim Rowland, publisher of Canadian Paper Analyst, as saying "...if there wasn't a strike, prices [of newsprint] would be heading southward" like the prices of other natural resource-based products.

Roger Tremblay, a worker in the steam plant in Shawinigan, said that strikers receive Can\$150 (US\$99) weekly from the strike fund of their union. On top of this many other locals of the CEP have voted to donate two hours' pay per week to strikers, bringing their weekly amount up to as high as \$373.

Susan Lamont and Kristin Meriam, members of USWA in Birmingham, Alabama; Vicky Mercier, member of CAW Local 1285 in Toronto; John Steele, member of International Association of Machinists Local 2113 in Toronto; and Joanne Pritchard in Montreal contributed to this column.

## — LETTERS —

### On the Clinton scandal

In reading your account on the deepening social crisis in the United States, the thing I am most struck by is that in the past two or three years you have said nothing whatsoever about the Clinton administration's scandals and the Ken Starr investigations.

Some brief comments: be wary of viewing this social crisis as though it were the 1930s. The decisive difference is, unlike that crisis that was precipitated by the collapse of an economy whose everyday workings were at once removed from the functioning of the state, that this economic crisis will be directly reflected as a crisis in the state structure itself. One of the causes of this change was the integration of much of what used to be called the Left in this country, principally the trade union bureaucracy, into the state, leading to the Left's disintegration in the later 1980s world-

wide.

This is why the classic model set out in [Leon] Trotsky's writings as how rightist solutions to the social crisis are imposed do not apply now, or will apply only with important modifications. The ruling class needs an executive power that can act directly and arbitrarily, without the limitations that have been imposed by constitutional constraints, to suppress popular unrest and drive down the standard of living.

I think there is a real danger that an authoritarian government is starting to be imposed from the political center. In this situation, the right-wing Republicans are pushing the basic corporatist agenda. The Clintons (Bill and Hillary) are putting up a false front of "caring" about "ordinary people." As you did point out several years ago, the purpose of sex scandals is to get someone to do what you want them to do. The whole Contract with

America has a basic right-wing strong statist thrust (under cover of being "anti-statist"), but the line item veto has a particular significance as being a first step toward an Enabling Act. The basic point to remember is that the solution to the Clintons for their personal problems is to create a state of national emergency and declare martial law.

Yes, this question was posed during Watergate and it wasn't going to happen then. But a lot of things have changed since then. One particular difference I'll point to is that the attack on Clinton comes from the Right of conventional politics. Much of it is motivated by hostility to military downsizing. Clinton's whole style is to steal the Right's thunder at the crucial moment by adapting its agenda after pretending to oppose it. I think the Right knows that, and that actually the Starr investigation is disguised to provoke a state of emergency and

suspension of the Constitution.

Thorn Roberts  
Elizabeth, West Virginia

### Masses make change

I am a New Afrikan Political Prisoner. I am 25 years old. My situation remains the same as far as being Kaptured in Amerikkka's Konsentration Kamp. These imperialistic prison conditions came about way before my time. It is hard to understand why people can endure so much hardship without becoming more conscious and without rising up in anger and rage. People of poverty in general and the colonized people in particular are being devastated on the outside and then warehoused and destroyed on the inside.

We must never forget that it is the people who change circumstances, going amongst the people with a clearness of open minds, educating

and learning from the people, and serving the people. We are the ones who can develop the minds [and] build bodies for this struggle to seize oppression! We ought to not cultivate the exceptional or seek the hero, who's another form of leader. We ought to uplift the people, we must build, strengthen, and develop their brains, create and fill them with ideas. Change them and make them into leaders! The letter I wrote was just my thoughts, which I would struggle to the end to see put in full active effect!

A prisoner  
Cresaptown, Maryland

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.

## French gov't holds mass frame-up trial targeting Algerian immigrants

BY FLORENCE DUVAL  
AND MICHEL PRAIRIE

FLEURY-MÉROGIS, France — "It's all for Algerian oil," was the unanimous declaration of a dozen of the defendants as they waited outside the specially equipped gymnasium where the trial of 138 people, most of them of Algerian origin, is taking place. The French government has accused the 138 of a "criminal association in relation to a terrorist undertaking."

The so-called "Chalabi" trial, named after defendant Mohamed Chalabi, supposedly targets the logistical support network of the Islamic Armed Groups (GIA) in France, which is waging an armed struggle against the French-backed military dictatorship in Algeria. The supposed conspiracy allegedly involved collecting arms and money and producing false documents.

Algeria is a former French colony, which won its independence in the early 1960s after a hard-fought war for national liberation. French imperialism has maintained powerful economic, political, and military interests in the country, particularly in petroleum products, of which Algeria is one of the world's biggest producers.

The civil war in Algeria, which has claimed tens of thousands of lives, began after the government canceled elections in 1992 due to the probable victory of the Islamic Salvation Front candidates. The government and media in France constantly portray the GIA as responsible for grisly massacres in Algeria despite increasing evidence that government-sponsored death squads are responsible for much of the killing.

The Chalabi trial, the largest "antiterrorist" trial to ever be organized in France, began September 1 and is expected to last for two months.

The 138 defendants were among more than 200 people arrested in two large series of raids in November 1994 and June 1995. Hundreds of police were involved. Many of those arrested were held in prison during the police investigation for days, months, and, in some cases, years.

Of those initially arrested, 176 were officially put under investigation. Charges were dropped against 33, although not before some had spent up to eight months in prison. Finally, 143 were indicted. One of them committed suicide in prison and four others fled. Twenty-seven of the defendants are currently imprisoned; the other 111 are "free" but are supposed to report each day of the trial.

### Most defendants boycott show trial

The trial and investigation are being carried out by a special tribunal set up under the "antiterrorism" laws adopted in 1986. For the last 12 years, these laws have been principally used against Basque and Corsican activists, two oppressed nationalities in France, as well as against Algerians. A special law adopted in December 1997 moved the Paris trial into a gymnasium located just outside the suburban Fleury-Mérogis prison, far from the city center.

The coalition government of the Socialist, Communist, and Green parties led by Premier Lionel Jospin, has organized the trial as a demonstration of police force. Five companies of heavily armed gendarmes — that is more than 300 cops — are present. Roadblocks have been set up on routes leading to the trial and people must pass through an x-ray machine before entering the court. The prisoners are subjected to a body search six times a day. Prisoners are seated in two special boxes made of bulletproof glass.

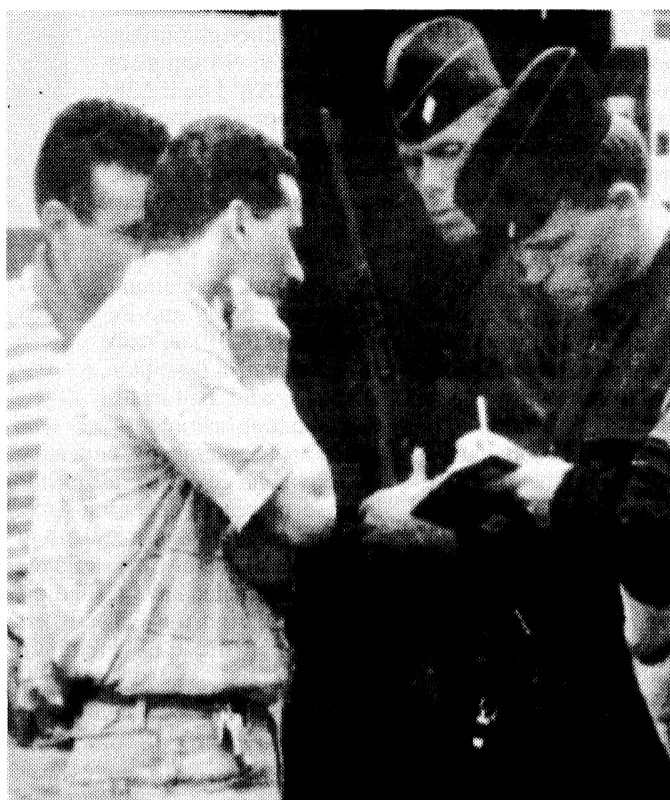
The first day of the proceedings, 60 lawyers representing about three quarters of the defendants demanded a new trial, the release of those defendants who are still imprisoned, and the lifting of all judicial surveillance.

In court, Jean-Jacques de Felice, a specialist in immigrant rights who was once a

defense lawyer for anticolonialist fighters during the Algerian war, denounced the choice of the trial site as worthy of "totalitarian regimes," the use of special "anti-terrorist laws," and the trial's "mass character." Then, the 60 lawyers walked out of the courtroom, followed by about 100 of the defendants.

Most have boycotted the proceedings since, refusing to recognize their legitimacy. Many defendants have no idea what they are concretely accused of doing. Among those imprisoned, four have refused to appear. The first day of the trial, half of the defendants refused to rise when the judges entered the courtroom.

"What is this crime of which we are accused?" Mohamed Chalabi asked on the third day of the trial. "This began with a police plot, then a pre-



Mass trial over supposed "terrorism conspiracy" comes in context of stepped-up police repression and government attacks on democratic rights of immigrants. Above, French cops check identification papers of two immigrants in 1995.

tense of an investigation, and continued with a judicial masquerade." In spite of the boycott, the tribunal has continued, trying the defendants *in absentia*.

### Police issued blank warrants

The few defendants present in the days after the trial opened showed their opposition by going outside to talk in front of the gymnasium. This is where *Militant* correspondents were able to interview several of them September 7. Those who spoke would only give their first name, out of fear of reprisals against their families in Algeria.

Mohamed, who is about 30, told how he had been arrested in November 1994 instead of his brother, with whom he lodged. His brother was absent at the time. Mohamed spent two years in prison, and was then released while awaiting trial. "I have lost two shops, an import-export service, two apartments, and a car," he said.

Rabah, a 50-year-old restaurant owner, said the police invaded his home at 6:30 a.m. on Nov. 8, 1994, and pointed guns at the heads of his young children. During their search, the police destroyed everything in his home, which he said happened to many others too. "They did not even go into the garage, which shows that they really were not looking for evidence," he added.

Rabah pointed out that in many cases the

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## Sinn Fein initiatives force pro-British party in Ireland to meet Republicans

BY PAT SHAW

MANCHESTER, England — For the first time David Trimble, the first minister of the newly elected Northern Ireland Assembly and leader of the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), met with Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams September 10. The meeting followed initiatives by Sinn Fein, the party leading the struggle to end British rule in Northern Ireland, that removed the excuses Trimble had previously made for refusing to meet Adams.

Commenting on the meeting, the republican newspaper *An Phoblacht/Republican News* noted that it represented a "belated and begrudging [acceptance of] the rights of non-unionists to political representation."

Reflecting the weakening and fragmentation of the unionists, four members of Trimble's UUP resigned from the party hours after his meeting with Adams.

In a further advance for Irish nationalists, six political prisoners were released September 11 from Long Kesh prison in Belfast, the first under the "Good Friday" agreement between London, Dublin, and parties in Northern Ireland. Loyalist or Unionist prisoners, those loyal to, or wishing to remain in, a union with the United Kingdom, were the first to be released. British television news showed three members of the Ulster Defence Association trying to shield their identity as they rushed into a waiting car. In marked contrast, the three republican prisoners who were released walked slowly, their heads high, to be greeted by a crowd of supporters.

"It is excellent to be out on this historic day," declared Sean McGuigan, speaking in Irish. The other republican prisoners freed were Henry Louis McNally and Michael Gerard Magee.

A further 200 prisoners are expected to be released by the end of October. All were convicted by a single judge in a non-jury "Diplock" court set up by the British government as part of its efforts to criminalize the struggle to free Ireland from British rule. In the past 25 years one in every six nationalists living in Northern Ireland has been

subject to imprisonment.

Among those waiting to greet the republican prisoners on their release, was Gerry Kelly, now a Sinn Fein representative in the assembly. Kelly escaped from Long Kesh — also known as the Maze — in 1983, during a mass break-out. Also attending was Brendan 'Bik' McFarlane, who was a commanding officer of republican prisoners during the 1981 hunger strike that won political prisoner status for nationalists. Reacting to the prisoner release, rightist Ian Paisley Jr. of the Democratic Unionist Party complained, "This is a travesty of justice. What we are seeing is the start of the release of unrepentant terrorist prisoners... back into societies which are still awash with weapons."

Speaking on behalf of Sinn Fein, Gerry Kelly insisted that the prisoner release program was moving too slowly. "I am very pleased for the prisoners who got out, but it should be more. Only... six prisoners are being released after five months."

In the week prior to the meeting between Adams and Trimble, the Royal Black Preceptory, a sectarian anti-Catholic organization, was compelled to reroute their march through the nationalist areas of Newry. Their decision came in the wake of the Orange Order's first ever failure to march along the Garvaghy Road in Portadown, Northern Ireland. Speaking on behalf of the Newry Coalition Against Sectarian Marches, Kevin Byrne described the decision of the Royal Black Preceptory to reroute as a "historic breakthrough."

In Portadown itself loyalists have begun turning on the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), who have for decades beaten nationalists off the streets to allow the Orange Order march to pass through Catholic areas. RUC officers were injured by a blast bomb thrown by loyalists taking part in a September 5 "Loyalist Right to March" rally, held in Portadown to protest the decision of the parades commission to reroute the Orange Order march in that city in early July.

The sectarian rally broke up and a loyalist mob descended on the Catholic area with

placards that read "No Taigs In Portadown." Taig is a derogatory term used to describe Catholics. Earlier in the day two Catholic businesses were set on fire.

### Antidemocratic laws protested

In Britain protesters chanted "British justice: no justice" outside the British parliament on September 2, as it debated new repressive laws designed to prop up British rule in Northern Ireland and curtail democratic rights.

Speaking at a public meeting inside Parliament following the protest, Sinn Fein leader Michelle Gildernew protested that London was still functioning as though "it believed the North was a colony, and a part of the Empire."

Also speaking at the meeting was Rory Herrity. Along with four others he was arrested on July 10. For two days Herrity refused to talk to the police until he was allowed to speak to a lawyer. He explained "under these new laws I could have been considered guilty for exercising my right to silence." Herrity was released without being charged.

Unexpectedly, 88 Members of Parliament voted against the new laws, including former British prime minister Edward Heath. Capturing the nervousness of many British politicians, another former British prime minister, John Major, commented that the new laws "are bound to have loopholes."

In the Irish Republic police used new powers they have been given by the Dail, the Irish parliament, for the first time September 7. They have held, for an extended period of time, a man who they are questioning about alleged "firearms offenses."

Meanwhile, the British army ended its foot patrols in Belfast September 12 and withdrew its troops to barracks. The army will continue to patrol the streets throughout the rest of Northern Ireland. Around 16,000 British soldiers are still stationed there.

Pete Clifford in London contributed to this article.