

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Meeting celebrates political contributions of Paul Montauk

— PAGES 8-9

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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Louisiana strikers fight bosses' take-back demands

BY TONY DUTROW

GRAMERCY, Louisiana — More than 350 workers here are on strike against Kaiser Aluminum. The plant is being operated with scabs protected by hundreds of Vance Security goons — the “asset protection teams” — who were also used against United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) coal miners during the 1990 Pittston strike. Kaiser, with the help of Vance's guards moved 75 trailers, one by one, on to company property to house the 400 scabs working in the plant.

The workers here are part of a strike that spans three states. The walkout began September 30 when 3,000 members of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) walked off the job in Washington, Ohio, and Louisiana rejecting the company's last offer in contract negotiations. Kaiser is demanding the permanent elimination of 400 jobs, the contracting out of 150 jobs, and offering only a 2.3 percent annual wage increase during the life of a five-year contract — less than the average inflation rate

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Students rally across France demanding better schools

BY DEREK JEFFERS

PARIS — Demanding more teachers, fewer students per class, and better study conditions, 500,000 high school students, out of a total of 2.3 million in France, participated in demonstrations in 350 cities throughout the country October 15.

“A thousand of us — half the student body — came from my school today,” said Béatrice, a student from Étampes, a suburb 20 miles south of Paris, at the demonstration of 28,000 in the French capital. “Our school was built for 1,000 students, but now there are twice that many.”

Other students described similar problems. Maud Germain, 17, from another working-class suburb, Montgeron, declared, “We want to have the means to be able to study in good conditions. Even when a teacher is absent for a month, he's not replaced. The buildings are in bad repair and there are 35 students per class.”

About 280,000 demonstrated October 20 in 240 actions across the country. This time the government mobilized over 5,000 police in Paris alone, where 25,000 protesters turned out.

The cops tried to intimidate the youth, carrying out 18,000 identity checks and arresting 76 young people in Paris.

Predominate in the Paris demonstrations were students from working-class suburbs, many of them young women. Students chanted, “High school students are angry, we're fed up with this mess!” and, “All together, all together” — the popular slogan of the November 1995 wave of strikes and demonstrations that forced the government

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Killing of gay youth sparks protests in U.S.

Murder is new flashpoint in ‘culture war’

BY NAOMI CRAINE

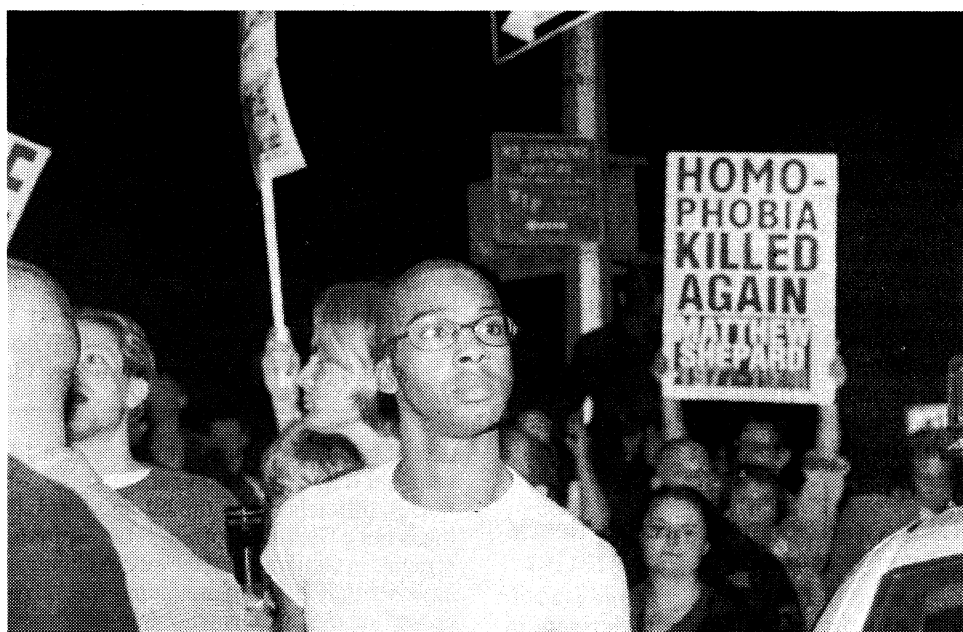
The brutal killing of Matthew Shepard, a gay college student in Laramie, Wyoming, has become the latest flashpoint in the “culture war.” Across the United States thousands of people have turned out for vigils and rallies protesting his lynching. One thousand people attended Shepard's funeral, while a small group of rightists picketed across the street with signs such as “No Tears for Queers.”

Democratic Party politicians and other liberals are using the killing to push for the extension of laws that allow stiffer penalties for offenses deemed to be “hate crimes,” undermining democratic rights and fanning the flames of rightist demagoguery. Right-wing politicians and pundits are posturing as the defenders of free speech and opponents of supposed “special privileges” for gays.

Shepard was severely beaten the night of October 6 and left tied to a fence post in near-freezing weather. By the time he was found 18 hours later, he had entered a coma. The 21-year-old University of Wyoming student died in the hospital October 12.

Two young men, Aaron McKinney and Russell Henderson, have been charged with first degree murder, kidnapping, and robbery. Police say the two met Shepard at a bar in Laramie, drove him to an isolated field, struck him repeatedly in the head with a pistol, and tied him to the fence. They then reportedly returned to town and assaulted

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Militant/Hilda Cuzco

Protestors march in Manhattan October 19, outraged at murder of Matthew Shepard.

Thousands rally in N.Y., other cities

BY BRIAN TAYLOR AND PETER THIERJUNG

NEW YORK — Determined to voice their anger at the murder of Matthew Shepard and call for justice, some 5,000 protesters marched down Fifth Avenue in Manhattan October 19.

Hundreds carried candles, some held up placards with Shepard's photo, others had signs against antigay violence. “I'm outraged by what happened and that's why I'm out here today,” said participant Tony González from Brooklyn. He also noted a

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Sell the ‘Militant,’ build YS convention!

Letter to our readers on two-week campaign to meet subscription goals

Dear Reader,

With about two weeks to go in the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* subscription drive, a change of course is needed to get on a real campaign to reach our goals of selling 1,300 *Militant* and 400 *PM* subscrip-

tions, together with 1,300 copies of the Marxist magazine *New International*. The main challenge is meeting the *Militant* subscription goal. As the chart on page 5 indicates, we need to sell another 663 *Militant* subscriptions by the November 8 deadline.

This is possible if a concerted drive is organized every single day for the next 15 days, involving every single supporter of the *Militant* — members of the Socialist Workers Party, communist leagues, and Young Socialists; friends of the communist movement; and other readers.

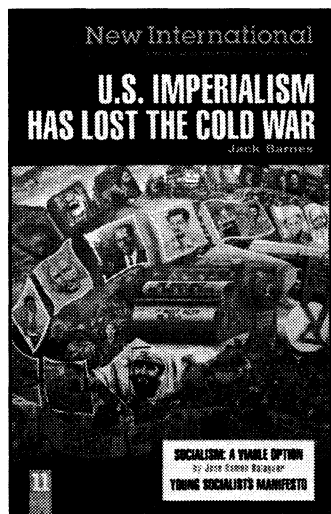
This two-week special sales effort fits well with campaigning for Socialist Workers candidates through the November 3 elections in the United States and engaging in other political activities that can convince young people to join the Young Socialists and come to the YS convention in Los Angeles in December (see ad on this page).

As every page of news reports in the *Militant* underscores, there are more than enough political opportunities in the class

struggle to do this — from the protests across the United States against the murder of Matthew Shepard, to the stepped-up immigrant rights actions, demonstrations against police brutality, actions by Black farmers fighting discrimination, high school walkouts in defense of affirmative action, and activities

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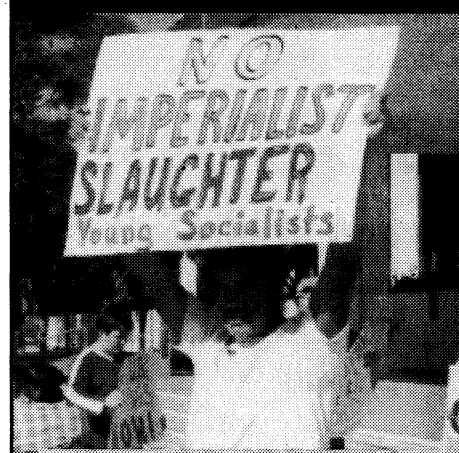
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Washington, NATO: still ready to use force in Yugoslavia

Washington's U-2 spy planes began reconnaissance flights over Yugoslavia October 17, as "observers" from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe began to take up posts in Kosovo. This stepped-up U.S. intervention takes place under an accord Washington forced on the government of Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic by threatening military air strikes against the Balkan workers state, using the pretext of concern for the rights of Albanians in Kosovo. Officials of the U.S. dominated NATO alliance gave a 10-day extension for Milosevic's forces to pull out of Kosovo October 17, but warned they are still prepared to use military force. "The Serbs fully know the consequences if they don't comply, and this is not a bluff," said Richard Holbrooke, U.S. special envoy to the Balkans.

The top NATO official, U.S. Gen. Wesley Clark, demanded that seven battalions of the Yugoslav army be withdrawn from the Kosovar region and that up to 5,000 army troops and 4,000 paramilitary troops be removed. The Yugoslav government will be allowed to maintain 12,500 soldiers and 6,000 cops in that province, where the overwhelming majority are Albanians who want independence from Serbia. Meanwhile, Kosovan independence fighters continue to battle against Milosevic's military and police force.

Okinawans protest youth's death allegedly caused by U.S. Marine

In early October an 18-year-old student was a victim of a hit and run accident in Okinawa, allegedly struck by a drunken U.S. Marine from one of the U.S. military bases there. A week later she died from head injuries. Since the accident, U.S. officials have refused to turn over the accused Marine to Japanese authorities to be tried. Demonstrations have sprung up in Okinawa demanding that Washington turn over the Marine and comply with an agreement signed by the two governments in 1995. The agreement, which calls U.S. Marines who are suspects of "heinous crimes" to be placed under Japanese jurisdiction, flowed from the conviction

Los Angeles: hundreds protest anti-immigrant attacks



Militant/ Carole Lesnick
Chanting "Unconditional amnesty now!" and "¡Residencia sí. Deportaciones no!" (Residency yes. Deportation no!) about 300 people marched through East Los Angeles to the downtown area October 11 for a rally called by Latinos USA.

tion of two U.S. troops in the rape of a 12-year-old school girl that year.

U.S. officials claim the hit-and-run killing is not a "heinous" offense. Government officials in Okinawa and the city of Ginowan have written letters denouncing the "arrogance" of U.S. troops who they say "think lightly of human life." In addition to turning over the soldier, they demand compensation for the family of the young woman.

Japan: Korean group is arsoned

The headquarters of the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan, a group that reportedly supports the government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, was burned down in the early morning hours of October 15, leaving one person dead. Local cops claim that the building was probably burgled. An article in the *Korea*

Times wrote that a Korean residents' group in Japan pointed out the escalation in death threats and other forms of harassment since Pyongyang launched a satellite of the August 31. There are roughly 640,000 Koreans in Japan.

Currency crisis in Asia shrinks imperialists' exports

The World Trade Organization (WTO), which said in March that the financial crisis devastating Asia would make only a "small dent" in global output, now expects annual growth in world trade to be cut in half. The crises that caused currencies to plummet in South Korea, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and many other coun-

tries in late 1997 and early '98 has greatly reduced the amount of imports these countries are able to buy from the imperialist countries. The export prices of many goods from the underdeveloped nations has also dropped with the value of the currencies. According to the WTO, U.S. imports from Asia rose 9.5 percent while exports fell by 14.5 percent. Exports from nations in the European Union to the five Asian countries hardest hit by the crisis plunged 40 percent and imports increased 12 percent.

Colombia: public workers strike

Workers employed by the Colombian government went on an indefinite strike October 7, rejecting that government's austerity measures. Those measures include a pay raise that falls below the new inflation rate and an expansion of items subject to sales tax, from medicine to books. On October 14 thousands of workers from all over the country rallied in Bogotá, the capital city, while others blocked a major road in Cúcuta, which borders Venezuela. Workers are also demanding the regime reschedule debt owed to foreign capitalists and halt all sell-offs of their national patrimony. Colombian president Andrés Pastrana refused to accept the workers' demands, declared the strike illegal, and threatened to arrest pickets blocking entrances to government-owned buildings. The government also ordered troops to "dislodge" strikers occupying major installations like oil facilities.

Honduras: deadly legacy of Washington's 'contra' war

The U.S.-backed counterrevolutionary *contras* — forces who fought against the Nicaraguan revolution — used Honduras as a training ground and base of operations in the 1980s. Washington, which funded and trained the contra forces, left behind a heavily mined 400-square-kilometer area around the border. Dozens of people have been killed or maimed by the mines. More than a decade later, the U.S. government sent 12 dogs trained for eight weeks in mine detection to help "deactivate" the mines.

— BRIAN TAYLOR

Farm workers fight for union in N. Carolina

BY PAT LEAMON

DURHAM, North Carolina — Union activists and farm workers from throughout North Carolina and other states came here October 10 to launch a union contract fight at Mt. Olive Pickle Co. and the growers who provide cucumbers for it. For more than a year the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) has been part of a campaign to organize the migrant farm workers in eastern North Carolina who harvest cucumbers for Mt. Olive, the largest pickle company in the region. Some 2,000 workers have signed union authorization cards.

In June 70 farm workers and supporters

marched for 70 miles on the highway from Mt. Olive to the state capitol in Raleigh.

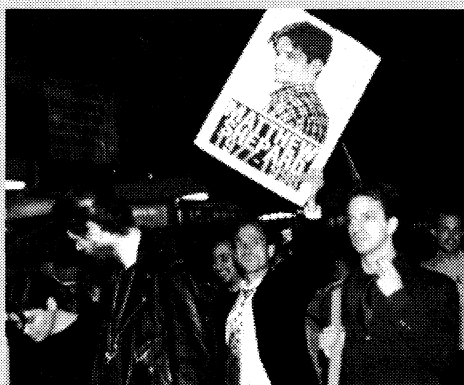
About 25 farm workers attended the meeting in Durham carrying red flags that read "FLOC: Hasta la victoria!" Students from various area campuses including Warren Wilson College, Duke University, Appalachian State attended, as well as young people from Student Action with Farm workers, El Centro Hispano, and the Young Socialists. Speakers included AFL-CIO state president James Andrews and longtime civil rights activist Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth.

Mount Olive Pickle Company has refused to negotiate with the 7,000 farm workers.

THE MILITANT

Civil rights for gays and lesbians!

The recent protests across the United States condemning the lynching of a gay man in Wyoming shows the growing intolerance among working people for such homophobic acts. The 'Militant' explains this is a part of the increasing resistance in the working class. Don't miss a single issue!



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Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant's* views. These are expressed in editorials.

Norway: two-hour strike protests austerity

BY DAG TIRSÉN

OSLO, Norway — Some 1.2 million unionists brought this country to a standstill for two hours the afternoon of October 15. The work stoppage, called to protest a proposed government austerity budget, stopped air, train, and bus traffic. Schools, day-care centers, and hospitals closed, and industrial production was halted.

Workers held more than 100 strike rallies and demonstrations across the country. In Oslo, the capital, tens of thousands of strikers rallied outside the Norwegian parliament.

"All my co-workers are striking," said Vidar Eve, who works at a day-care center, at the rally here. Eve said he was glad that the four main union organizations had called a joint demonstration, something that had not happened before.

"The strike is a powerful show of force, but it should have been longer," commented 33-year-old Stein Olof Ringen, a municipal worker. He didn't put much stock in the wrangling by the political parties in parliament over the budget. "What is important happens outside parliament," Ringen said.

The strike was called by the four national union federations — LO (unskilled workers), YS (skilled workers), AF (Academics union), and NL (Teachers union) — to protest a proposal by the Norwegian government to change the number of legal holidays from 21 to 20 days a year. This is part of an austerity package totaling 9 billion



Transport workers march in Oslo to protest Norwegian government's austerity budget October 15. Demonstrations took place in more than 100 cities and towns during two-hour work stoppage.

Norwegian kronor (\$1.2 billion) that the minority government, headed by Kjell Magne Bondevik of the Christian People's Party, is trying to get through parliament.

Although it became clear in the days before the protest action that the proposal to cut the holiday will be defeated in parliament, the unions did not back down from

their strike call. Union workers worry that the austerity package will include lowering sick pay and making the first day of sick leave unpaid. At the rally in Oslo the Transport Workers Union brought a large banner demanding vacation be extended to five weeks. Bus and truck drivers in that union recently won a strike that resulted in wage

increases of more than \$1 per hour.

Their fight was a part of a strike wave in May and June this year involving tens of thousands of workers. Hospital workers and other public employees took strike actions, and the government eventually intervened to settle these strikes with wage raises of more than \$1 per hour. Strikes by telephone workers, air traffic controllers, and later pilots at Braathen Airlines followed.

Another banner from a Transport Union local demanded the ouster of the Bondevik government.

Drop in oil prices shakes economy

Norway is a weak imperialist country dependent on exports of aluminum, fish, and in recent decades oil. Prices on these commodities have plummeted recently, as deflationary pressures have gripped the capitalist world economy. In 1997 as much as 45 percent of the Norwegian state income came from oil, and Norway was the second biggest oil exporter in the world, after Saudi Arabia. Norway was seen as an exception in Europe, with unemployment still under 3 percent, although rising.

But in 1998 oil prices have almost dropped 50 percent and the Norwegian government income from the oil is dramatically reduced. This has put downward pressures on the Norwegian currency the krona. Since March of this year, the Norwegian central bank has raised interest rates in steps from 3.5 percent to 8 percent, attempting to defend the value of the krona. On August 24, the central bank declared that the currency would be allowed to float without further intervention. Interest rates in Norway are now the highest in Europe. The day of the general strike, October 15, the krona again dipped to one of its lowest levels this year.

The lower Norwegian krona and drop in oil income have sharpened trade conflict among the ruling classes in Scandinavia. The Swedish krona is also floating, and following the Norwegian krona downward. The Finnish markka, however, is locked into the European Monetary Union and has to follow the relatively stronger German mark, which means its exports are less competitive than those from Sweden and Norway. For both Finnish and Swedish capitalists, export of paper and pulp is very important. Both are hit by the drop in prices for these commodities, but Finnish capitalists are also losing market shares to their Swedish competitors.

Dag Tirsén is a member of the Metalworkers union in Stockholm, Sweden. Carl-Erik Isacson and Dechor Hien contributed to this article.

British cops arrest former dictator of Chile

BY TONY HUNT

LONDON — In a flagrant abuse of the national sovereignty of Chile, British police arrested the country's former military dictator, Augusto Pinochet, October 17 on a warrant issued by two Spanish judges. Pinochet, 82, was detained at a private hospital in London where he was being treated. He is due to be taken to court to face extradition proceedings to Spain in about 10 days. The warrant is based on atrocities committed by Pinochet's government between 1973 and 1983, including the murders of Spanish and British citizens.

The arrest warrant was issued by Spanish judge Baltasar Garzón, a social democrat who is notorious for prosecuting Basque independence fighters. The proceedings against Pinochet were initiated by the Left Unity, a parliamentary group led by the

Spanish Communist Party, in Madrid and the Commission of the Disappeared in Chile.

Pinochet took power in Chile in 1973 in a military coup backed by U.S. imperialism, which overthrew the democratically elected government of Salvador Allende. Some 400 U.S. advisers reportedly assisted Pinochet in establishing his brutal regime. More than 3,000 people were murdered or "disappeared" and thousands more were tortured.

Pinochet was also in cahoots with British imperialism, providing camps for British special forces during the 1982 Malvinas War against Argentina. Former prime minister Margaret Thatcher, in power during that war, was among his supporters.

The arrest has evoked contrasting responses from the big business press. The liberal *Observer* praised the actions of the Labour government, saying it was a demonstration of its "ethical foreign policy." An editorial in the right-wing *Daily Telegraph* defended the 1973 coup and condemned the arrests because Pinochet was "an unstinting ally of this country." The *London Times*

editors pointed out that the arrest set a precedent by which other current or former heads of sovereign governments could be arrested when visiting Britain.

Right-wing Peruvian author Mario Vargas Llosa told the BBC he hoped it would be followed by the arrest of President Slobodan Milosevic of Yugoslavia and President Fidel Castro of the revolutionary government of Cuba.

Speaking in Portugal, Fidel Castro said the "arrest was international meddling." Rallies have taken place in both London, Madrid, and elsewhere by human rights groups and radical and liberal activists supporting the arrest. Right-wingers in Chile have rallied to oppose it.

The Communist League in the United Kingdom issued a statement condemning the arrest and extradition proceedings. "Only the Chilean people have the right to bring this butcher to justice, not the British or Spanish imperialists, whose system has been responsible for the greatest atrocities and crimes in human history," it read.

Students in France

Continued from front page

of former Prime Minister Alain Juppé to back off from some of its attacks against public health care and retirement benefits.

In Paris hundreds of enraged youths tore apart parked cars and broke into some shops, making it difficult for many school contingents to reach the demonstration route. On October 13. Demonstrators responded to these actions by massively chanting, "Only one solution — demonstration!"

The afternoon of October 15 Claude Allègre, education minister in the government of Socialist Party prime minister Lionel Jospin, met with a delegation of 10 high school students chosen by the organizers of the demonstration.

A series of further meetings were planned on specific points, but members of the student delegation explained that "no really concrete measures" had been announced. "We are still skeptical and wary. We ask the students to stay mobilized," declared Loubna Méliane, a participant in the delegation.

Teachers unions are supporting most of the student demands and were considering participating in further national high school student demonstrations planned for October 20. At the October 15 demonstration in Paris, students cheered a small group of teachers who stood with a union banner along the march route.

Derek Jeffers is a member of the General Confederation of Labor at the Alstom transformer plant in Saint Ouen. Jean-Louis Salfati contributed to this article.

Canada paper strikers win right to bargain jointly

BY JOANNE PRITCHARD

SHAWINIGAN, Québec — In mid-September, after more than three months on strike, 4,500 workers at 10 Abitibi-Consolidated paper mills in Quebec, Ontario, and Newfoundland forced the company to agree to negotiate a central contract. They walked out on June 15 after the company demanded that contracts for each mill be negotiated separately.

"Everybody's happy. This is what we wanted. It was the number one goal of the strike," said Réjean Chevalier, an operator at the Abitibi-Consolidated mill in Beauport, Quebec.

Now workers are maintaining their picket lines until they have a contract. Negotiation of local issues began in September; talks on the central contract started October 16.

Maurice Gauvin, who replaces cloth used to strain pulp at the Belgo Division plant here in Shawinigan, explained that workers had been forced to put in excessive amounts of overtime and that one of their local demands was to hire more people for his department. Gauvin said that the priorities for the new contract, such as a retirement age of 55 and more vacation time, were also aimed at creating more jobs.

At the Grand Mère, Quebec, picket line, Réjean Cossette commented, "We've been giving things up for the last 10 years in the name of saving jobs. Its time to stop retreating and start advancing." The contract negotiated at Abitibi-Consolidated is expected to set the pattern for 20,000 other paperworkers in eastern Canada.

"It's our impression that the company wanted us to walk out," said André Marchand, a paper machine operator, adding that the company had paper stockpiled and that other companies have sold paper to Abitibi so that it can meet its orders.

Abitibi-Consolidated is the biggest newsprint producer in the world, but faces falling prices for its products. There is also less demand for paper because of the economic crisis in Asia. In order to stay on top of its competitors, the company wants workers to work faster under worse conditions. For example, Gauvin explained that the company had wanted to extend bonus payments for productivity. Workers rejected this because it is "poisoned money," he said.

Joe Young and Annette Kouri, members of the United Steelworkers of America, contributed to this article.

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Success of fund depends on reaching fighting workers

BY JONERWAY
AND BROCK SATTER

NEWARK, New Jersey — After reaching the halfway mark in the \$115,000 New International Fund drive, we face a critical juncture. The fund slipped further behind schedule last week, standing at about \$25,000 — 22 percent — so we are now \$32,000 behind.

There are encouraging examples in some cities that, if generalized, will make it possible to complete the campaign in full and on time. These are examples of supporters of the fund who go beyond the circle of long-time readers of *New International* and systematically ask co-workers, working-class fighters, and revolutionary-minded youth involved in various political activities for contributions.

Today's bubbling of struggles by working people and other political activities — from outraged students protesting the murder of Matthew Shepard to Black farmers fighting government discrimination — provides the best opportunities ever for reaching out to all those who value *New International* for its working-class politics.

Some of the examples of this include:

In **Birmingham**, Kristin Meriam explained how she got a contribution from her co-worker at Sloss Industries, a Steelworker-organized coke plant. "I brought in a fund-raising letter drafted by the local fund committee and showed it to co-workers. One worker, who I've never sold socialist literature to before, pulled out his wallet and gave

me \$10 for the New International Fund."

In **Miami**, local fund director Kay Sedam reports that a political activist in Tampa Bay, Florida, who met the socialist movement during a protest against U.S. war threats on Iraq, "drove his motorcycle all the way to Miami last month to hear Martín Koppel, editor of *Nueva Internacional*, give a talk on the book *Secrets of Generals*," referring to a collection of interviews with revolutionary Cuban generals. "At the meeting he bought a copy of *New International* no. 10 on 'Imperialism's March toward Fascism and War.' Later, at his urging, we organized a sales team to Tampa Bay, where we had a meeting of several people to discuss the political ideas that are in *New International*. He had his copy of *New International*, which was all crumpled from carrying it around and reading it. Two people at the meeting gave contributions, including a vegetable farmer from the area."

Supporters of the fund in Miami are also organizing a raffle for the New International Fund to sell to co-workers on the job.

In **Des Moines**, Maggie Trowe reports that socialists who work at the nearby Swift Co. meatpacking plant in Marshalltown are contacting a dozen of their co-workers — all those who have bought *New International* in the past year — about contributing to the fund.

In **San Francisco**, Markie Wilson notes that she sold a copy of the latest issue of *New International*, which includes the article "U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold

War," to one of her co-workers on the railroad, who then gave her a \$10 contribution to the New International Fund.

Some \$1,200 was collected, and \$250 in new pledges was received at a fund-raising meeting in **Newark** October 18. Thirty-two people attended the event, including seven new readers of socialist publications. During the fund pitch, Ellie García, a member of United Transportation Union Local 1370 at Amtrak, read the following message of support from a co-worker, Jeff Payne:

"As a subscriber to the *Militant*, my first introduction to the *New International* came through excerpts printed in various issues. I purchased my first issue, *New International* no. 10, 'Imperialism's March Toward Fascism and War,' several years ago, and I noted in a comment to a friend the other day how accurately it has foretold the happenings of today!

"*New International*," Payne's message continued, "gives workers a clearer picture of the events today which adversely affect working people around the world. I would urge working people to buy an issue and if possible make a cash contribution to support its publication."

These examples are not yet the norm in every city. If they are followed, we will be able to raise the \$115,000 necessary to produce *New International*.

Grand jury refuses to indict cops who killed Pedro Oregón

BY LEASHERMAN

HOUSTON — A grand jury here refused to indict the six Houston police involved in the killing of 22-year-old Pedro Oregón Navarro on any felony charges. Only one cop was indicted for misdemeanor criminal trespassing in the October 19 ruling. All the cops have been suspended with pay since July 12, when the Mexican worker was shot to death in his apartment.

This ruling has sparked widespread condemnation and outrage in the city, as many of the facts of the case have been widely publicized. The police entered Oregón's apartment with no search or arrest warrants, supposedly acting on an informer's tip about drugs. They fired more than 30 shots at Oregón, hitting him 12 times. Nine bullets entered his back, and once in the head. The shots were all fired from above and behind, according to a coroner's sketch. No drugs were found in the apartment or in his system during the autopsy.

A little more than an hour after the grand jury verdict, a protest and news conference was held in front of the courthouse with all the major television stations reporting from the protest for the 5:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. news. The action was called by the Justice for Pedro Oregón Coalition.

In the steady rain, more than two dozen

protesters chanted in English and Spanish, "What do we want? Justice! When do we want it? Now!"; "Jail, jail, jail the killer cops"; and "The jury wants the facts? Twelve shots in the back!" Some joined the anti-police brutality action as they came out of the courthouse. Two students from Houston Community College who saw the protest on the 5:00 p.m. news joined the action, outraged by the court's decision.

Pedro Oregón's mother, Claudia Navarro, and his sister Susana Oregón, who have led this fight for justice, joined the news conference for a short time with their attorney, Paul Nugent. In addition to a civil suit, the family is demanding federal civil rights investigation.

In a statement to the press, the coalition condemned the grand jury's refusal to indict the six cops who killed Pedro Oregón on murder charges, and called for a march and rally October 25 in the neighborhood where Oregón was killed.

Harris County officials had no intention of pressing charges against the cops. Five days after the shooting, District Attorney John Holmes made this clear. "I don't know of any authority at this point that gave them the right to be in that residence," Holmes told the July 17 *Houston Chronicle*. "But that doesn't make the shooting a crime."

At the end of August Holmes turned the case over to the grand jury with no charges. Since grand jury proceedings are secret; none of the evidence presented, nor questions asked of the cops who testified, have been available to the public.

In the face of overwhelming condemnation of the decision by working people throughout the city, many local politicians have felt compelled to call for some type of federal action in the case. This includes Houston mayor Lee Brown, three city council members, and Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee.

City officials raised the specter of a violent reaction to the ruling, which was played up in the press in the weeks leading up to the decision. This aided a campaign to discourage people from taking part in public displays of outrage, such as protest actions. Leaders of various Latino groups and politicians have encouraged people to be patient and "wait for the system to work."

In the week before the grand jury decision, the Justice for Pedro Oregón Coalition held a widely covered press conference to announce that a demonstration would be held in the wake of whatever decision came down and to note that all the actions so far have been peaceful and legal. The only violence has come from the cops involved in

\$115,000 New International Fund Drive

CITY/COUNTRY	GOAL	PAID	%
New Zealand			
Auckland	1,500	802	53%
Christchurch	550	235	43%
N.Z. Total	2,050	1,037	51%
United States			
Detroit*	5,000	2,350	47%
Des Moines	2,500	1,147	46%
Philadelphia	4,000	1,665	42%
Miami	2,500	820	33%
Pittsburgh	4,000	1,250	31%
Washington, D.C.	4,000	1,150	29%
Seattle	8,500	2,260	27%
Boston	4,700	1,241	26%
Atlanta	2,800	711	25%
Newark	8,500	2,162	25%
Cleveland	4,000	912	23%
Twin Cities, MN	7,000	1,480	21%
New York	12,000	2,373	20%
Chicago	7,500	1,345	18%
Birmingham	3,000	515	17%
San Francisco	11,000	1,400	13%
Los Angeles	9,000	555	6%
Houston	6,000	0	0%
Other		410	0%
U.S. Total	106,000	23,746	22%
United Kingdom			
London	1,710	475	28%
Manchester	684	0	0%
UK Total	2,394	475	20%
Australia Total			
	650	0	0%
Canada			
Montreal	665	0	0%
Toronto	1,670	0	0%
Vancouver	665	0	0%
Canada Total	3,000	0	0%
Iceland Total			
	1,400	0	0%
Sweden Total			
	1,250	0	0%
INT'L TOTAL:	116,744	25,258	22%
SHOULD BE:	115,000	57,500	50%
*Raised goal			

the killing of Oregón, the coalition statement noted.

Laura Garza, Socialist Workers candidate for governor, strongly condemned the travesty of justice carried out by the grand jury and called on all those outraged by the decision to join the October 25 protest at 2:00 p.m. at Bellaire and Hillcroft in southwest Houston. "Only a determined public campaign of meetings, speak outs, and protest marches can force officials to do what they have shown by their actions they do not want to do — that is, to bring charges against the cops who killed Oregón, present all the devastating evidence, and sentence the guilty cops to jail," she declared. "The treatment given to working people like Oregón, especially Blacks, Latinos, youth, and immigrant workers shows the so-called justice system is really a system that serves the ruling rich — the factory owners, landlords, and bankers."

Lea Sherman is a member of the International Association of Machinists and the Socialist Workers candidate for Congress in the 29th C.D.

San Francisco: Irish prisoners released on bail

BY NORTON SANDLER

SAN FRANCISCO — Irish freedom fighters Terry Kirby, Pol Brennan, and Kevin Barry Artt were released on bail here October 16 after spending the last 14 months in a federal prison awaiting extradition to Northern Ireland.

The bail came a week after a federal appellate court overturned a lower court ruling ordering the three returned to Northern Ireland under the terms of 1986 extradition treaty with the government of the United Kingdom. The appellate court sent the case back to the federal district court for a new trial. Kirby's bail was set at \$1 million, Artt's and Brennan's at \$500,000.

The U.S. government is indicating that they will continue to pursue extradition of the three, who are scheduled to appear in court again on November 13.

Kirby, Brennan, and Artt were among 38 republican prisoners who escaped from the

H-Block wing of the Long Kesh prison in Belfast, Northern Ireland, in 1983. Along with a fourth republican freedom fighter, Jimmy Smyth, they were arrested by the FBI in California between 1992 and 1996. They became known as the H-Block 4 and their cases received wide publicity internationally. Smyth was deported back to prison in Northern Ireland in 1996.

In overturning the earlier decision, the appellate court stated that the trial judge did not give proper consideration to the fact that Artt and Kirby's so-called "confessions" had been coerced during their original trials in Northern Ireland in British diplock (non-jury) proceedings.

In a telephone interview, Terry Kirby told the *Militant*, "This is not about us three guys, this victory is about the people of Northern Ireland. The great work they are doing gets results, including in the United States."

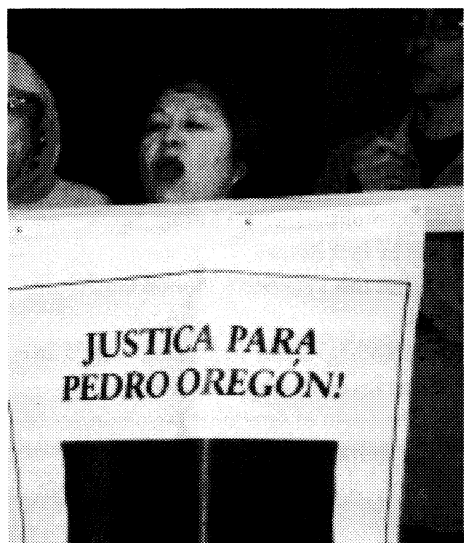
Commenting on his incarceration, Kirby

added, "Jail is jail, no matter where you are. None of us had charges against us in this country. We shouldn't have been in jail in the first place."

Kirby was also elated about the releases of other prisoners back in Northern Ireland under the terms of the peace accord. "I just heard that two women were released from jail and that both Jimmy Smyth and Joe Doherty were given preliminary reports — that means they are due out anytime now," he stated.

Doherty, like Smyth, was extradited to Northern Ireland from the United States after losing a several year legal battle to win political asylum in this country.

Norton Sandler is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 1781.



Militant/Barbara Graham
October 19 emergency protest in Houston, Texas, to condemn court's ruling in indicting only one of the six cops involved in the killing of Pedro Oregón July 12.

Why fighting workers and farmers need the 'Militant'

"The *Militant* is my window to a part of the world that rarely receives adequate and truthful coverage — the struggles of working people. It's inspiring to see my brothers and sisters around the world fighting back."

Dean Cook
Locked-out oil refinery worker



Dean Cook, left, campaigning to win support for fellow unionists locked out by Crown in Houston, Texas.

'Militant' supporters sell subs to farmers, meatpackers

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

"We left Des Moines the morning of October 17 and drove a 660-mile trip to an area in southwestern Kansas called the 'Golden Triangle,' where five huge meatpacking plants are located," report Joseph Feinberg and Amy Roberts. "The plants are located in three cities employing 10,000 workers who are predominantly Mexican."

Feinberg said they talked to packinghouse workers and an activist farmer during their trip as they sold 17 copies of the *Militant* and two subscriptions, and 14 copies of *Perspectiva Mundial* and one *PM* subscription. They also sold three Pathfinder titles, including the pamphlets *Farmers Face the Crisis of the 1990s* and *The 1985-86 Hormel Meat-*

and they're trying to kill us."

Feinberg and Roberts also reported that they met with Linda Hessman, a farmer who is an executive board member of the Kansas Farmers Union. "There are 17,000 farmers in the state, most of them facing crisis conditions due to low wheat prices. United with workers, they would make up a powerful political force."



From Birmingham, Alabama, Cindy Jacquith wrote, "We have two supporters on their way to western Kentucky to talk to coal miners about their struggles and introduce them to the *Militant*. And another team has just returned from a trip to Mississippi, where they visited a Black farmer activist who purchased a *Militant* subscription."

Jacquith said she set up a campaign table with Socialist Workers candidate for governor of Alabama Kristin Meriam at a fund-raiser at the University of Montevallo. "We had a big poster opposing imperialist intervention in Yugoslavia and one of the musicians announced our presence and urged people to stop by our table. Several students did, including two people who bought subscriptions to the *Militant*. One young man purchased a subscription and a copy of *The Truth about Yugoslavia* and another student expressed interest in joining the socialist candidates on a team to the picket line of United Auto Workers members at Peterbilt in Nashville, Tennessee."

Jacquith added that one socialist worker in the Steelworkers union sold a subscription to a fellow unionist after she spoke at her local union meeting about why the "anti-import" crusade promoted by the steel bosses is reactionary and against workers' interests.



"I'm on my way to the University of Florida at Gainesville to join a team from Miami for a two-day visit to that campus," wrote Dan Fein from Atlanta. "We have sold hundreds of dollars of Pathfinder books at the Sweet Auburn Street Festival here, including five copies of *New International*, three *Militant* subscriptions, and one copy of *Perspectiva Mundial*."

John Staggs from Philadelphia said supporters there received a big boost during their target week, selling nine new *Militant* subscriptions. "We sold a sub to a refinery worker who attended a meeting of 700 people that featured Sein Fein president Gerry Adams from Ireland. We also sold 40 copies of the paper and *New International* no. 11 at the event." Staggs reported another team of *Militant* supporters sold a copy of *NI* no. 11 to a driver at a bus barn of the Southeast Pennsylvania Transit Authority (SEPTA) that had been a major picketing site during the June strike of the Transit Workers Union against SEPTA.



"Three of my co-workers at Sterlingwear purchased subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial* this week," wrote Greg McCartan from Boston. "Two of them participated in the recent meeting with Norberto Codina and wanted to get a monthly socialist paper that included coverage of Cuba in addition to labor struggles."

"The third unionist, who joins in the shop floor struggles we have sometimes, wasn't able to hear Codina that day. I am trying to get around to others who participated to see if anyone else is interested in buying a book, paper, or subscription after the brief exchange. It was a very serious question and answer period. Clearly, people want to learn more about Cuba and get a different point of view. At least where I work I'm finding that a lot of the younger-than-30 generation doesn't know much about Cuba and mainly have a lot of questions about the big-business, Spanish-language media."



Socialists sell *Militant* and Pathfinder books at demonstration during general strike in Norway.

Packers Strike in Austin, Minnesota.

The two socialist workers report various struggles over the past few years have left some plants unionized and others nonunion. "We sold the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* at the Excel meatpacking plant, at National Beef in Dodge City, and at the IBP plant in Garden City," they wrote. "We also went door to door in working-class neighborhoods with the socialist press and spoke with people about the conditions in the plants."

"One worker told us, 'The bosses want more every day. They're never happy. I think the supervisors get bonuses

SUBSCRIPTION DRIVE September 12 – November 8 MILITANT/PERSPECTIVA MUNDIAL/NEW INT'L

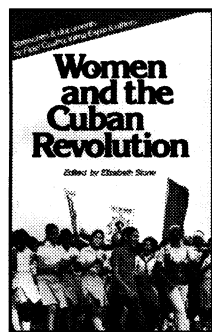
	Militant			PM		NI	
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
United Kingdom							
Manchester	24	13	54%	2	4	15	0
London	40	20	50%	10	8	60	51
UK total	64	33	52%	12	12	75	51
United States							
Philadelphia	35	26	74%	8	2	30	22
Atlanta*	35	24	69%	12	10	40	29
Chicago	65	39	60%	25	17	58	53
Des Moines*	45	25	56%	25	14	35	16
Detroit	45	25	56%	10	7	40	30
Newark, NJ	120	66	55%	40	25	100	81
Pittsburgh	40	22	55%	6	7	45	15
Seattle	70	38	54%	20	11	70	39
Washington, D.C.	45	24	53%	15	18	45	36
New York*	140	72	51%	60	40	140	104
Houston	35	17	49%	10	1	43	17
Los Angeles	90	43	48%	45	17	70	45
Miami	40	18	45%	20	8	40	32
Birmingham, AL	50	20	40%	6	2	40	23
Cleveland	35	12	34%	10	4	30	23
Twin Cities, MN	65	22	34%	10	3	45	31
Boston	35	10	29%	20	8	35	25
San Francisco*	95	28	29%	38	22	90	74
Santa Cruz	10			5			
U.S. total	1085	531	49%	380	216	996	695
New Zealand							
Christchurch	18	8	44%	1	0	15	7
Auckland	28	14	50%	1	1	25	21
N.Z. total	46	22	48%	2	1	40	28
Australia							
	16	7	44%	3	2	18	9
Canada							
Toronto	40	18	45%	5	2	50	42
Vancouver	40	12	30%	5	1	40	35
Montreal	25	7	28%	10	7	40	20
Canada total	105	37	35%	20	10	130	97
Sweden							
	16	5	31%	8	8	25	21
Iceland							
	8	2	25%	1		4	
France							
	5	0	0%	3	3	25	17
Int'l totals	1345	637	49%	429	252	1313	918
Goal/Should be	1300	813	63%	400	250	1300	813
*raised goal							

IN THE UNIONS

Country/Union	Militant			PM		NI	
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
United States							
UAW	40	26	65%	5	1	20	13
IAM	70	38	54%	20	12	70	39
UFCW	10	5	50%	13	7	11	4
USWA	65	26	40%	15	5	25	8
UTU	45	13	29%	3	1	40	9
OCAW	24	6	25%	4	0	12	1
UNITE	5	0	0%	7	7	5	0
U.S. total	259	114	44%	67	33	183	74
Australia							
AMWU	3	1	33%			4	0
TCFU							
Australia total	3	1	33%			4	0
Canada							
CAW*	5	1	20%		1	6	1
USWA	5	1	20%		1	6	1
IAM	8	2	13%	2	0	9	1
Canada total	18	4	17%	2	2	21	3
New Zealand							
EU	4	1	25%			2	0
MMU	1	0	0%			1	0
SFWU	2	0	0%				
N.Z. total	7	1	14%			3	0
Sweden							
OBS	1			1		1	
United Kingdom							
AEEU	4	0				5	0
RMT	5	0				5	1
TGWU	5	0				3	0
UK total	14	0				13	1

AEEU — Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Workers Union; AMWU — Amalgamated Manufacturers Union; CAW — Canadian Auto Workers Union; EU — Engineers Union; MMU — 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; UFBGWU — 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.

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and others

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Socialist Workers candidates in Florida oppose death penalty, gun control measures

BY ANGEL LARISCY
AND BILL KALMAN

MIAMI — "Amendment no. 2 would make it easier for the government to use the death penalty as a weapon of terror and intimidation against the working class, particularly Blacks and immigrants," declared Shirley Peña, the Socialist Workers candidate for Lt. Governor of Florida. "Our campaign calls for the abolition of the death penalty and for working people to vote 'No' on Amendment no. 2."

The reaffirmation of the death penalty is one of 13 proposed changes to the Florida state constitution that will be on the November 3 ballot here. Four amendments are being proposed by the state legislature and nine revisions to existing amendments were drawn up by a Constitution Revision Commission. Amendment no. 2 proposes to amend the section of the state constitution that outlaws cruel and unusual punishment, by explicitly writing into law that "the death penalty is an authorized punishment for capital crimes designated by the Legislature."

Peña and Socialist Workers candidate for governor Ernest Mailhot explain that this measure would also be used to cut back the amount of already shrinking legal space available to condemned prisoners. Florida has the second-highest execution rate in the country after Texas. Last year it was revealed that nearly one-fourth of death row inmates released nationally after having their convictions overturned were freed in Florida.

"The ruling class continues to attempt to establish a legal basis for their class oppression and intimidation of working people," Peña remarked.

For the same reason, the Socialist Workers candidates are opposing a measure to tighten gun control laws. "Revision no. 12 will be used to undermine the democratic right of workers to defend themselves," Mailhot said. "For this reason alone we stand foursquare against this proposal."

Revision no. 12, the proposed revision to the constitution on firearms, reads, "Each county shall have the authority to require a criminal history records check and a three to five-day waiting period, excluding weekends and legal holidays, in connection with the sale of any firearm occurring within such county."

The proposed revision would give also give county governments the option of requiring a criminal history check of gun-buyers. "Giving any government body or agency free reign to pry into the lives and 'records' of working people, which may very well include arrests and incarceration for strikes and social protests, is a dangerous proposal," said Mailhot. "The capitalist government will use any excuse to hype up the 'fight on crime' to attack our democratic rights," he said. Mailhot further pointed out that sensationalized investigations into violent shootings and bombings are used to undermine important, hard-won rights like presumption of innocence, the right to due process, protection from illegal search and seizure, freedom of association and the right to privacy, and protection from police informers, spies, and agent provocateurs.

Most of the 13 amendments and the proposed revisions are not matters that workers should pay much attention to — they simply don't mean a great deal in politics today and in fact are a distraction from the real issues facing our class. "The working-class has nothing to say about how the bosses 'modernize' their antilabor government," explained Mailhot. "Any ballot initiative, referendum, and constitution revision that socialists take a stand on should be of substantial interest to the workers movement."

The Florida Socialist Workers campaign is taking "no position" on 10 of the proposals. "Despite the titles of some of these proposals," Mailhot said, "none of them advance the fight to abolish taxes on working people; to stop the deterioration of the environment at the hands of Big Sugar and the timber barons; to maintain and extend fully funded public, secular education for working people into adulthood; or to advance the fight to defend the hard-won gains of Blacks and women."

For example, Florida socialists are taking no position on the passage of a state Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). The proposal adds the words "female and male alike" and changes "physical handicap" to "physical disability" in the constitution. It keeps intact, however, a provision in the Basic Rights amendment that states, "the ownership, inheritance, disposition and possession of real property by aliens ineligible for citizenship may be regulated or prohibited by law."

The socialist candidates are calling for a "No" vote on Revision no. 11, which is also called the "Fair Ballot Access Proposal." This amendment is supported by a wide range of organizations, including Common

Cause Florida, the American Civil Liberties Union of Florida, Libertarian Party, Reform Party, Natural Law Party, American Reform Party, and Socialist Party of Florida.

The measure would change the petitioning requirements for statewide office from 3 percent of the total number of registered voters in the state (242,336 signatures) to 3 percent of the party having the largest number of registered voters (110,664 signatures).

Common Cause had urged the Florida Socialist Workers Party to support Revision no. 11, saying it would "end the discrimination in Florida law that makes it extremely difficult for minor party and independent candidates to get on the ballot."

In a written response for the Florida Socialist Workers Party, Bill Kalman explained, "Any real reform of the state's undemocratic ballot access laws should be aimed at overturning both the restrictive petitioning requirements and exorbitant filing fees. Forcing third parties to collect over 100,000 signatures to run for governor or U.S. Senate is not a real reform and does nothing to end the discrimination that exists."

At a meeting of The Society for Cultural Revolution at Florida International University on October 20, Ernest Mailhot participated in a discussion on ballot rights and third parties along with Tom Regnier, vice chair of the Libertarian Party of Florida.

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

Susan LaMont, U.S. Senate, (USWA)
Kristin Meriam, Governor, (USWA)
George Williams, Lt. Governor, (UAW)
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)

GEORGIA

Dan Fein, U.S. Senate, (UFCW)
James Harris, Governor, (UTU)
Arlene Rubenstein, U.S. Congress — 4th CD, (IAM)
Paul Cornish, U.S. Congress — 5th CD, (USWA), YS

ILLINOIS

Alyson Kennedy, U.S. Senate, (OCAW)
John Studer, Governor, (USWA)

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

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 Garmendia, Governor
Gary Boyers, Lt. Governor, (USWA)
Holly Harkness*, U.S. Congress — 15th CD
John Sarge, U.S. Congress, (UAW)

MINNESOTA

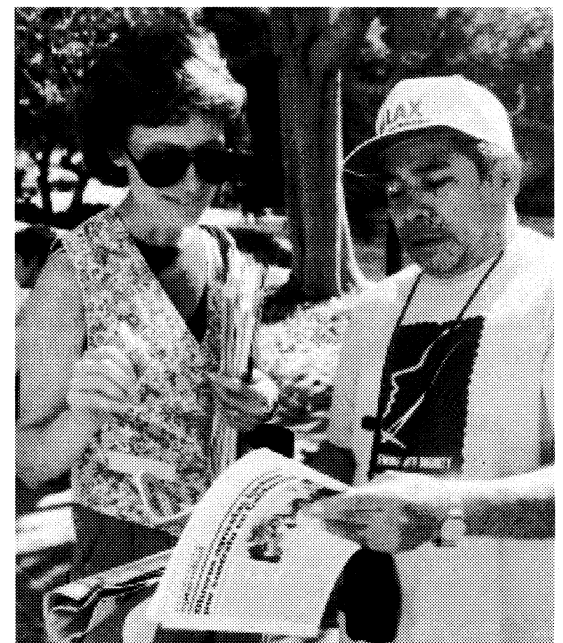
Tom Fiske*, Governor, (IAM)
John Hawkins*, Lt. Governor (USWA)
Heather Wood*, U.S. Congress — 4th CD (USWA), YS
Michael Pennock*, U.S. Congress — 5th CD, (OCAW)

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



Militant/Carole Lesnick
Gale Shangold, Socialist Workers candidate for governor of California at October 11 protest in Los Angeles against anti-immigrant attacks.

Susan Anmuth*, U.S. Congress — 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

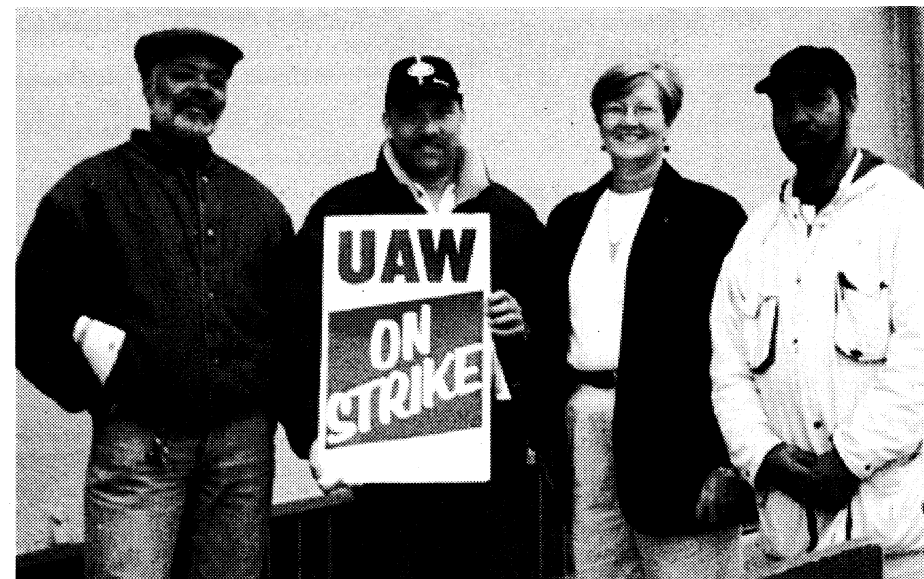
Laura Garza, Governor, (IAM)
Lea Sherman*, U.S. Congress — 29th CD, (IAM)
Patti Iiyama, U.S. Congress — 25th CD, (OCAW)

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)



Militant/Don Mackle
Ruth Robinett, Socialist Workers candidate for lieutenant governor in New York, at picket with Standard Motors strikers in early October.

'Art is richer and more diverse in Cuba today,' Cuban editor says in Minnesota

BY TOM FISKE

MINNEAPOLIS — "In challenging times man most needs spiritual values. This is reflected in art and film in Cuba. A lot more space for art has been gained. The art is richer and more diverse in Cuba today than previously." This was a central theme in an October 14-16 visit to the Minneapolis-St. Paul area by Norberto Codina, accomplished Cuban poet and editor of *La Gaceta de Cuba*, the magazine of the National Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba.

At three public meetings Codina focused much of his remarks on the relationship between art and culture in Cuba today and the struggle for socialism. He developed his points in the form of a dialogue with his audience by answering questions. The events were held at the University of Minnesota, the Riverview branch of the St. Paul Public Library, and CreArte, a gallery for Chicano and Latino artists here.

"A lot of poetry is read and circulated in Cuba today," Codina said in response to a leader of the Friends of the St. Paul Public Library, who asked what themes and topics are being written about in Cuba today. "Poetry helps us to be better. The role that poets play is the same in the United States and in Latin America. They are needed to understand our own identity."

"The economic challenges facing Cuba have affected all of culture," noted Codina in response to a question at the University of Minnesota about the effects of what Cu-

bans call the Special Period. "We have faced a combination of three factors — the U.S. embargo, the cut-off in trade with the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries, and the international economic crisis. The art schools have suffered for lack of money. All the paints, the musical instruments, and so forth now have to be bought with dollars. This difficult situation has actually brought out more contributions by those who care about art. And the economic crisis has helped to bring out the creative powers of the artists."

Criticism strengthens revolution

At a couple of meetings Codina was asked if the role of the writer was to defend or to criticize the Cuban revolution. "I think to criticize is the best way to defend the revolution," he stated. "Of course I am opposed to criticism for the sake of criticism or for the sake of tearing down the accomplishments of the revolution. Cuba is a society which is transitional towards socialism."

"Che Guevara dealt with these ideas in the 1960s when he criticized socialist realism and when he criticized government officials for judging the tastes of the Cuban people," Codina added.

"Culture has a very significant weight in a country like Cuba with a background of underdevelopment," the Cuban poet said in response to the question how art and writing have changed from the time before the revolution. "Cuba is fighting to develop more

culture, including to develop its economy. However, culture is not a product for privileged minorities as it is in capitalist countries."

To initiate his presentations at the University of Minnesota and the St. Paul library, Codina read several of his poems. In both audiences there were questions about what he intended to convey. Arrin Hawkins, a young activist and student at the University of Minnesota, asked about a very brief poem, entitled "The Mayflower Pilgrims."

Down the anchor rope and ties
right over the copper discs
descended the rats
also unknown among the Delawares.

Was the poet's main intention to speak about genocide against the Native Americans? Codina replied, "There is a synthesis in the poem. It is not only about the genocide. I was thinking of the native peoples who were seeing the Europeans arrive, how strange they must have looked and how they brought a number of diseases. I was thinking how it's in the name of civilization that there have been so many evils."

Atmosphere of artistic freedom

Participants at all three meetings asked about the atmosphere of artistic freedom in Cuba and the extent of government censorship. At the art gallery event Codina replied, "This is spoken of many times outside of Cuba in a very distorted way and in a manner intended to harm the revolution.... In Cuba there exists much less censorship than in the 1970s. There is also more freedom of

expression than five years ago when the film *Strawberry and Chocolate* was produced. Freedom of artistic expression in Cuba is related to the problem of cultural prejudices. There has been a constant struggle between the two."

Codina got a big laugh of recognition when he further explained that a masked form of censorship of art exists in "democratic" capitalist countries like the United States today. "Art for the wealthy is a form of censorship as well. To watch the two Spanish-language TV networks here is to see censorship at its most alienating." Univision and Telemundo are notorious for their programming of silly and uninformative shows.

Sixty people attended the largest of the meetings at the CreArte art gallery. Thirty attended the library meeting, which was publicized extensively by the Friends of the St. Paul Public Library as part of a series featuring Chicano and Latino writers. Forty attended the meeting at the University of Minnesota, which was sponsored by a number of academic departments, including Theater Arts and Dance, Spanish and Portuguese, American Studies Program, English, Afro-American and African Studies, Chicano Studies, and the College of Liberal Arts Scholarly Events Fund.

A significant percentage of those attending the three meetings were artists and writers in the Twin Cities area. The Minnesota Cuba Committee, a group of students, professors, workers, and activists who carry out activity in defense of the Cuban revolution in the Twin Cities area, helped build all three events.

The article below appeared in the Oct. 15, 1998, issue of the *City on a Hill Press*, a weekly paper at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

Ashwin S. Gandbhiri
Multicultural Desk Writer

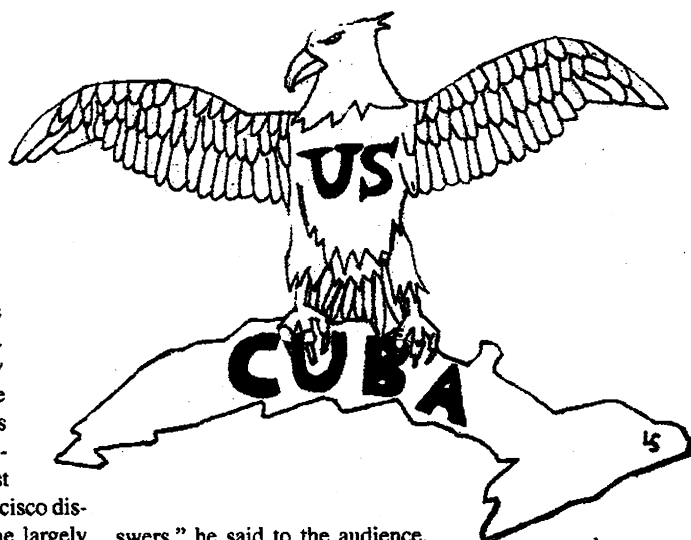
One day after the 10th anniversary of Latin American revolutionary and socialist icon Che Guevara's death, Cuban poet Norberto Codina Boeras spoke at UC Santa Cruz's Oakes College, Oct. 9.

Approximately eighty people filled the Guzman room at Oakes College, and representatives from a socialist bookstore in San Francisco distributed literature. The largely Latino audience included professors as well as students. The back corner of the room was transformed into a memorial altar for Che Guevara. "Che [Guevara] always appears in the most incredible places," Codina told the audience.

Born in Caracas, Venezuela, Codina has lived and worked in Cuba since the Cuban revolution. He has won numerous Cuban literary awards and is the editor of *La Gaceta de Cuba*, Cuba's premier arts and literature magazine. The UCSC chapter of the Young Socialists organized the visit of the Cuban poet with the support of the Latin American and Latino Studies department.

Codina said the day was too beautiful for a formal atmosphere. "I will take advantage of such a beautiful day and your presence to share some poetry," he said. As the presentation got underway, the formal atmosphere dissipated and Codina addressed even the most serious topics in a relaxed manner. After the poetry, he opened the floor to discussion, and said he would love to entertain all questions. "A man's life is made up more of questions than of an-

(The on-line edition of the paper corrected the date of Che Guevara's death, which was 31 years ago on Oct. 9, 1967.)



swers," he said to the audience. The audience responded with a variety of questions for the Cuban poet, including questions about Fidel Castro, Che Guevara, and the Zapatista movement in Mexico. The room filled with laughter as he said, "Many of these questions are themselves worthy of an entire conference." Nonetheless, Codina answered all questions.

The majority of student and faculty questions surrounded Cuba and its future. "I think Cuba has an enormous challenge — to preserve the basic successes of *La Revolucion*, as well as evolving and transforming as a whole society," Codina told the audience. "It will be difficult for Cuba to survive economically in a hostile world," Codina told the audience. And in terms of the rising tourist industry in Cuba, Codina said, "tourism has a high social cost in poor countries. Many [American tourists] go to the tropics with a conquistador mentality — like Tarzan with a visa," he said. However, according to Codina, the will of the Cuban people to survive and persevere in a world which has not made it easy for the small Caribbean island, will overcome hostile forces.

Codina encouraged people to broaden their awareness of

Latin America. J.P. Drysdale, an audience member, found Codina's discussion informative. "I didn't know much about Cuba but I'm learning more," Drysdale told *City on a Hill Press*. "I've always seen [the political state of] Cuba as an example of what people can do if they put their minds' to it."

Event organizer Omari Musa told *City on a Hill Press* he senses a growing discontent with politics, as well as a heightened awareness of international political issues in the US. "Economic crisis is coming home," he said to *City on a Hill Press*. "The United States is entering a profound economic and social crisis, so we have growing interest [in politics]," Musa said. And as for the nature of student activism: "When the whole tree gets shaken up, the leaves start stirring first," Musa said. "That's what students are, the leaves."

Boston garment workers meet Codina



Militant/Margrethe Siem

Cuban editor Norberto Codina (left) with workers at Sterlingwear garment shop

BY GREG MCCARTAN

BOSTON — Cuban editor and poet Norberto Codina spoke to 40 garment workers here as part of a three-day visit to the city. Members of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees at Sterlingwear, a manufacturer of military coats, met with Codina during two 30-minute lunch breaks October 6.

Lucelly Meléndez, a sewing machine operator, told Codina of several shop floor struggles the workers have waged. The union put out a flyer demanding that workers be treated with respect, which many posted next to their machines, she said. The effort forced the bosses to agree they would stop yelling at workers on the job. After talking with the Cuban editor about the struggles, Meléndez said she was impressed because "he defends the workers and the union. He clearly supported our fight against discrimination."

Several workers asked Codina about the effects of the U.S. embargo of Cuba; what the role is of the unions in a socialist country; what is the difference between socialism and capitalism; and what he thought about Cuban president Fidel Castro.

"It was good to learn something about Cuba," said José Colón after the event. "I learned workers don't pay taxes there and how Cuba is able to provide schooling and medical care for everyone. I wanted to ask about the elections and how Fidel Castro stays in as president, but we ran out of time."

Carlos Hernández said he came away with

the impression that "everyone in Cuba works hard together for the same goal. He explained how the U.S. embargo is no good. I think the same thing."

Greg McCartan is a member of UNITE Local 1 in Boston.

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Meeting celebrates life of Paul Montauk, 60-year cadre of Socialist Workers Party

BY JIM ALTENBERG

OAKLAND, California — "Paul Montauk was a veteran cadre of the Socialist Workers Party," said SWP national secretary Jack Barnes. The term cadre is important, he explained. It refers to a core group of trained, experienced personnel who train and lead others. To forge a cadre takes time and effort. It links individuals and generations. The word originates in military terminology, which makes sense since every political question today will ultimately be settled in combat.

Some 170 people gathered at the Amalgamated Transit Union hall here October 18 to celebrate the life of Paul Montauk, a 60-year cadre of the SWP. Montauk died September 29 at age 76 of complications of pneumonia. People who had worked and fought alongside of Montauk over decades came from around California, and from as far away as Miami, New York, Chicago, Seattle, Minneapolis, and Vancouver. Many of Paul's relatives were present, including his wife, Mary Lou, and his daughters, Susan and Juliette. Around three dozen people sent messages to the meeting, some of which were read aloud as part of the program. (An article on Montauk's life and political contributions appeared in the October 12 issue of the *Militant*.)

Norton Sandler, organizer of the Socialist Workers Party branch in the San Francisco Bay Area, welcomed participants on behalf of the party branch. He said that Montauk had become active in politics as a teenager, when he joined protests against fascist Jersey City mayor Frank Hague and his goons in 1937. This experience would never be lost on Montauk. "He looked the fascists in the face in New Jersey at 17 and knew what would happen if they won," Barnes pointed out. He learned in the face of Hague's cops and thugs that you had to organize without amateurism, and in such a way that you knew you could count on your fellow fighters completely. Paul joined the SWP in 1939. His political life spanned six decades, and remained inseparable from the priorities and activities of the party.

Sandler recognized two Irish freedom activists who were at the meeting, John Fogarty and Kate Boyle, both of the Irish American Unity Conference, a group that has been in the forefront of defense of the "H-Block 3," Irish political prisoners facing extradition from the United States to Northern Ireland. Two days earlier Terry Kirby, Kevin Barry Artt, and Pol Brennan had been released on bail pending a new extradition trial (see article on page 4). Sandler read a



Cover of March-April 1965 issue of *Young Socialist* magazine gives picture of the rising struggles Montauk and other SWP cadres responded to. Above, Paul and Mary Lou Montauk around that time.

letter that Kirby sent to the meeting, which began, "I wish to extend my condolences to the family, friends, and comrades of Paul Montauk. I know he was a true soldier in the struggle for peace and justice not only in Northern Ireland but everywhere we fight oppression."

Also recognized was meeting participant Jackie Santos, a fighter for Puerto Rican independence and an activist in Comité '98, an organization that promotes the Puerto Rican independence struggle.

Part of proletarian core of SWP branch

Paul Montauk had a positive impact on many young people who joined the communist movement in the early 1960s, Mary-Alice Waters told the meeting. Waters, editor of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist*, had moved to Berkeley, California in 1963 to enter graduate school at the University of California and build the Young Socialist Alliance there. She worked with Montauk during those tumultuous years, and joined the Oakland/Berkeley branch of the SWP.

The Oakland/Berkeley branch was not particularly strong, Waters explained, but like most branches it included a proletarian core

of cadres who were decisive in winning radicalizing youth to communist politics. "Paul and Mary Lou Montauk were examples of the stability and continuity of the communist movement," Waters said.

They helped make possible the transformation of the Young Socialist Alliance into a nationwide, influential revolutionary youth organization that was part of the growing youth radicalization and movement against the Vietnam War that was soon to come.

The YSA from its inception had an inseparable connection to defense of the Cuban revolution, Waters noted. That together with the defense of the "Bloomington 3" forged the YSA as a centralized revolutionary youth organization that decided upon and carried out common campaigns effectively and professionally.

In May, 1963, three members of the YSA in Bloomington, Indiana, were charged under a state anti-Communist law with "sedition" for their political activity on the University of Indiana campus. They had held protests in defense of Cuba during the October 1962 "missile crisis," and had been viciously attacked for it. The YSA around the country immediately threw themselves into a campaign to get all charges dropped against the "Bloomington 3," as they came to be known. They raised thousands of dollars over the four-year long campaign, which ended in victory.

Waters described how the YSA worked with others to raise funds for the defense fight in the Bay Area, including benefits by the San Francisco Mime Troupe.

The Bloomington case was also part of the growing fight to challenge restrictions on free speech and political activity that were enforced on many campuses, explained Waters. The high point of the fight was in Berkeley, where administration bans on so-called off campus political activity led to a Free Speech Movement that included mass sit-ins and rallies of up to 18,000 people. YSA members were central leaders of the Free Speech Movement, and Montauk played an important role in turning the cadres of the SWP toward the developing campus struggles.

Antiwar movement and Black struggle

What was happening in Berkeley was part of international developments, Waters noted. The year 1964 began with anti-imperialist demonstrations in what was then known as the Canal Zone, a U.S. colonial enclave surrounding the Panama Canal. A workers and farmers government had been established in Algeria. The Cuban Revolution was consolidating itself, and its impact was reverberating throughout Latin America. Nelson Mandela was on trial for taking up armed struggle against the racist South African government. Malcolm X had broken with the Nation of Islam, and young fighters challenged segregation in the Freedom Summer campaign. In the Bay Area, there were battles over desegregation and affirmative action.

Struggles like these, which would deepen in the following year with the beginnings of the anti-Vietnam War movement, opened the

way to renew the Socialist Workers Party after the long retreat of the 1950s. Montauk became a leader of the Vietnam Day Committee, a group on the Berkeley campus that organized a 36-hour teach-in on the war that drew crowds of 12,000 people. All who wanted to debate the war were invited to participate. Unlike the SWP and YSA, the Communist Party declined to participate, saying that their presence would hurt the movement. The U.S. State Department was also invited but did not show.

As young opponents of the war worked through the problems of building the anti-war movement, Paul paid close attention to discussing politics and recruiting the activist youth to the YSA. This continued to be true through the decade, as battles opened for Black and Chicano studies raged at San Francisco State University and the anti-war movement grew in size and influence.

As Waters explained, it was not obvious at the time that the party would be in the thick of these fights. There was resistance from some in the party whose habits and expectations had been shaped by a political period of little opportunity for activity and recruitment. Montauk was one of the cadres who pointed the party toward the youth. He did it with enthusiasm and the serious, professional attitude that a revolutionary cadre aims to instill in others. He understood that the dog days were over.

Waters concluded her remarks by pointing out that in the 1960s, student youth were moving into action ahead of the working class, whose organizations remained on the sidelines of the unfolding struggles in the United States. Today, for the first time since the 1940s, the working class is ahead of the students. Resistance among workers and in the trade unions themselves has begun to spread, and opportunities for young people to participate in political activity in the working class can be found everywhere. Conditions are better today than in the 1960s to win students and other youth to a proletarian party. Montauk was always confident that this would occur, and in the last years of his life he turned toward the young people coming around the Young Socialists with the same enthusiasm and seriousness that he had three decades prior.

'Youth can emulate Paul's conduct'

Samantha Kern spoke on behalf of the National Executive Committee of the Young Socialists. Kern is California state organizer of the YS.

Kern explained that she had learned a great deal about Montauk's life from reading about it in the *Militant*. She said Paul showed how communists can politically respond and function as revolutionaries during wartime. As a young person facing the coming horror that would be World War II, Montauk adopted pacifist views. But he became convinced politically that revolutionaries had to do political work in the military, where millions of other working-class youth would be drafted. Later, he organized against the Vietnam War. "Young people," Kern said, "can emulate his conduct in relation to imperialist war."

"Paul's life," she said, "was an example for all young workers who deeply feel the alienation of working under capitalism. He was one of the first communists I ever met.

'A recruiter to proletarian politics'

Below are excerpts from a few of the messages read to the October 18 meeting celebrating the political contributions of Paul Montauk.

Paul was someone who was a recruiter, in my case to proletarian politics and the proletarian party. This was the main thing. It was a case of patiently explaining over time as the occasions arose in our activity. I must say I don't think of Paul as ever having lectured me.

It was he who broke me from bourgeois norms about money. That is, putting the party first in terms of money, too. You decide pledges based first on considering the party's needs, not your budget first and then pledging what's left over....

The YSA had to have a proletarian standard [of dress]. I can still hear him saying this — we dress conservatively because the workers demand respectability. He explained workers get dirty at work and clean up afterward and dress as well as possible when not engaged in alienated labor.

Andrea Morrell

Paul Montauk was the first adult I met who supported the Cuban Revolution. It was late 1962 or early 1963, and the Civil Rights movement and Cuba were beginning to have an impact on my generation.

Student radical groups were tiny, isolated and fractured by internal factionalism, including the Young Socialist Alliance.... But two things stood out about the YSA. One was its enthusiastic support of the Cuban Revolution and the second was its association with the Socialist Workers Party. It was impressive to me that there was an organization that had a life outside the student milieu, where people, even some gray-haired people, had devoted their lives to socialist ideas.

Syd Stapleton

The H-Block Three's recent release from federal prison in Camp Parks, CA, after 14 months is proof of the power of the peace process we have all struggled so hard to create and maintain.

Paul was indeed one of us. I am especially grateful to Paul's wife Mary Lou Montauk, who, with so many others stood with the H-block prisoners, both here in America and in Northern Ireland. This solidarity sustained us.

Additionally, I am grateful to the *Militant* newspaper for telling our side and for promoting our case worldwide in the face of British government lies.

Please excuse my absence, I hope to meet and thank you all in the very near future.

Terrence Kirby

Meeting a communist who had dedicated his entire life to building a party that could lead workers and farmers to victory had a big impact on me."

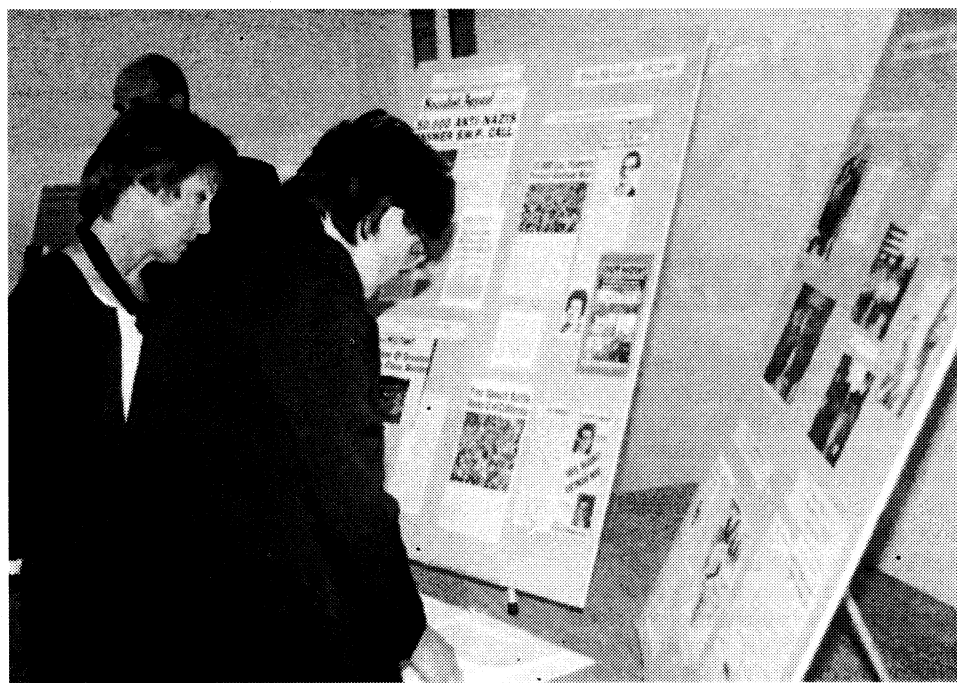
Kern pointed out that one of the last public political meetings Paul attended was a YS west coast regional conference, which took place September 5-6. He later said that this was one of the most important political meetings he'd attended in years, and made even clearer the need for the San Francisco SWP branch to put all its effort to winning youth to the communist movement.

In a message sent to the meeting Joel Britton, an oil worker and a leader of the SWP's trade union work, stated, "Confidence. Confidence in his beliefs, in his class and in its organized vanguard. That is what comes to mind when I think about my encounters with Paul over a span of three decades."

Paul was a founding member of the SWP's Oakland branch, arriving here in 1946 and immediately jumping into labor struggles and broader political activity, Osborne Hart told participants at the memorial meeting. Hart, a member of the San Francisco branch of the SWP and the United Transportation Union, worked alongside Montauk in the party's national office in the late 1970s as well as in San Francisco over the past six years.

In the '70s, the SWP and YSA were deeply involved in a number of anti-racist struggles, including fights around affirmative action and the battle to desegregate the Boston schools, as well as the campus movement against the apartheid regime in South Africa. Montauk had a deep appreciation of the revolutionary significance of the fight of the Black nationality in U.S. politics, Hart explained. He organized working people in public housing projects and fought police brutality in Oakland, joining with others in 1947 to win the shutdown of the West Oakland Lock-up, a jail known for police violence against Blacks.

As a member of the Detroit branch of the SWP, Montauk was part of the campaign in 1955-56 to raise funds for cars for use by



Displays at the meeting depicted some of the events of the class struggle over the six decades of Paul Montauk's political life. Above, participants check out the displays and a book of messages sent to the meeting from Montauk's friends and comrades.

Black civil rights fighters in Montgomery, Alabama, during the bus boycott.

Over the last few years, Paul staffed the Pathfinder Bookstore in San Francisco every Saturday, Hart said. He did so as the reliable, professional cadre he had become. He would be there promptly, and used his time there well to show anyone who came in to the books and articles in the *Militant* that would help them understand their political questions.

Proletarian habits and attitudes

Jack Barnes pointed to the example Paul Montauk set for revolutionary fighters. Montauk sought to promote through everything he did the proletarian habits, attitudes, values identified with the revolutionary, self-sacrificing cadres who had led the Minneapolis Teamsters strikes and the SWP in the 1930s. He knew that the party consisted of numerous generations, who worked together at politics. Young people had enormous energy, Barnes explained, but they could not be recruited to communism without an organization spanning many political generations. Montauk reached out especially to the young people coming around the SWP and the youth organizations associated with it, to work with them, discuss politics, and

seek to demonstrate through his own example what it meant to become a cadre of the revolutionary movement.

Montauk explained tirelessly that character traits have a class character. Even after a devastating economic collapse or war, the blind laws of capitalism will recreate the same setup again without any conscious effort. The working class cannot win with the character traits of the bourgeoisie, Barnes said. There are proletarian values and habits, that must be consciously learned, created, and put into practice in the struggle if capitalist society is not to undermine the working class by its daily operation.

Barnes pointed to the letter that Andrea Morrell, a rail worker in Boston, sent to the meeting. "Paul's example as a worker-Bolshevik who really put the party first, especially in difficult things or things we are taught are difficult, like money," she wrote.

Paul remained firmly convinced, Barnes explained, that the human material that made up the party consisted of ordinary, common people who made an effort, who worked at becoming revolutionary cadres. There are no special individuals who are born to the task. Individuals decide to be political and work at it, often, as Montauk himself experienced, in the face of tremendous pressure

to retreat.

In a political debate or discussion, Montauk sought to provide the books and materials to allow for common study of the questions involved. He was a "gatherer," Barnes said, gathering in one place the historical experience on a given topic. The scope of this work is significant. In the late 1970s, serving in the party's national education department, he helped collect material for numerous "Education for Socialists" booklets containing reprints of important political documents and writings on political questions.

Although Paul and most others of his generation did not go into industrial plants when the party turned to the new openings to carry out revolutionary work in the trade unions at the end of the 1970s, this turn to the industrial working class was an effort of the whole party. Montauk joined with others in reconquering and advancing the Marxist approach to a whole range of political questions posed to the party at the time: the workers and farmers government; the course of the Cuban Revolution; women and the revolutionary movement; the social weight of the Black struggle; the writings of Lenin, and much more. Much of the party's accumulated knowledge and experience was not lost due to Montauk and others like him.

The meeting closed with a presentation by Dave Prince, who explained that Pathfinder Press is seeking to acquire advanced computer-to-plate equipment that will drastically lower the labor time required to publish the attractive, professional books and pamphlets working people need today. He urged people to contribute to a Capital Fund of \$550,000, which would enable this equipment to be purchased and previous debts be repaid. Contributions were made at the meeting of \$7,200. Nearly \$70,000 more toward the down payment on the equipment was raised on the West Coast before and after the meeting.

Jim Altenberg is a member of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers.

Collection honoring Montauk spurs \$550,000 capital fund

BYNAOMICRAINE

OAKLAND, California — "The next steps are upon us to advance the distribution of Pathfinder books and make it possible to keep them in print, in order to meet the expanding opportunities to get them into the hands of militant workers and revolutionary-minded youth," said Dave Prince in a special presentation to the meeting here celebrating the life and political contributions of Paul Montauk. "To take these next steps we need to raise \$550,000 in capital." Prince is the director of the capital fund.

Of this sum, \$350,000 is rapidly needed to purchase state-of-the-art computer-to-plate (CTP) equipment that will "make it possible to produce the books with a drastic cut in labor time and materials costs. We can do more work at higher quality with a smaller printshop, bringing it to the size we can sustain," Prince said.

An additional \$200,000 is needed pay off outstanding loans for the web press the *Militant* is printed on and two Heidelberg sheet-fed presses used to produce Pathfinder books.

Presenting this campaign to raise capital at a meeting celebrating the life of Paul Montauk was "very fitting," Prince said. As many speakers stressed, Paul knew the value of books. He "recognized the indispensable place of the hard-won experiences of the working class concretized in the 350 books and pamphlets published by Pathfinder."

Keeping these books in print is a joint effort of the socialist cadre who volunteer in the printshop and some 140 supporters of the communist movement who have volunteered to convert the entire Pathfinder arsenal into digital files. Many comrades and friends who came to the meeting for Montauk are part of that effort.

"Volunteers are now sending in completely digitized books, with the cover, graphics, and formatted text all on one compact disk," Prince noted. The computer-to-plate system

will allow workers in the printshop to use these files to prepare plates for the presses without the massive amounts of highly skilled manual labor previously needed. This makes it possible for a smaller staff to produce quick, high quality reprints in short runs.

There's a lot more involved than just bringing in new equipment. "The cadre in the press and bindery departments are in the midst of organizing themselves to carry one of the most far-reaching and radical transformations ever in how the shop is organized," Prince said.

Recently there has been a big drop in commercial sales, which the shop needs to stay in business and keep up necessary skills for producing Pathfinder books. The leadership in the shop did not face quickly enough the training needed to sell work produced digitally and then get it through production. In face of this crisis, the volunteers who run the presses and bindery — where the printed pages are turned into books — began taking initiatives to implement the training program that had previously been discussed and decided. They took the lead in finding ways for more and more members of the shop staff to begin learning to sell printing work and prepare the digital files to meet production needs. Cadre in the shop take written tests to qualify on each responsibility.

Two days before the meeting here "we signed the purchase order for the air conditioner and duct work needed to install the CTP equipment," Prince said. "A special 'Red Weekend' is being organized November 13-15 to prepare the site for the installation. A few volunteers are needed the week or so beforehand to do preliminary wiring, carpentry, and other work."

One of the displays at the meeting showed the manufacturer's information on the AGFA Galileo computer-to-plate system that will be purchased, as well as a diagram of the



A purchase order will be signed for computer-to-plate system shown above as soon as funds are raised for \$100,000 down payment, fund director Dave Prince told the meeting.

digital work flow and photos of the area in the printshop where the equipment will be installed.

The initial down payment of \$100,000 will be made as soon as it is raised, Prince said. The balance — another \$250,000 — will be due 60 days later. "We're organizing over the next few weeks to raise these funds," he explained.

At the meeting and over the next few days, \$75,700 was raised. This includes one large contribution of \$50,000, and \$18,500 in contributions ranging from \$1,000 to \$7,000. In addition, a special capital fund collection honoring Montauk's political life raised \$7,200. Normally, contributions such as these of less than \$1,000 go to efforts like the current New International Fund (see page 4). Contributions to the capital fund generally come from bequests, trusts, and other wind-

falls.

Members of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists in six industrial unions — the International Association of Machinists; Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; United Auto Workers; United Food and Commercial Workers; Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees; and United Steelworkers of America — are holding national meetings the weekend of October 24-25. Each meeting will discuss how they can help raise the needed capital, not only through contributing job bonuses but helping win other contributors to the capital fund, including among the younger generations being won to the communist movement.

To find out how you can contribute, write to the Capital Fund Campaign, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Standard Motors strikers rally in N.Y. against concessions

BY DON MACKLE

NEW YORK — Chanting "No Money, No Work" about 80 striking members of United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 365 at Standard Motors picketed and rallied outside the plant October 13. Union and company officials were to meet that day for the first negotiating session since the strike began October 2.

The strikers met at 9:00 a.m. for the rally along heavily traveled Northern Boulevard. Many motorists honked in support of the pickets. Noticeably noisy were passing truck drivers, city bus drivers, and telephone company vehicles. Members of the Communication Workers of America recently completed a successful strike against the Bell Atlantic phone company.

Representatives of the UAW's international and Region 9A offices attended the October 13 rally, as well as City Council speaker Peter Vallone, who is the Democratic candidate for governor of New York.

The Standard Motors strikers have been working to keep the picket lines up 24 hours a day. Some have done volunteer picket duty on the weekends to keep an eye on the plant. "I've been here 22 years. I just can't give it up like that," explained Assel Brown, an operator in the plant, while picketing on October 24. "When you are fighting for a good cause you just can't give up."

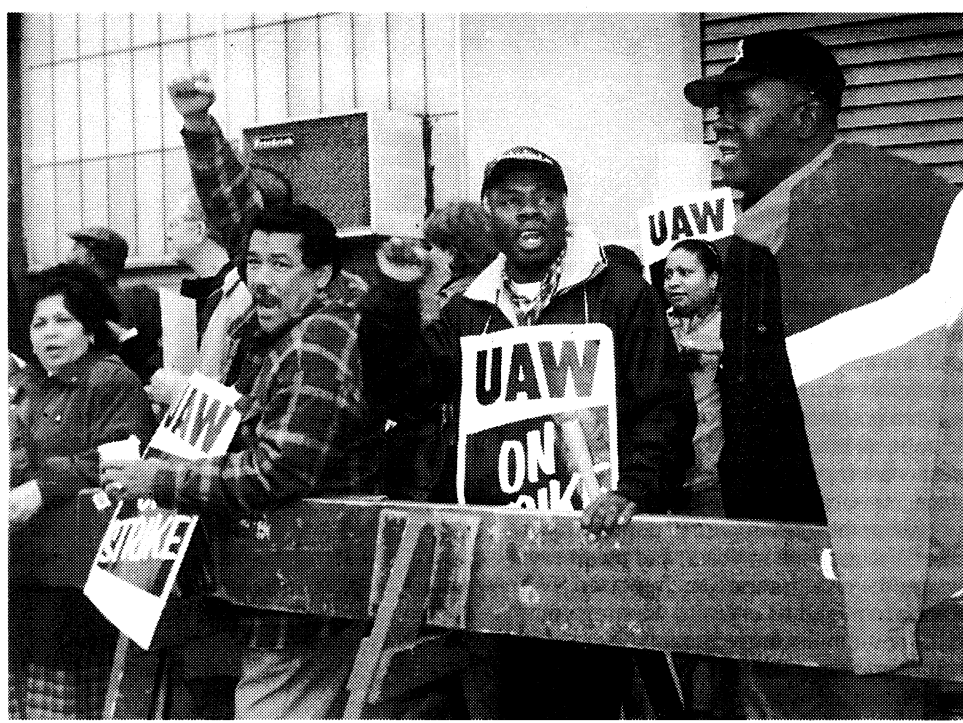
The strikers' central demand is that the company back off its proposal to cut medical benefits to retirees and to begin charging

union members \$50 a month for their medical insurance. Currently about 266 retirees are covered by the company. At one time the plant employed more than 1,500 workers. Today less than 200 unionists operate the highly automated machines. Almost all those still in the plant have well over 15 years experience.

The company has hired private security guards since the beginning of the strike. The guards, dressed in semi-military uniforms, come out of the plant about once an hour to count the number of people on the picket line. Strikers say the company has also begun bringing in scabs from out of town to work in the plant alongside company supervisors, technicians, and engineers. As many as 30 scabs live in the plant full-time according to pickets.

Strikers have also stood up to company efforts to sow seeds of division in the union. One night about four days into the strike, company personnel came out of the plant at night to talk with the pickets. They claimed to have made an offer to the union officials and wanted to know why the union hadn't told the workers. The company people urged strikers to return to work while talks continued. Strikers didn't fall for the trap. "The problem was you should have made an acceptable offer earlier and we wouldn't have had to go on strike," picket captain and union shop steward Daniel Cintron told the company reps.

Strikers laughed as they recounted the



Militant/Don Mackle

Striking UAW members rally outside Standard Motors plant October 13

incident, and explained the particular company official involved would never speak to workers in the plant, even ignoring those who said good morning to him.

Strikers received certified letters from the company at their homes October 17, accusing the union of lying. The company letter claims Standard Motors never asked for reductions in vacation, sick days and holidays or demanded workers pay \$50 a month for insurance. It asks the workers to return to work while details of the contract are worked out.

"*Mentiras, mentiras*" (Lies, lies), called out one group of workers in Spanish on the picket line October 19 when asked about the letter. They said they saw it as an effort by the company to divide the union. The letter, in English and Spanish, was taped to the

building wall behind the pickets. Below it was a notice for a union meeting the next morning.

Strikers were not unanimous in their opinion of the letter. Some said they were uncertain about what to believe and were anxious to get to the union meeting. They wanted to hear an explanation from union officials about what was going on in negotiations with the company.

The strike has drawn support from workers in the area. Unionists from the United Transportation Union and the Communication Workers of America stopped by the picket line October 19 to express solidarity with the strike.

Don Mackle is a member of UAW Local 365 at Cecilware.

AMFA kicks off antiunion campaign at United

BY LARRY LANE

SAN FRANCISCO — Supporters of the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA) leafleted entry gates at the United Airlines Maintenance Operation Center here October 12. AMFA is a company-minded outfit that is campaigning at United and Northwest Airlines to split mechanics away from the International Association of Machinists (IAM).

They distributed a leaflet entitled "Official Declaration," which proclaimed, "The 1998 United Airlines campaign for the Mechanics and Related to obtain freedom through independent union representation is officially on." The leaflet, signed by AMFA national treasurer Steve Kadziulis, points to a "large quantity of signed Authorization for Representation cards already submitted," and lists arguments why mechanics at United Airlines should join AMFA.

This campaign at United Airlines, as well as an October 16 representation vote by mechanics and cleaners at Northwest Airlines on whether to join AMFA, has started a discussion among IAM members here about the role of a company-oriented grouping like AMFA. More workers are starting to question AMFA's motives.

AMFA seeks to separate the aircraft mechanics into a separate "union" from members of the IAM who work on the ramp, and in the kitchen, stores, and customer service.

After years of not seriously fighting AMFA's union busting, IAM officials recently published two articles in the IAM District 141 *Messenger* opposing AMFA. IAM District 141 includes all IAM members working for United Airlines, U.S. Airways, and some smaller airlines.

One article explains that the IAM officials are dividing the district that all members at Northwest had belonged to into separate districts by job classifications. It quotes IAM International President Thomas Buffenbarger as saying "it is time to turn up the heat on this phony group," referring to AMFA's campaign at Northwest.

Another article by District 141 president Kenneth Thiede talks disparagingly of the contract that AMFA negotiated at a small carrier called Atlantic Coast Airlines.

Union-busting logic

AMFA claims that since mechanics are highly skilled and trained professionals, they should bargain with the employers by themselves to get the best contracts. On AMFA's

web page, called "The Mechanic," an article by mechanic Steven Carey states, "In the past when unskilled industrial workers were unorganized, the Industrial Union offered a very positive alternative to the exploitation that they labored under. However, the skilled workers, once they were captured by these huge groups, served only as juicy bargaining chips to elevate the conditions of the unskilled workers beyond what they could normally achieve by virtue of market value."

Nowhere in AMFA literature can one find any criticism of the employers — that they are to blame for low pay, poor training, and lack of safety.

At United Airlines Maintenance base in San Francisco, a leaflet by Scott Williams, who identifies himself as a concerned mechanic and a strong supporter of AMFA "seeking to keep his dignity and honor intact," writes that "We are not machinists." In this he argues that machinists ("one who is skilled in operating machine tools") is not a mechanic ("a worker skilled in the making, using, or repairing of machines, vehicles and tools").

Williams argues that machinists, because they don't have Airframe and Power Plant (A&P) licenses and are supposedly easily trained, really belong in the ramp service, storekeeper, and cleaner classification. He says, "A&P mechanics need their own elite union, and they need it now. Without a bunch of unskilled machinists riding on our coat tails." By this logic, welders, platers, electricians, millwrights, and building maintenance workers could also be split from the bargaining unit. This is not union busting. It is union busting — fracturing workers into competing groups that would be at the mercy of the employers, their government, courts, and banks.

AMFA undermines fights against boss

AMFA has a long history of showing up when workers are in a fight with the bosses. This was the case in the Machinists strike at Eastern Airlines in 1989-91. AMFA did not support the strike, but sought to split off a layer of workers at the Trump Shuttle from supporting the strike.

This year, as pilots waged a successful strike at Northwest Airlines and IAM members there overwhelmingly rejected a proposed contract, AMFA petitioned for a representation election. This gave Northwest management the pretext to break off contract negotiations with the IAM, which represents

27,000 ground employees.

Within a week of the vote by 19,000 United Airlines customer service workers to join the IAM, the largest union organizing victory in the United States in 20 years, AMFA kicked off a campaign to sign up mechanics for a decertification vote.

There are other examples in the San Francisco Bay Area of groups who use similar union-busting tactics. One such outfit, called the "Coastal Berry Workers Committee," forced an election in July to represent the workers at the largest strawberry producer in California, Coastal Berry Co., by intimidating workers to sign cards for it. This company-inspired campaign took place in the context of a nationally known United Farm Workers (UFW) drive to organize the strawberry industry in California.

This fake union portrayed the UFW as a bunch of greedy bureaucrats who are forcing workers to pay dues to support the officials' opulent lifestyle, similar to a lot of AMFA's propaganda against the IAM. Their pro-company campaign included thug violence in which farm workers who supported the union and UFW organizers were beaten and driven from the fields.

Since then, UFW supporters have had to continue defending themselves against attacks from the bosses and the fake union. The UFW is challenging the representation election, arguing that the Coastal Berry Workers Committee is not a union.

Another attack has been against the members of Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees (HERE) Local 2, who are trying to organize the large Marriott Hotel in downtown San Francisco. The hotel workers won a majority in a representation election two years ago, but Marriott management has not signed a contract with the union. There are biweekly mass pickets and boisterous rallies in front of the hotel, which are a focus for the labor movement in San Francisco.

Last November a group calling itself Associates for a United Marriott made its debut. The San Francisco *Bay Guardian* reported that the group held a reception November 14 at the building where Marriott's lawyer has his office. They reported that the following day petitions began circulating in the hotel to decertify Local 2 and on December 30 they filed with the National Labor Relations Board for an election. That petition is on hold, pending the outcome of charges by HERE of Marriott's involvement

in the pseudo union.

Discussion among United workers

The decision by the IAM officials to divide the workers at Northwest into separate districts, one for mechanics and the other for the rest of the ground workers, gives credence to AMFA's claim that mechanics will be better off separate from the rest of the workforce. It weakens workers' unity just when we need to stand together against the company's attacks and AMFA's operation.

On the ramp at San Francisco International Airport, the discussion over the AMFA campaign is just beginning. Ramp service worker Dwight Kacher stated: "The mechanics who are for AMFA don't understand that management is trying to bust all of us. We shouldn't think short term. We should stick together because we're stronger together."

Another ramp worker, Christopher Korp, commented that AMFA supporters "believe that the ramp is holding them back because they are lumped in with us unskilled workers, even though the sheer numbers is the only thing that will help them in the coming labor battles.... There are at least three schools in the Bay Area alone that are training people to be aircraft mechanics. They are just as disposable as rampers. We all need each other to be a good fighting unit."

AMFA's brand of union busting also must be explained within the context of the larger events in the world. Deep economic uncertainty and the declining rate of profit have led corporations to attack the living standard of millions of workers over the last two decades. There have been take backs, layoffs, and the loss of democratic rights.

The years-long retreat of the working class in face of this offensive has come to an end. Over the last two years, strikes at UPS (United Parcel Service), General Motors, Caterpillar Corp., several regional phone companies, and the Bay Area Rapid Transit system, as well as the Northwest pilot's strike, the IAM contract rejection at Northwest, and the IAM organizing victory at United all show that workers more and more are deciding to fight for their interest against the bosses' profit drive.

AMFA and its ilk attempt to short circuit this process and strengthen the employers' hand in these struggles.

Larry Lane is a machinist and a member of IAM Local 1781 at United Airlines.

Louisiana: strikers stand up to Kaiser

Continued from front page

over the last decade. Kaiser also proposed a wholesale gutting of seniority agreements and locally negotiated understandings on issues such as overtime, shifts, and vacation scheduling. The company's offer also included pension increases that would keep retirees below the industry standard for at least five more years and a proposal to cap retirees' health insurance, forcing them to pay for increased costs.

This "enhanced offer" by Kaiser and its use of scabs is seen by strikers as a straight up union-busting effort by their employer.

David Charles has worked for three-and-a-half years as an outside operator, one of the toughest jobs in the mill according to him and others on the picket line. This is his first strike. "Yes, it's tough but you have to deal with it," Charles said in an October 18 interview. "We have to stick together. We can't let them rip our union apart. So far we're very strong."

The union here is reaching out for solidarity, including a support rally at the nearby St. James Boat Club on October 25.

The Gramercy plant, nestled between vast sugar cane fields along the Mississippi river, refines alumina powder from bauxite shipped to the mill primarily from Jamaica, according to pickets. All of the alumina is sold and shipped, mostly by rail, to aluminum companies outside the Kaiser chain. Houston-based MAXXAM, Inc. purchased Kaiser Aluminum in the early 1990s.

Local support for the strike is very visible — and audible — as drivers of cars passing by the busy US Highway 61 honk and wave in solidarity. The mill is one of the oldest nonsugar related industries in the area. Some strikers said the plant is more than 40 years old. Working people and others in the nearby towns of Lusher and Vacherie are outraged at Kaiser's union-busting tactics.

The October 5 issue of the Vacherie *Enterprise* ran a front-page picture of Vance Security's military-style watchtowers and Klieg lights at the main gate. The caption under the picture read: "Shades of Angola. Kaiser security forces keep a close watch on steelworker pickets from what looks like a prison watchtower. One steelworker on the picket line said that the last time he saw one of those was in Vietnam." The Angola, Louisiana, prison just up Highway 61 near Mississippi is notorious for its brutal treatment of prisoners.

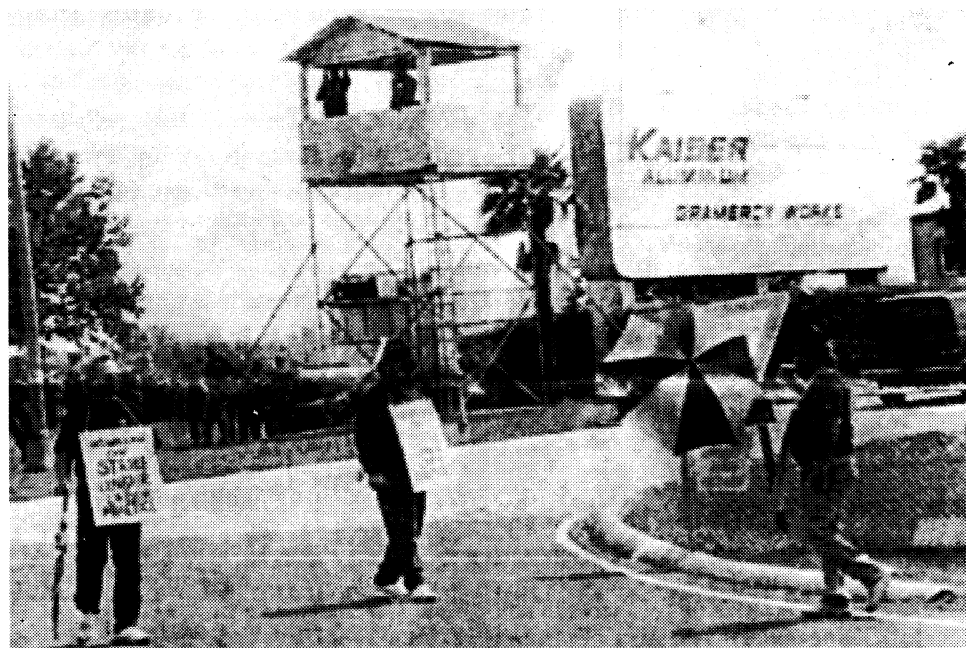
As this correspondent walked the picket line, strikers said they had recently won a victory against the company's attempt to weaken their pickets. The unionists reported the company originally set up fences so close to the road that striker's safety as well as drivers passing by were at risk. In fact, minutes before *Militant* reporters arrived, a truck driver panicked trying to cross the picket line and took out a section of the fence where strikers were previously forced to stand.

Wayne Stafford, USWA Local 5702 president told this reporter that the St. James Parish sheriff requested that the company pull their lines back. "The sheriff contacted the company on three different occasions and told them to pull back their lines," Stafford said. "The last time he threatened

to take them to court and the company backed down."

Strikers walk the picket line in 12-hour shifts around the clock. Usually about 15 strikers are on the line and are kept busy as trucks, contractors, and retired Kaiser foremen go in and out. Each vehicle is stopped for 90 seconds and greeted with a determined picket line marching across the entrance and exit. The strikers are allowed to do this by a precedent they use from an earlier strike at Bayou Steel in neighboring St. John parish. That strike began in 1993 and lasted three years. The St. John Parish line runs through the middle of the Kaiser refinery. Not everyone gets stopped, strikers told us. For example, we saw farmers trucking out the sugar cane from adjoining fields who are authorized by the union to pass. Usually they wave and honk their horns at pickets.

Many on the picket line have worked in the mill for decades and are concerned about the attacks on seniority. A striker with 25 years in the mill, who requested his name not be used, is able to walk the line on weekends while picking up a few jobs during the week. "To me, money is not the main thing," he said. "They [Kaiser] want to test for each higher job classification. If you don't pass the test, you go to the bottom of the list of job classes. I think the company thinks we're a bunch of dumb Cajuns," he said. A big part of the work force in this area refer to themselves proudly as Cajuns, the descendants of the French-speaking Arcadians forced to settle here in the 18th century.



Steelworkers picket Kaiser on shoulder of highway demanding higher wages and pensions and an end to job cuts. Company goons man tower behind pickets.

Strikers are reaching out for solidarity in nearby towns. Pickets said they are inviting everyone to come to the rally at the St. James Boat Club on October 25. They're also leafletting the predominately Catholic churches in the area to invite everyone to come. The union local is also circulating a petition to residents asking them to sign up in support of the USWA's struggle to win a

contract and oppose Kaiser's union-busting attempts.

Tony Dutrow is a member of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 716. Phil Duzinski, International Association of Machinists Local 15 in Houston and Susan LaMont, a member of the USWA, in Birmingham, also contributed to this article.

Miners, Caterpillar workers turn out to back contract fight at Illinois power plant

BY CAPPY KIDD

PEORIA, Illinois — Supported by striking coal miners and members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers who handle the downstream power distribution, 75 power plant operators picketed the headquarters of the Central Illinois Lighting Co. (CILCO) here October 16.

Local 8 of the National Conference of Firemen and Oilers called the picket to protest the company's delays in reaching a contract agreement. The union members have been working without a contract since July 1, 1998. "Safety and working conditions are the key unresolved issues," Tom Pinkhan told the *Militant*. Pinkhan is the recording secretary of Local 8.

"We have had over 50 retirements in the last period, but the company hasn't replaced these workers. Electric power generation is a 24-hour-a-day, 365-day-a-year operation. CILCO is attempting to force the remaining 200 workers to maintain the operations formerly carried out by 250 people," Pinkhan added.

CILCO is demanding that it be able to combine the job classifications that currently consist of welders, electricians, instrument technicians, and boiler operators.

"Moving people into jobs they are not trained for creates a safety hazard," said Pinkhan. "When you are in a place as dangerous and volatile as a coal-fired power

plant you don't want to take any unnecessary risks."

One of the most popular chants on the picket line was "No to multitasking."

"I'm here because these people are my union brothers and sisters," striking coal miner Frank Hasquin told the *Militant*. Hasquin is a member of United Mine Workers of America Local 1969, currently on

strike against Freeman United Coal, normally the main supplier of coal to CILCO.

Several members of the Rapid Tactical Response Team of United Auto Workers members from Caterpillar also joined the picket line.

Cappy Kidd is a member of the United Auto Workers.

McDonald's workers strike in Virginia

BY CLIVE TURNBULL

BURKE, Virginia — "We're not asking for much. They just have to sell one 'super size' meal per hour to cover a person's wages," said Josh Whitman, 17, one of seven workers at McDonald's here who walked out on strike October 16.

Whitman explained, "We've got horrible working conditions. There are only four or five people working, when there should be nine or ten. Employees sometimes end up working for 12 hours with no breaks, because we're short handed. They don't treat us with common respect. They treat us like children. I'm supposed to be a full-time employee, but I only get 32 hours a week. I was promised 40."

Enrique Peña, 16, said, "I haven't been on the schedule for three weeks. They called

me up to come in for one hour. I had to come as I needed the money."

The strikers have picketed since walking off the night shift October 16. Within 45 minutes a team of managers from a corporate "flying squad" was brought in to keep the restaurant open.

Talks between strikers and McDonald's management were held that night and the following day. "They said that most of what we're asking for was already McDonald's policy," said Whitman, "but it isn't occurring here. So we're continuing our picket. We're seeking at least the same terms of employment as McDonald's workers who went on strike in Ohio."

Clive Turnbull is a member of USWA Local 2610, Baltimore, Maryland.

Mississippi: 'We couldn't wait to strike Titan Tire'

BY JEANNE FITZMAURICE

NATCHEZ, Mississippi — Inside the main plant gate, on a big signboard where ordinarily there might be a job safety notice, the Titan Tire bosses have placed the message "What goes around, comes around." Despite company attempts like this to cut across the morale of striking Steelworkers here, the walkout remains solid.

Members of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 303L began picketing the plant September 15, eleven days after Maurice Taylor, who acquired the plant in August, closed the gates and fired all the workers. Several local union officials were terminated a few days before the strike started, including a grievanceman who was fired for attending a grievance meeting.

Workers at Titan's Des Moines, Iowa, factory have been on strike since May 1.

"We couldn't wait to get to the picket line," said one striker. "We waited to get to this point for 18 months — it got so we could hardly keep people inside the plant!"

Shortly after the strike started, Taylor

began to try to restart production, using a contractor to hire the scabs instead of Titan doing so directly. Despite company claims, workers say there are only about 150 tires a day being made at the Natchez plant, about a tenth of normal production.

Local 303L members report that the contractor has been calling strikers and offering them jobs — a thinly veiled attempt to interfere with their ability to qualify for unemployment benefits, on the basis that they refused work. Strikers know they have a right to refuse such work and are continuing to draw unemployment.

There are about 500 members in Local 303L, but only 200 were working on September 4. Most union members were laid off in April 1993 after the former owner of the plant filed for bankruptcy. The Natchez plant had been Fidelity Tire Manufacturing Co., owned by Condere Corp. That company filed for bankruptcy last year. In late August of this year Titan Tire owner Maurice Taylor bought Condere's assets.

About 10 union members have crossed

the picket line here, strikers report.

The Titan strikers are winning support for their fight. Local merchants such as Kroger's have begun to donate groceries that are being distributed from the union hall near the plant. Members of other unions in the area have also stopped by to offer support, and the Teamsters are honoring the picket line.

Also at the union hall is a notice about the October 25 rally being held in St. James Parish, Louisiana, for USWA Local 5702 on strike against Kaiser Aluminum (see article on this page).

Local 303L has named their main picket area "Camp Wiley" in memory of local member Jerry Wiley. About a month before the strike started, Wiley committed suicide after facing inhuman pressure from the company to return to work shortly after heart surgery.

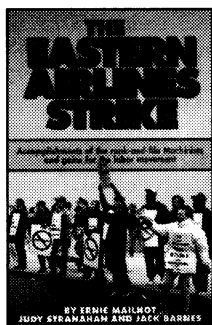
Jeanne FitzMaurice is a member of USWA Local 1013 in Fairfield, Alabama. USWA Local 2122 member Susan LaMont contributed to this article.

from Pathfinder

THE EASTERN AIRLINES STRIKE Accomplishments of the Rank-and-File Machinists and Gains for the Labor Movement

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Shepard killing: flashpoint in 'culture war'

Continued from front page

two Latino youths. Their girlfriends, Kristen Price and Chasity Pasely, have been charged with being accessories after the fact for allegedly offering false alibis and disposing of evidence.

McKinney's companion, Kristen Price, told the television news show "20-20" that the two men assaulted Shepard "to teach him a lesson not to come on to straight people."

McKinney and Henderson could be sentenced to death if convicted. Price and Pasely face up to three years in prison and fines.

Polarized response to lynching

This brutal killing sparked outrage across the country. Hundreds of people marched in Laramie, a town of 27,000, October 10. Protests in San Francisco, New York, Washington, D.C., numbered in the thousands. Smaller actions denouncing the murder have been taking place on campuses across the country. Giving lip service to this sentiment, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a resolution by voice vote decrying the killing October 15.

The response to the beating has been polarized. An October 13 college parade in Fort Collins, Colorado, included a float with a scarecrow labeled "I'm gay," mocking the assault on Shepard. The parade passed a few blocks from the hospital where Shepard lay dying. Three days later, a dozen people staged a picket across the street from Shepard's funeral in Casper, Wyoming, with signs such as "No Fags in Heaven" and "No Tears for Queers."

When nearly 6,000 people rallied in New York October 19 in a "political funeral" for Shepard, the city administration mobilized 1,000 cops who arrested more than 100 protesters, on the pretext that there was no permit for the action.

Ultrarightist politician Patrick Buchanan once again exemplified the right-wing "culture war" demagoguery that will increasingly be used to justify acts of brutality and street thuggery. Matthew Shepard's death "is already being used to launch a new round of Christian bashing," Buchanan wrote in his October 21 syndicated column. Seeking to draw on the fears and resentments of panicked middle-class layers in society to scapegoat gays, he continued, "The left is now using Shepard's murder both to diabolize Christian teachings on homosexuality and to impose on society its own moral code — in a new U.S. Hate Crimes Prevention Act."

Buchanan went on to state that the murder in Wyoming only received so much attention because the "alleged killers appear to belong to a class that is hated with a passion — white males who despise homosexuals." The column advocated use of the death penalty against McKinney and Henderson and praised the "law-and-order tradition" of Wyoming.

At the same time, Buchanan didn't miss a beat in pushing rightist propaganda against abortion. "We live today in a strange land where ethnic slurs are federal crimes," he said, "but a doctor who takes a hammer and smashes the head of a baby being born is performing a constitutionally protected act." With thinly veiled racism Buchanan concluded, "Why has the left not demanded that all interracial assaults and rapes be made

hate crimes?... Because the weight of those numbers would crush the myth about America" as "irredeemably racist, homophobic, nativist, [and] sexist."

Liberals call for 'hate crimes' laws

The response of many liberal politicians and gay rights organizations has been to call for more "hate crimes" legislation. These laws increase the penalties for "bias related" crimes above those usually imposed for the same action. Forty-two states have some form of "hate crimes" laws, about half of which include crimes against gays and lesbians.

House Democratic Leader Richard Gephardt and Attorney General Janet Reno are both campaigning to broaden federal legislation that would make it easier for federal authorities to step in to cases of alleged crimes motivated by a person's gender, disability, or sexual orientation. The editors of the *New York Times* and other liberal dailies

applauded this stance.

Right-wing forces have seized on these moves as an opportunity to pose as defenders of democratic rights. "Should government plunge deeper into stigmatizing thoughts and attitudes?" asked right-wing columnist George Will in an October 15 column. He went on to denounce the "evermore-elaborate structure of identity politics."

Shepard's murder and the polarized response to it occur in the context of an increased political scapegoating of gays by the ultraright as part of the supposed "moral degeneracy" of bourgeois society. It goes hand-in-hand with attacks on the right of women to choose abortion, demands to reinstitute prayer, and ban sex education in the public schools. This scapegoating gets wind in its sails from government moves like the 1996 "Defense of Marriage Act" signed by President William Clinton, denying federal recognition to same-sex unions. Some

recent examples include:

- A newspaper ad campaign by the Center for Reclaiming America featuring "former homosexuals" who claim to have "overcome" their sexual orientation through prayer.

- Televised remarks by Senate majority leader Trent Lott in June in which he called homosexuality a sin and compared gays to alcoholics and kleptomaniacs who should "learn to control that problem."

- A rally of 1,500 people in New York October 13 outside the opening performance of the play *Corpus Christi*, demanding it be shut down as "blasphemous" for supposedly portraying Jesus Christ as gay.

- A ruling the same day by the U.S. Supreme Court that let stand a Cincinnati city law barring antidiscrimination laws protecting gays.

- And, according to one survey, a 76 percent increase of attacks by police against gays last year.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

ALABAMA

Birmingham

Labor Resistance and Working-Class Politics: Leaderships Emerging from Today's Struggles. Benefit for the New International Fund. Speaker: Tom Leonard, veteran leader of Socialist Workers Party and union militant. Sat., Nov. 7, dinner 6:30 p.m., program 7:30 p.m. 111 21st St. South. Donation: \$4. Tel: (205) 323-3079.

GEORGIA

Atlanta

Hear the Socialist Workers Party Candidates Speak on Working-Class Politics Today. Fri., Oct. 30, 7:30 p.m. 230 Auburn Ave. Donation: \$4. Tel: (404) 577-7976.

NEW YORK

Brooklyn

The Socialist Alternative to the Growing World Crisis of Capitalism. Hear Socialist Workers Candidates: Al Duncan, SWP candidate for Governor of New York state; Rose Ana Berbo, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate; and Ryan Kelly, SWP candidate for Comptroller. Sun., Nov. 1, 6 p.m. Reception/Dinner: 5 p.m. Sponsored by the Socialist Workers 1998 New York Campaign Committee. Hosted by the Militant Labor Forum. Dinner and program: \$10. Program only: \$5. For more information, call: (718) 230-8643.

U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War. Celebrate the Publication of *New International* no. 11. Hear: Mike Fitzsimmons, member United Steelworkers of America. Sat., Nov. 7, 7:30 p.m. Dinner: 6:30 p.m. Dinner: \$5. Program: \$5. For more information, call (718) 399-7257.

Both events held at 59 4th Ave. (Corner of Bergen).

OHIO

Cleveland

Labor Resistance and Working-Class Politics: Leaderships Emerging from Today's Struggles. Rally for the New International Fund. Speaker: Tom Leonard, longtime leader of the Socialist Workers Party. Now retired, Leonard is a former merchant seaman, longshoreman, and machinist. He is currently active in building solidarity with the locked-out workers at Crown Petroleum in Houston, Texas. Sat., Oct. 31, 7:30 p.m. 1832 Euclid Av. (Across from Cleveland State University). Donation: \$5.

Classes: "Maritime Unions and the Growth of Imperialism in World War II," Sat., Oct. 31, 11 a.m. Sponsored by the Cleveland Socialist Workers Party.

For more information on both events, call: (216) 861-6150.

PENNSYLVANIA

Pittsburgh

New International Fund Event. Speaker: Sam Manuel, Socialist Workers Party National Committee and Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Washington, D.C. Fri., Oct. 30, 7:30 p.m. Reception 6:30 p.m. 1103 E. Carson St. For more information, call: (412) 381-9785.

AUSTRALIA

Sydney

Celebrate the Publication of *New International* no. 11: "U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War" and the opening of the new Path-

finder Bookshop. Sat., Oct. 31, 7 p.m. Reception 6:30 p.m. 1st floor 176 Redfern St, Redfern. Donation \$5. For more information, call 9690 1533.

BRITAIN

Manchester

The Struggle for a United Ireland Continues — Eyewitness Account. Fri., Oct. 30, 7 p.m. First Floor, 60 Shudehill. Donation: £2. Tel: 0161-839-1766.

NEW ZEALAND

Christchurch

Defend Democratic Rights! Protest S.I.S. Harassment of Political Activist! Speaker: David Small, spokesperson for the Democratic Rights Defence Fund, will explain the case taken against the S.I.S. for their breaking and entering of Aziz Choudry's house. Fri., Oct. 7 p.m. 199 High St. Donation: \$3. Tel: 365 6055.

CORRECTION

The introduction to the interview with Cuban leader Jorge Risquet on the 1962 "missile" crisis, published in the October 19 issue under the title "The month that we lived most dangerously," should have indicated that the *Militant* was reprinting major excerpts of the interview that appeared in *Cuba Internacional*, not the entire article.

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CALENDAR

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The Cuban Revolution Today. Speakers: Félix Wilson Hernández, First Secretary, Cuban Interests Section, Washington, D.C.; Johana Tablada de la Torre, Second Secretary, Cuban Interests Section, Washington, D.C. Thurs., Nov. 5, 1 p.m. *Newman Center, Rm. 757, Student Center, Way State University.* Co-sponsored by the Justice for Cuba Coalition and Newman Center. For more information, call: (313) 561-8330.

WASHINGTON

Seattle

Cuba: Diary of a Revolution. Lecture and Slides by Cuban Photographer Alberto Korda. Fri., Oct. 30, 7 p.m. *Campion Hall at Seattle University 914 E. Jefferson.* Korda's photographs will be on display Nov. 1-29 at the *Photographic Center Northwest, 900 12th Ave.* Artists Reception: Nov., 1, 4-6 p.m. Sponsors: Photographic Center Northwest, Seattle Art Museum Photograph Council, Seattle Cuba Friendship Committee, Seattle University Art Department and Foreign Language Department. For more information, call: (206) 720-7222.

What did he expect, a confession? — The federal judge presiding in the Microsoft anti-trust trial recessed the proceeding and demanded that the software giant pro-



Harry Ring

duce more financial data. What has been submitted so far, "doesn't make any sense," he growled, "It's gibberish."

Correction — Last May, we picked up the report that the Dutch government had finally decided to investigate the cargo on an El Al jet that crashed and burned Holland in 1992. The Israeli airline conceded it was using depleted uranium as wing ballast, but denied there was anything dangerous aboard. Now it's revealed that the cargo included components of the deadly nerve gas, sarin.

Just testing — So far, some 1,200 rescue workers and residents of the area of the El Al crash are suffering a range of serious illnesses. There were no clues to the causes of the afflictions until some-

one slipped copies of the cargo manifest to a Dutch paper. After the disclosure, Tel Aviv said the chemicals were intended to test gas mask filters.

And silk-type tp — Cool, well-heeled folks are currently into high-end jailhouse-type toilets. Like a stainless steel toilet, matching urinal, and stainless steel panels for walls and ceiling. Plus stainless sink, mirror and soap dish. How much? With add-ons like jets, a toilet alone runs \$2,000.

Make a nice poster — At Werrington, a prison for youth in England's Yorkshire area, more than

190 inmates, ages 15-17, are stuffed into 96 single cells. A report said they're forced to eat their meals in cells that are "little more than lavatories."

No sense of humor — "Lost Jobs Fuel Gloom on the Economy" — The Times London.

The rational society — In Calgary, Canada, the city's largest hospital was declared obsolete and blasted to the ground. Opponents of destroying the hospital then sought a mandate that land be used only for a new hospital. City officials oppose this.

Sound authentic — On a Lon-

don call-in show, the interviewer asked: "Do you tell the truth?" Caller: "Usually. But when I'm at work it's part of my job to sort of tell lies." Interviewer: "You're a journalist then?" Caller: "No...I'm a serving police officer." Interviewer: "Do you tell lies on a regular basis?" Caller: "...If you want to get a conviction you have to tell lies. It's part and parcel of the job."

Thought for the week — "The pieces are so beautiful and unusual. When do you get a toilet bowl completely in stainless steel, without a single fastener. They're very handsome." Architect Peter Pawlak.

Why socialist workers are in industrial unions

The selection below is from "The Revolutionary Perspective and Leninist Continuity in the United States," a resolution adopted by the Socialist Workers Party at a special national convention in January 1985.

These excerpts are from the first section of the resolution, which is included in the book *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions* by SWP national secretary Jack Barnes. That book is copyright © 1994 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission.

The entire resolution is published in issue no. 4 of the magazine *New Internationalist*. The recently published Education for Socialists booklet *Background to 'The Changing Face of U.S. Politics' and 'U.S.*

situation that opened in the mid-1970s made it possible once again for communists to advance this fight from within the industrial unions. This dictated a sharp turn. The SWP decided to get a large and stable majority of its members into the industrial unions and to build national fractions of its members in these unions....

The Socialist Workers Party's proletarian orientation and perspective of the development of a class-struggle left wing in the labor movement constitute a permanent strategic axis, which we seek to advance whatever the political situation may be. Under the present conditions in the United States, as in the rest of the capitalist world, the sharp turn to the industrial unions is necessary to advance this perspective....

Political axis of party work in unions

The party's political work in the industrial unions takes as its starting point the world class struggle, the crisis of the international capitalist economy and imperialist world order, and their manifestations in this country. It is these forces that establish the conditions under which the struggle to defend, strengthen, and transform the unions takes place. It is only with this broader perspective — not the narrow framework of union politics — that the road can be charted toward constructing a class-struggle left wing in the labor movement, whose goal will be the transformation of the unions into instruments of revolutionary struggle against the employers and their government.

Members of the SWP in the industrial unions function on three different levels.

First, they are members of the revolutionary party. Like all party members, whether in unions or not, they are constantly seeking ways to promote knowledge about the party and its activities, to involve others in its work, and recruit them to membership. This includes everything from selling subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial* and the *Militant*, to

strengthening the internal party committees and branch institutions, publicizing an election campaign rally or forum, and explaining the party's views on political events to those who are interested.

Second, as workers, they seek to involve other workers in political activities. They encourage their co-workers to come down to the party headquarters to attend a forum, to join a demonstration that the party is helping to organize against the war in Central America, to get involved in protests against police brutality or other racist attacks, or to read the program contained in the charter of the National Black Independent Political Party.

Third, they are union activists with a revolutionary perspective for the unions. The union fractions of the SWP strive to develop the ability to function as effective units that are integrated into the labor movement. In this sense, our fractions function collectively as union politicians. Their goal, as part of nationwide fractions, is to help forge a new union leadership, which will come forward from the ranks and will fight to unleash union power to defend the workers' interests. They operate within the union structures and realities of today, with a clear view of the revolutionary transformation that will occur tomorrow....

Based on the initial experiences of our industrial union fractions since 1978, the party has taken several new steps over the past few years to deepen the turn.

One of these new steps was adopting the goal of organizing weekly plant-gate sales of *Perspectiva Mundial* and the *Militant* as a norm of membership.

Our goal is to achieve regular weekly contact by every party member with industrial workers, especially those in unions where we are building national fractions. This is another step toward integrating the entire party into the turn — those who are part of industrial union fractions and those who are not, those employed and those laid off — and thus deepening our proletarian orientation. The weekly plant-gate sales are an important way to influence and recruit

industrial workers, which is the only way to establish the party as a tendency in the labor movement over the long run....

A second aspect of deepening the turn has been the establishment of two new industrial union fractions, in the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union and the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union. These new fractions advance the proletarianization of the party. The ILGWU and ACTWU are two of the largest industrial unions in the United States, and they play an important role in the labor movement in both the United States and Canada. Through our orientation to these unions, we are becoming part of a section of the working class that is composed of many recent immigrants and members of oppressed nationalities, and is generally paid wages lower than workers in other industrial unions.

A third product of the turn to industry has been the party's growing knowledge about and orientation toward the struggles and organizations of working farmers. We have begun to meet farmers who hold industrial jobs in order to make a living income and try to keep their land. Over the past few years, we have developed ties with farmers through our election campaigns and other propaganda vehicles, through participation as party members in their struggles, and also as members of industrial unions seeking ways to strengthen links of solidarity and united action between the labor movement and farmers organizations. We have expanded our contact with, and knowledge about, organizations of working farmers. And we have recruited to the party the first of a new generation of farmers who are revolutionaries.

Most recently, we have broadened our political contact with agricultural wage laborers, especially in California, Texas, and throughout the Southwest. We are increasing our political attention to farmworkers' struggles there today. The big majority of these workers are Spanish-speaking, many are immigrants, and all work for low wages and under arduous conditions.

BOOK OF THE WEEK

Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War also provides further reading on the questions taken up in this resolution.

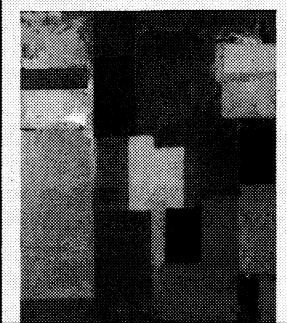
BY JACK BARNES

An essential part of the strategic line of march toward the establishment of a workers and farmers government in the United States is the fight for the transformation of the industrial unions — the most powerful existing organizations of the working class — into revolutionary instruments of class struggle for the interests of the exploited and oppressed.

During the long postwar period of capitalist expansion, political conditions in the United States stood in the way of effective revolutionary work by socialists in the industrial unions. The political and economic

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—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

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THE MILITANT
A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

November 2, 1973

DETROIT — How did Arabs in the U.S. view the Mideast war? Recently I spoke with Ahmad Ali and Mike Doleh, who work at GM's Detroit diesel plant and are members of United Auto Workers Local 136; and Hammie Aziz and Mosabi Hamed, students at Fordson High School. All four were born in or around Jerusalem.

Ali thought the occupied Arab territories, or many of them, might be returned, but that the Palestinian problem would not be solved. "If you can't live in your own home, you never settle down, you never forget it. Palestinians have got to have the right to our own land."

I asked what attitude they took toward Jewish people. Were they and their fellow Arabs against all Jews?

Aziz said, "No, but to be truthful, some are. But most are only against Zionist Jews. Jews and Arabs could live together. We want a democratic Palestine. We don't want a Christian, or Jewish, or Moslem rule, but one where we all are equal, where no sector is higher than others. This will happen

only when the Zionist state is eliminated."

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

November 1, 1948

The "tough" attitude of the Henri Queuille regime toward the mine strike that began Oct. 4 has brought France to the verge of civil war.

The miners' demands are modest. They ask that their present wage of \$57 a month be raised \$13 to make up for the decline in their living standards due to skyrocketing prices. To guarantee the new minimum level they ask a sliding wage scale.

The troops were ordered to take over the mines and moved forward with tear gas against the strikers and their wives, who hurled missiles at the steel-helmeted soldiers.

The government thereupon ordered police and troops to fire on the strikers "when necessary" and mobilized 40,000 army reservists. At St. Etienne, troops opened fire on the miners with their rifles, killing two and wounding forty.

Who has the right to try Pinochet?

The following statement was issued by the Communist League in the United Kingdom.

The October 17 arrest of Augusto Pinochet by British police, acting on a warrant issued by two judges in Spain, has nothing to do with defending human rights and is an attack on the sovereignty of Chile. It should be condemned by working people, especially in the United Kingdom and the United States. Pinochet, the former military dictator of Chile and a faithful servant of its ruling rich and imperialism, deserves to go on trial for his crimes. But only the Chilean people have the right to bring this butcher to justice, not the British or Spanish governments, whose own imperialist hands are bloodstained.

It's no accident Pinochet is arrested by London today. The "human rights" demagoguery of the liberal forces arguing for Pinochet's arrest simply echoes the war propaganda that Washington, London, and other imperialist governments are cranking up to justify their military intervention against Yugoslavia and elsewhere. Newspaper editorials on both sides of the Atlantic, Labour Party politicians, and others have openly speculated that Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic should now be arrested on overseas trips. In the name of opposing genocide and war crimes, the imperialist wolves in sheep's clothing seek to deepen their own intervention in the Balkans with the ultimate aim of overturning the workers states there. Bourgeois liberal and social democratic forces have been aggressively pushing for this "humanitarian" war drive.

In September 1973 the Chilean armed forces, under Pinochet's command, overthrew the elected government of Salvador Allende in a bloody coup. Fearful of the rising struggles of working people in Chile and throughout South America, the U.S. government instigated and aided the military crackdown. Tens of thousands of union militants and other Chileans were tortured, killed, imprisoned, or

forced into exile. Pinochet's government then launched fierce attacks on the living standards of workers and farmers, employing policies much admired by the British government of Margaret Thatcher.

As his backers at the right-wing *Daily Telegraph* unabashedly point out, Pinochet was an "unstinting ally" of the British ruling class. He proved this in 1982 by his assistance during the war London waged against Argentina to enforce its colonial rule over the Malvinas Islands, which belong to Argentina. At that time the British government justified its colonial war by hypocritically claiming it was fighting the Argentine military dictatorship.

Today, with pious hypocrisy, the Labour government of Anthony Blair claims it has an "ethical" foreign policy. Blair however, has his finger on the imperial trigger, ready to participate in an assault on the Yugoslav people, while pretending to provide humanitarian aid to Albanians in Kosovo fighting for independence. Last February Blair was also ready to join Washington in an assault on working people in Iraq. During the 1990-91 Gulf War, he and the Labour leadership, the loyal opposition at that time, fully supported the U.S.-led massacre of tens of thousands of Iraqis, in which British troops participated.

Now that Pinochet has already done his dirty work for imperialism, he is expendable to his masters, and his arrest can even be used to further their war goals elsewhere in the world. Class-conscious workers should not fall in the trap — promoted by liberal and radical forces — of thanking the British and Spanish governments for supposedly defending democracy. These imperialist regimes are enemies of working people. We should oppose their effort to assert the "right" to arrest and judge anyone they want to, anywhere in the world.

The only ones who have a right to try and punish Pinochet for his crimes are the working people of Chile. They will eventually have their day.

Sell 'Militant' subs, build the YS convention

Continued from front page

leading up to the December 10 events to demand freedom for the 15 Puerto Rican political prisoners. Defensive labor struggles show no signs of abating, from the Kaiser Aluminum strike to the latest union-organizing fight by McDonald's workers in Virginia.

By getting involved in these political activities, *Militant* supporters will meet young people attracted to the fighting capacity of the working class and to making a socialist revolution. In the course of working with them, each of these youth should be invited to the YS convention.

As depression conditions spread throughout the world capitalist system and struggles heat up, it becomes increasingly apparent to many more people that there are two forces in society who know that the question of power will be settled in the streets — the vanguard of the working class and the ultraright. Class polarization and rightist forces are growing in every imperialist country today. They are fed by the politics of resentment and by attempts by liberal politicians to narrow democratic rights, as in the case of Matthew Shepard. And they are increasingly organizing thug assaults in the streets.

There's nothing the working class and its vanguard can do to prevent the capitalist system from entering a depression, but what van-

guard workers do to prepare for the coming battles will be decisive in whether fascist forces can triumph over the working-class fight for socialism in the coming years.

Winning new subscribers to the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* and building the YS convention is part of this preparation.

As the article on page 5 shows, regional sales teams so far have done well in reaching industrial and farm workers, but have often missed the opportunity to get out to campuses as well. The final two weeks of the subscription campaign can be used effectively to meet not only young workers and farmers but students on campus, begin doing political work alongside them, and in this way convince them to go to the December YS convention in Los Angeles.

Meetings of the SWP's fractions in six industrial unions are holding national meetings over the October 24-25 weekend. They will discuss and organize to carry out the special two-week sales effort. And *Militant* supporters in each city will map a day-to-day battle plan to meet the goals of the subscription drive before this weekend.

We urge every reader to join in this effort. You can do so by contacting the numbers listed on page 12.

Naomi Craine
'Militant' Editor

Thousands protest killing of gay student

Continued from front page

local rise in incidents of anti-gay violence.

"This atrocity against gays should not go unnoticed," said Rachel Samberg, a 17-year-old student at the Dalton School. "This action is one of the most obvious ways to show the city that we will not tolerate these kinds of attacks." Marchers included students from several of the city's college and university campuses and workers who had just gotten off work.

While a majority were gay, many others also participated. One woman said she heard about the march on the radio as it was assembling and rushed out of the house to join in. Others said they saw a notice on the internet.

March organizers and many in the crowd were surprised by the massive turn out. "I expected to see about 100 people," said Stuart Sussman, 37, a resident here. The local press said the march was reminiscent of a recent protest by more than 40,000 construction workers attacked by police.

The action was called by an ad-hoc group of gay rights and other organizations, according to a press person for Act Up New York. Organizers decided against getting a permit from city authorities and only a couple of dozen marshals with armbands were on hand to help direct the action.

As nearly 2,000 marchers assembled on a plaza off Central Park, a small number of protesters organized a sit-in in the street blocking traffic. Several dozen cops broke up the sit-in and made arrests.

"Equal rights now!" "Justice! Justice!" and "Homophobia has got to go!" were chants that rang through the crowd.

Cops regrouped several times to try to block the marchers. More than once about 20 police officers on mopeds formed a line blocking the street, but protesters walked around and through the lines without incident.

Bolstered by reinforcements, cops then created a blockade at 42nd Street with squad cars and emergency vehicles.

The marchers then turned down a side street to continue down Sixth Avenue. But a squad of two dozen motorcycle cops in riot gear and armed with billy clubs moved in to meet the front of the protest. At the same time, cops at the march's rear blocked the street and divided the march. At least 1,000 cops were mobilized.

A tense standoff then occurred that lasted more than a half hour as 2,000 people were hemmed in between two police lines. "Let us go through!" and "Shame! Shame!" they chanted in unison. Finally, the police allowed the marchers to walk down Fifth Avenue and the march ended with a rally at a park on 23rd Street.

In the stand off, one woman was injured by a police horse and others were ruffed up by the provocative cops. Act Up New York reported that 136 people were arrested that evening and the *New York Post* the next day attempted to smear the protest as a "gay riot."

Some people at the march held signs calling for passage of more "hate crime" laws.

Denise Dvoravic, a 19-year-old student at New York University, said that she supported "hate crime" legislation because she thought harsher laws may help curb the anti-gay violence.

Tony González had a different view. "I don't think hate crime laws will change the attacks because even if something was implemented, how do I know they [the government] will enforce it. There's a law against it [killing] now."

"I don't support hate crimes laws," said Kathleen Carlin, a 29-year-old musician, "because they are just reforms. I worked in a domestic violence center and have seen reform after reform with no change. That's why I'm happy to see so many people here today. This is how we'll make change."



BY WALTER BLADES

SAN FRANCISCO — Several hundred people gathered here October 15 to protest the fatal beating of Matthew Shepard in Laramie, Wyoming. The protest was organized by Community United Against Violence and other San Francisco gay rights activists.

At an open mike, more than a dozen people spoke. Two men who had suffered anti-gay beatings recounted their experience. A gay high school student described the fear and terror he felt at being harassed at school; another pointed to the refusal of school administration and faculty to do anything to combat anti-gay violence in school. Other speakers pointed to the viciously anti-gay pronouncements of U.S. senator Trent Lott for contributing to a climate where anti-gay violence is tolerated. A number of participants in the rally carried signs attacking Republican party politicians.

Supporters of the Socialist Workers campaign distributed campaign literature and carried a large sign reading "Stop Anti-Gay Violence."

The rally concluded with a march down Market Street to the Loading Zone bar, site of the recent murder of a gay man, Brian Wilmes.

Jim Altenberg contributed to this article.



BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Thousands of people gathered on the steps of the U.S. Capitol the evening of October 14 for a candle light vigil to express their outrage at the brutal beating death of Matthew Shepard. The action was called on short notice by several gay rights organizations including the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation.

The platform of speakers at the event was predominantly Democratic Party politicians in Congress who urged passage of a national "hate-crimes" bill. Also speaking were several close friends of Shepard and actresses Ellen DeGeneres and Kristen Johnston. DeGeneres said that incidents such as the attack on Shepard were what motivated her in part to reveal after about 1-1/2 years on her television show, "Ellen," that she is gay.

Two days earlier on October 12, some 200 people rallied at the University of Maryland's College Park campus to protest publication of a campus newspaper column condemning gays. The column characterized homosexuality as a "genetically defective state" and decried the gay community's "nonstop effort to push their 'twisted and perverted' views on everyone." This right-wing column appeared under a pseudonym for which no one has taken credit. Several speakers pointed to this slanderous column as the same arguments used by those who beat Matthew Shepard to death.

Tire workers in North Carolina: 'We're staying out until we get ours'

BY JILL FEIN
AND FLOYD FOWLER

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina — "We're prepared to stay out until Christmas," several strikers stated confidently as they picketed Continental General Tire here. This is Continental's main plant, which normally produces 33,000 tires for passenger vehicles daily. The company also operates plants in Mayfield, Kentucky, and Bryan, Ohio, both unionized, and Mt. Vernon, Illinois where workers are trying to organize.

Some 1,500 members of USWA Local 850 have been on strike since September 20. Prior to the strike workers in the other plants gathered hundreds of signatures on petitions supporting the North Carolina workers. The main issues are wages and the company's demand for concessions in work rules and benefits. The 1995 contract included a wage freeze, and this time the company's final offer is 35 cents over three years. "I've seen the production rate in Final Finishing where I work go from 3,500 to 4,085 tires in an eight-hour shift, and we used to have five people, now we only have four," said Ralph Bryant. "And now they want to go from five shifts to four, which would cost us 120 more jobs."

"We've met every production goal they've given us," John Chapman added. "We don't get rewarded for our efforts. They told us they were broke, but they made 1.5 billion in sales alone this year. They admitted making a profit, then they gave bonuses to salaried people only."

Two of the more than 100 newly hired probationary workers are the only ones who have crossed the picket line. More than 85 percent of the hourly workforce belongs to the union, despite the so-called right-to-work laws in this state. Workers make on average \$16 an hour.

Strikers have set up picket tents with lawn chairs and signs with slogans such as, "Who's the liar? — Continental General Tire." During the time *Militant* reporters were there, many strikers came to sign up for picket duty. There were 12-15 people there continuously.

"The company doesn't want us to have the right to bid" on jobs, said striker Ivan Gill. "They don't want us to have seniority rights. They don't want to pay overtime after eight hours. They're really trying to wipe out the union. But we're sticking together and staying out." The company and union met with a mediator October 11. "The only thing we're hoping for is that now we'll have a witness when we ask the company to open the books and they refuse us. But we don't

think anything is going to be resolved today," he said.

The last strike at Continental General Tire in 1989 lasted four months. In 1995 they took a concession contract with a two-tier wage scale, and no double time on Sundays.

About 30 percent of the strikers are women. "When I first came to the plant 25 years ago you could count the numbers of women on one hand. Now there's no such thing as a man's job in the plant," Pierre Monroe commented.

Ives said, "They're good workers. They work harder than the men do."

Carl Doster, retired after 28 years in the plant, was helping out on the picket line. Asked how many strikes he had been involved in over the years, he told us, "24 strikes, and only four of them were legal. The rest of them were wildcat."

As the strike goes into its fourth week, the company is using management personnel in the plant for production, and claim



Militant/Jill Fein

Strikers picket Continental General Tires in Charlotte, North Carolina.

they are producing between 2,500 and 5,000 tires a day. Strikers scoff at that. Strikers believe some production has been shifted to the Mayfield, Kentucky, plant where everyone has been recalled from a long layoff. Continental has also placed giant ads in the local newspaper for temporary workers at between \$16-\$18 an hour and has brought in a few scabs from Ohio. Vance Security men in their black jumpsuits videotape the

strikers from the plant guard shack, and two police cars wait down the street.

A solidarity rally has been called for November 5. "We've had pilots out here, UPS drivers, CWA [Communications Workers of America], and here's some more," said Gill, as a car loaded with food from United Auto Workers members at the Freightliner truck plant in Mt. Holly, North Carolina, pulled up. "We're staying out until we get ours."

New Zealanders protest workfare laws

BY RUTH GRAY

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand — More than 100 people took part in an October 1 rally outside government welfare offices in central Christchurch to protest draconian new measures against unemployed workers that came into effect that day.

Widely known as the "work for the dole" scheme, new government legislation renames unemployment and sickness benefits as a "community wage." Recipients can be required to perform up to 20 hours a week of "community work." They will receive up to an extra \$21 for this. At the same time, payments under the sickness benefit have been cut to the same level as the unemployment benefit. Tighter work-testing rules for those on the domestic purposes benefit (for single parents), widows benefit, and invalids benefit are to begin next year.

The Campaign Against People's Last Economics (CAPLE) initiated the protest. In an interview with *Prime*, a local television station, CAPLE spokesperson David Small explained "Unemployment is a result of government policies, not people's unwillingness to work, and that's the real issue."

Small added that he was "also concerned that it doesn't just affect beneficiaries, it affects people who are in jobs as well. There is a real danger that employers and other groups won't employ people for real wages if it can effectively get free labor from un-

employed people press-ganged into working for nothing." Trade Union Federation representative Paul Watson described the scheme as "essentially slave labor" in his address to the rally. Under the new law, those who refuse to do community work, who are late for work or a job interview by as little as 15 minutes, or who fail to work satisfactorily in the employer's eyes will have their benefits cut or stopped altogether.

The government wants welfare organiza-

tions, city councils, community organizations and schools to offer work under this scheme. Many such groups have already signed a pledge that they will not participate. Following the speeches, protesters marched several blocks to the Christchurch City Council offices to protest the council's support for the scheme.

Ruth Gray is a member of the Engineers Union.

Socialists in New Zealand get press

BY LARS ERICSON

Supporters of the Communist League's election campaign took part in the October 1 rally outside the welfare office. Interviewed by a reporter from the Christchurch *Press*, mayoral candidate Ruth Gray said the community wage scheme was about "scapegoating and harassing beneficiaries."

Gray has spoken at six public meetings for Christchurch mayoral candidates during the local body election campaign. The largest of these — attended by 800 people — was organized by the *Press* newspaper. An edited version of this meeting screened the next day on *Prime* television. In addition, two television in-

terviews with Gray have been screened by local stations.

All the local newspapers have either interviewed Gray or carried campaign statements. This has helped to raise the profile of the campaign. To date, NZ\$70 has been raised from election campaign tables set up around the city over the last few months. "I am meeting people who recognize me from photos in the papers and are coming up to say how much they like what we are saying in this election," Gray said. One campaign supporter reported that twice in one week he experienced people refusing to take election material because, as they explained, "I'm already voting for Ruth Gray."

LETTERS

Truth about Bartholomew

I'd like to commend the *Militant* editors for reminding me of the need for attention to detail and total accuracy and professionalism when writing articles for the paper.

The article "Adams: 'British partition of Ireland means repression and injustice'," which appeared in *Militant* no. 37 contained one small fact, which I suspect, few workers knew — the real first name of the prime minister of the capitalist government of the Irish Republic.

His name appears in all the big-business newspapers as "Bertie" Ahern. His actual name is "Bartholomew," which the *Militant* printed.

In common with capitalist politicians, the world over, Ahern likes to pretend he is an ordinary person. Like "Bill" Clinton and "Tony" Blair, he uses a friendly sounding shortened version of his first name as part of an effort to appear as the friend of working people.

The truth is Ahern speaks for the interests of the exploiting classes in Ireland, and the *Militant*, which is published in the interests of working people, rightly has no truck with this cover up. The bourgeois party Ahern leads — Fianna Fail — also

likes to pose as the defender of Irish national rights — calling itself "The Republican Party." This too is false. It is workers and small farmers in Ireland, under the leadership of Sinn Fein, not the wealthy ruling families Ahern represents, who are the backbone of the advancing struggle to free Ireland and end partition.

When I submitted the article to the *Militant* editors, they insisted I discover Ahern's correct first name, instead of guessing. At 9 o'clock at night, my phone research took me to the library of the *Irish Times*, the main bourgeois paper in Dublin.

The librarian explained that in response to earlier inquiries she had spent a lot of time, trying to track down this piece of information. She eventually learned the truth from Ahern's secretary. "But I have never seen it written down anywhere," she told me emphatically. "I don't think you should use it."

Well, unaffected by the hesitations which afflict the servants of the rich, the *Militant* did print Ahern's name. For me it was an object lesson in how being sloppy about a seemingly small detail can obscure an important political truth.

Tony Hunt
London, England

More on Tibet

The news that the CIA funded the Dalai Lama's movement (letter by Mark Friedman, October 19 *Militant*) must qualify as one of the least surprising "revelations" of the year.

Today the question of "Free Tibet" is raised, along with "prison labor" and the all-encompassing "human rights," as part of a campaign by sections of the capitalist class who face competition from Chinese imports. And perhaps also by capitalists who profit from the trade, but want to pressure the Chinese government for better terms.

Their arguments are echoed by the trade union bureaucracy, who bemoan the loss of "American jobs" to low-paid, or allegedly unpaid, Chinese workers. (These bureaucrats don't call for union scale wages for U.S. prisoners, instead they're trying to raise the wages of prison guards!)

The Dalai Lama also seems to attract an endless supply of alienated middle-class intellectuals, who find Eastern mysticism more appealing than its more mundane Western equivalents. But whether in the U.S. or Tibet, winning workers, farmers, and youth away from such reactionary movements requires a

clear Leninist approach to national oppression. As far as I can recall, the last article the *Militant* ran on Tibet only wrote in passing that the Chinese Stalinists have trampled on Tibetan national rights. We should look at the history of the communist movement on this question.

In his "Open Letter to the Members of the Chinese Communist Party," written in 1967, veteran Chinese communist leader P'eng Shu-tse wrote, "In 1922 the Chinese Communist Party decided to acknowledge the right of self-determination of the national minorities, which meant they had the right to establish their own independent government in such places as Tibet, Inner Mongolia, and the Muslim community in Sinkiang. This decision was taken in order to win the sincere collaboration of the national minorities and to unify the nation on the basis of equality."

"Since your party took power in 1949, it has yet to solve the problem of the national minorities on the principles practiced by Lenin. Formally the party has established the autonomous regions of Tibet and Inner Mongolia, yet, in practice the national minorities are still ruled in the tradition of the great Han race....

It is for this reason that the old antagonisms still lie just beneath the surface and could possibly foment a crisis of still another civil war."

The *Militant* article referred to Tibet as today's "poor little Finland."

Leon Trotsky helped to steel the Socialist Workers Party against the bourgeois hue and cry around the 1939 Soviet invasion of Finland.

In that same year, Trotsky responded to Hitler's noises about a "Greater Ukraine," by raising the slogan of "a united, free, and independent workers' and peasants' Soviet Ukraine," explaining that "...but for the rape of Soviet Ukraine by the Stalinist bureaucracy there would be no Hitlerite Ukrainian policy."

Marc Lichtman
Brooklyn, New York

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.

Thousands at Dublin rally demand: 'Independence for Ireland now!'

BY PAUL DAVIES

DUBLIN, Ireland — "The Ulster Unionist Party are using decommissioning to try to renegotiate the agreement that all parties signed last Easter. The only thing that needs decommissioning is the mind-set of the past," Dierdre Feehan told a crowd of several thousand demonstrating for Irish independence and the release of political prisoners October 18. Feehan, from South Armagh in Northern Ireland, was speaking on behalf of Sinn Fein Youth, who along with Saoirse, an organization that campaigns for the release of political prisoners, sponsored the action here.

Thousands came from across Ireland, including a train load of prisoners' relatives and supporters from Belfast. Pierce Doherty, a member of Sinn Fein Youth from Dublin, noted, "Three times in the past year a Saoirse train has been planned to travel from Belfast to an event in Dublin. On each occasion it has been canceled at the last minute, because of threats to block the line, by loyalists in Portadown."

Saoirse is the Irish word for freedom. Last July the pro-British loyalist forces in Portadown, Northern Ireland, organized through the rightist Orange Order, were humiliated when their march along the Catholic Garvaghy Road was rerouted. The Orange Order holds intimidating marches through Catholic communities throughout British-occupied Northern Ireland to reinforce Protestant privileges and to back British rule. Despite the threats to block the train there was no organized protest by loyalists this time.

Speaking for Saoirse at the demonstration, former political prisoner Martin Meehan paid tribute to the determination of the 300 people who rode the train to Dublin. "What the 'freedom express' shows is that we're off our knees and that we're not going back, that being treated as second class citizens is not acceptable." Meehan congratulated republican prisoners for their contributions in the fight for Irish independence.

Meehan also pointed out at the rally that Britain had yet to release a single woman republican prisoner since the signing of the April 10 agreement.

Also speaking at the demonstration on behalf of Sinn Fein was Barry McElduff, a councilor from West Tyrone. "The agreement was not our document and it was hard for us to approve it, but don't just turn the spotlight on the Unionists for trying to wreck it," he said, referring to those who favor the continued "union" of Northern Ireland with the United Kingdom. "Turn the spotlight on the British government. We don't want to reform the six counties in the North. We're going to fight to end British rule."

Participating in the demonstration were a few dozen nationalists from Newtownbutler, in Northern Ireland, dressed in costume and armed with pikes, to commemorate the uprising of the United Irishmen 200 years ago in 1798. There have been events organized throughout Ireland to commemorate the uprising, including a march of 1,500 in Dublin the previous week.

Unionists stall on implementing accord

David Trimble, leader of the Ulster Unionist Party and first minister of the new Northern Ireland assembly set up by the agreement, has so far delayed any steps to form an Executive that would include Sinn Fein, as well as the all-Ireland bodies established by the agreement. The deadline for establishing these bodies is October 31. Writing in the British newspaper *The Observer* on the day of the demonstration, Trimble argued, "Those who have perpetuated violence cling on to their weapons of war tenaciously.... I am prepared to wait if necessary for others to live up to their commitments." Trimble faces opposition from within his own party at its forthcoming annual conference, should he compromise on decommissioning.

Responding to Trimble's article, Sinn Fein chief negotiator Martin McGuinness stated, "The Ulster Unionists cannot be allowed to frustrate the wishes of the vast majority of the people on this island any longer. It is now time to tell the rejectionists that their day is gone."

Sean Neeson, leader of the Alliance, a procapitalist party that poses as neither nationalist nor unionist, said "Decommissioning has been allowed to fester like an open wound.... Unionists must not look upon it as a precondition to fulfilling the obligations that rest on David Trimble.... He must move immediately to establish the executive." Neeson added that if Trimble did not set up the Executive by October 31 he would be in breach of the April 10 agreement.

The Conservative Party in Britain had been insisting on the decommissioning of weapons as a precondition for Sinn Fein taking up office in the new assembly. Reflecting uncertainty among some British politicians, they are no longer pressing for this to be included in a bill before parliament.

Unionists aren't 'decommissioning'

Gerry Kelly, a Sinn Fein representative in the assembly from north Belfast, commented on the issue of decommissioning at a meeting held at University College Dublin, days before the demonstration. "Trimble talks about decommissioning but doesn't mention the 130,000 legally held arms in Northern Ireland, almost all of which are held by Unionists. The people that I represent tell me that decommissioning by the IRA would leave them undefended. Belfast has witnessed a quarter of all the deaths in the past 30 years."

During the previous week two Catholic homes in north Belfast were petrol bombed. Occupants of one of the homes had previously received threats, and occupants of the second house have now decided to move away from the area.

Harassment and intimidation are also a daily reality for Catholics in South Armagh. Speaking at a press conference organized by South Armagh Farmers and Residents Com-

mittee, Toni Carragher described the increase in British army patrols, refurbishment of army spy posts, and unceasing helicopter traffic. Farmer Henry McElroy explained how farmers' livestock are injured daily by helicopters.

Nationalists in Northern Ireland are not alone in facing harassment. Mhuircis O'Greaghain, chairman of the Sinn Fein *cumman* (branch) at University College Dublin, told this reporter about the attacks on democratic rights that he and other Sinn Fein activists at the university have faced from the Garda, the police force in the Irish Republic. O'Greaghain said once a week he and others sell the republican paper *An Phoblacht* on the campus, and they are regularly followed and stopped by the Garda and questioned. Garda plain clothes cops regularly appear at the *cumman's* meetings to see who is there. While O'Greaghain was hospitalized recently, the cops visited his parents and asked them about him. When he returned home, he was visited again by the cops, who asked for the names of other members of Sinn Fein at the university. O'Greaghain refused and asked, "Is it illegal to be a member of Sinn Fein?" One of the cops replied, "Not exactly."

Immediately following the demonstration, the Garda attacked several members of Sinn Fein Youth who had gone to the police station to protest the assault and arrest of Sinn Fein Youth members attending their national conference the previous day.



Militant/Phil Waterhouse
Sinn Fein Youth leader Dierdre Feehan spoke to thousands at a rally for Irish independence in Dublin, October 18.

Pierce Doherty, from Sinn Fein Youth in Dublin, said the cops drew their batons and beat activists on their way back from a social after the conference. He described how the parents of members of the youth organization are regularly visited by the Garda. "They do this because they want to squash the growth of Sinn Fein Youth, but we'll keep protesting every time."

Paul Davies is a member of the Transport and General Workers Union in Manchester, England. Debra Jacobs and Phil Waterhouse contributed to this article.

Sinn Fein leader tours United States

BY EMILY FITZSIMMONS AND PEGGY KREINER

PITTSBURGH — Close to 1,000 people heard Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams speak at Duquesne University here October 12. The audience was overwhelmingly young, including a busload of high school students from McKeesport High School, a former steel mill town outside of Pittsburgh.

"The republican belief is that the people are sovereign, based on our own sense of ourselves. Our country is partitioned and under British control. The vast majority of the island want unity and independence," Adams said. The Sinn Fein leader and member of the newly formed Northern Ireland Assembly described the history of Unionism in Ireland as the colonization and dispossession of a native people, like the oppression of other people around the world. "Ireland belongs to all who live in Ireland.... Under partition, Catholics have faced internment, apartheid slums, and for some, the denial of the vote up through the 1970s."

Adams fielded a number of questions from the audience after his half-hour presentation. Several related to the "Good Friday" agreement, which Adams said was not a peace settlement, but a range of measures aimed at reversing the discrimination against Catholics, releasing political prisoners, and creating a level playing field in the north of Ireland. He stressed that the cause of the

conflict in Ireland lies with the British rulers, who "have the biggest imperative to war" and must be pushed to act to resolve it. He said the rulers in London believe they still have an empire, and they must come to a new view of the world.

Adams held a press conference after the event and then spoke in the evening at a fund-raiser at the convention center to a crowd of over 300, mostly longtime supporters of the Irish struggle. A number of local politicians, including city council members and Pittsburgh mayor Thomas Murphy made welcoming remarks.

David Trimble, first minister of the Northern Ireland Assembly and leader of the Ulster Unionist Party, and Seamus Mallon, deputy first minister of the assembly spoke in Pittsburgh October 9 as part of a 12-city tour promoting Northern Ireland as a good place to do business.

❖

BY RUTH NEBBIA

NEW YORK — Hundreds of people filed into Webster Hall, a popular nightclub, for a birthday concert celebration for Gerry Adams October 17. Many well-known Irish bands and singers entertained the overwhelmingly young crowd.

John Francis Mulligan, 29 years old, and a member of an Irish Gay and Lesbian organization, was there building there show-

ing his support as well as building the October 19 vigil for Matthew Shepard, the young student recently killed in Wyoming. "I am concerned about the peace process because I don't know what the Irish people have been given," he said. "The RUC needs to be disbanded, they are a biases police force, and those issues need to be worked out before there's any real peace."

Lori Rowbotham, 33, from Passaic, New Jersey, recently visited Ireland with a group of 16 others, and has been working with Irish Northern Aid for the past four years.

Nancy Richardson, 23, from Montclair, New Jersey, got interested participating because "my brother was interested, so I began reading and finding out what is going on." Richardson traveled with the group Rowbotham went with, which visited the Irish Republic as well as Belfast and Derry in the north. "I am currently looking to participate in a group because I am trying to learn more," she said.

Adams also spoke to meetings in Boston and Lowell, Massachusetts; Albany, New York; Fairfield, Connecticut; and Philadelphia during his week-long visit to the United States.

Emily Fitzsimmons and Ruth Nebbia are members of the United Transportation Union. Peggy Kreiner is a member of the United Steelworkers of America.