

THE MILITANT

INSIDE
Miners face layoffs, petition to defend benefits in Pennsylvania

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Moscow is stung by Chechens, pressured by Washington

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

Forces defending the Chechen capital of Grozny dealt a blow to Russian troops who entered the city December 15, attacking a tank column and leaving an estimated 100 Russian soldiers dead. The pitched battle was the first major ground clash in the city since Moscow began its offensive against Chechnya in September.

Moscow's campaign, which aims at subduing independence forces and bringing the rebellious republic forcibly under its rule, has occupied 60 Chechen towns and villages but has to date shunned infantry battles with Chechnya's defenders. This was the first heavy fighting reported in the capital since the Russian invasion of the territory began over two months ago. Much of Grozny lies in complete ruins after the Russian bombardment which preceded this latest move. "There are no windows, no roofs. There is nothing there," one woman among the more than 200,000 people who have fled the city told reporters. Tens of thousands of people remain in a city that was home to a quarter of a million.

But aerial bombardment alone can't win a war. The armored column that entered Grozny December 15 "was surrounded by rebel fighters armed with rocket-propelled grenades. The bodies of several dead Russian soldiers were seen sprawled around burning tanks and armored personnel carriers near the city center," CNN reported.

Before the clash General Valery Manilov, the first deputy chief of the Russian General Staff, said in Moscow that Grozny would succumb in "a question of days."

Washington and its imperialist allies have seized on the events in Chechnya to pressure the Russian government, professing concern

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Protest gov't attacks on transit workers in N.Y.!

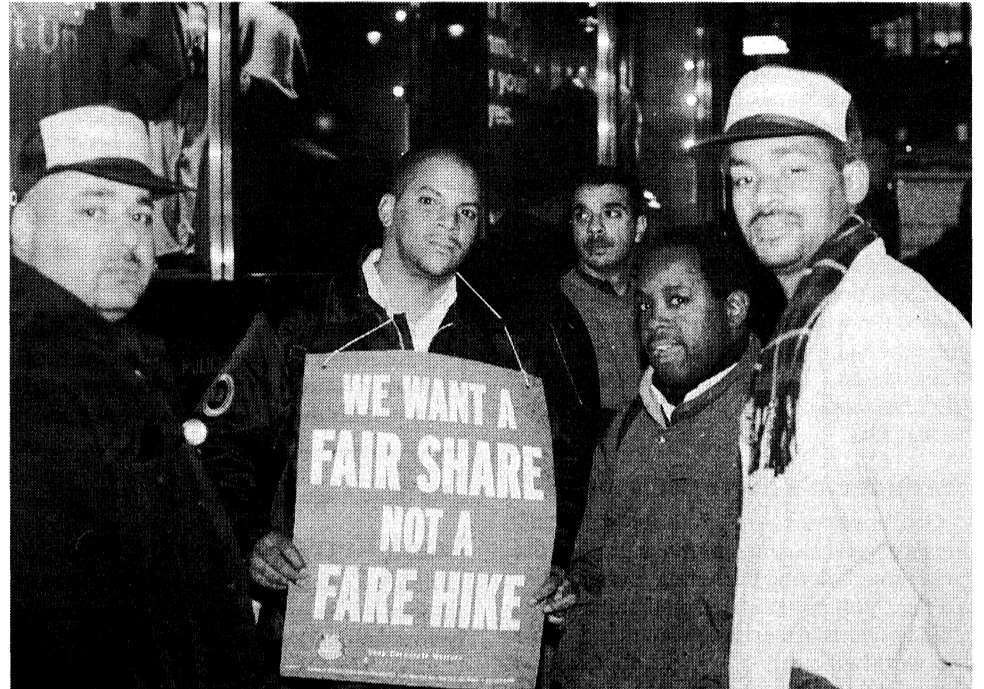
The following statement was issued December 15 by the New York branch of the Socialist Workers Party.

The rulers of New York City and the state have launched a vicious attack on the rights of the transit workers who run New York City's subways and buses. They are threatening to use the cops and courts to impose astronomical fines and arrest not only against any worker who strikes, but against anyone who *advocates* exercising the basic right to withhold one's labor. The restraining order and City Hall's fines remain in place—backed by a force of 3,000 additional cops in the transit system—even as members of the Transport Workers Union vote on whether to accept the proposed contract.

This blatant government intervention against workers fighting for a decent contract is aimed not only against the TWU members and other city workers who face contract negotiations in the coming months, but all working people in the city and beyond. Just in this region nurses at St. Vincent's Hospital are demanding that more nurses be hired, striking truckers at Overnite are fighting for representation by the Teamsters union, dye workers in New Jersey textile mills are resisting their bosses' attempts to slash wages and benefits, and workers at the Domino Sugar refinery in Brooklyn are on strike for a decent contract. That's why the entire labor movement should stand as one to demand an end to the government attacks on the transit workers.

What are the rulers afraid of? The desire by thousands of transit workers to fight, demonstrated most graphically when more than

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Militant/Marc Lichtman

More than 10,000 transit workers and supporters rally December 8 in New York one week before contract expiration, demanding wage increases and an end to harassment.

N.Y. transit workers fight for a pay raise

BY OLGA RODRÍGUEZ

NEW YORK—As the 33,000 workers who operate New York City's bus and subway system prepare to vote by mail on a proposed contract, a Brooklyn Supreme Court judge extended a restraining order against union members even discussing the possibility of a strike. Meanwhile, city officials are continuing their

propaganda campaign against the transit workers and their union, Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100, with accusations of sabotage.

The executive board of TWU Local 100 narrowly voted to approve a tentative contract settlement with the state-run Metropolitan

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Farmers rally in D.C., renew struggle for land

BY BRIANTAYLOR

WASHINGTON, D.C.—"When we started this fight it was not about money, it was about

justice," said Jacob Lipscomb, a hay and cattle farmer from Nottoway, Virginia. Lipscomb was one of the original farmers who initiated a class-action suit against the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for racist discrimination. He was one of nearly 100 farmers and their supporters from a dozen states across the country who rallied here December 13 at Lafayette Park. The upbeat mood of the protesters in the cold, late-morning drizzle exemplified their determination.

Meeting after the rally, the farmers called actions for January 17 in Atlanta and in late February here in the capital to turn up the heat in their fight to hold onto and win back their land.

More than eight months after the farmers forced the government to admit to its racist discrimination and agree to pay a miserly minimum of \$50,000 each to farmers who were mistreated by the USDA, the vast majority of the farmers involved in the case haven't seen a dime.

Farmers were supposed to be able to apply for compensation and relief under two "tracks" in the consent decree agreement. Under Track A farmers were all but promised a \$50,000 settlement, along with relief from USDA debts, after "substantial"

evidence of discrimination is presented. Track B in theory allows farmers to seek a larger cash settlement, but requires more documentation. "I've never heard of someone being found guilty in court," only to have the plaintiff have to go and reestablish their guilt, said Gary Grant, president of the Black Farmers and Agriculturists Association (BFAA), refer-

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Militant/Stu Singer

We Support THE NATIONAL BLACK FARMERS ASSOCIATION

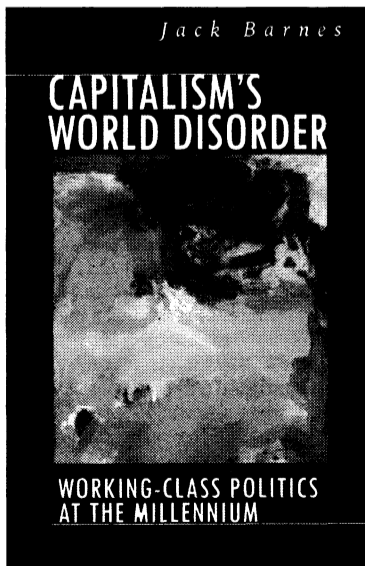
Gary Grant (with microphone) of Black Farmers and Agriculturists Association and John Boyd (with sign) of National Black Farmers Association issued joint call for protest.

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Students in Mexico resist tuition fees, cutbacks — page 6



Panama wins back canal

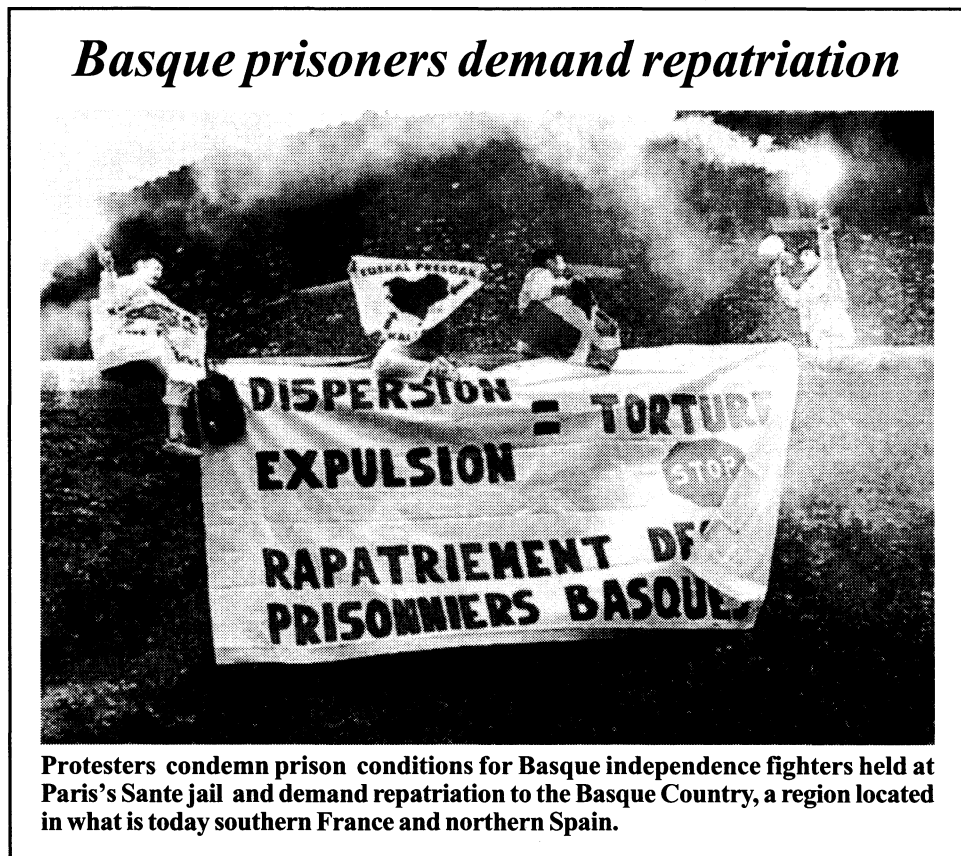
At the end of the year Panama will take possession of the canal that splits its territory, after nearly a century of U.S. intervention and domination. Washington instigated the 1903 secession of Panama from Greater Colombia in order to build the canal across the isthmus. Thousands of workers lost their lives in its construction. For 85 years Washington has controlled the waterway and more than a dozen military bases. Protests demanding Panamanian possession of the canal have flared up over the years, and in 1964 police and U.S. troops killed 20 protesters as they attempted to fly the Panamanian flag in a Canal-Zone school. In 1989 the U.S. military mounted a brutal offensive concentrated on working-class areas in Panama City to overturn the country's elected government.

In 1977 U.S. president James Carter was forced to sign treaties transferring possession in 2000. U.S. secretary of state William Daley was the only ranking member of the Clinton administration who attended the December 14 celebrations in Panama. One academic reflected the widespread national resentment among Panamanians of imperialism's role when he said, "Their attitude is absurd. Fine. Until December 31, they are the boss. But after that, no."

Washington's 'terrorist' scare

On December 11 U.S. state department officials urged U.S. citizens overseas to avoid large crowds during the holiday season, stating that "groups have been planning terrorist actions against American citizens and ... this is a worldwide threat." U.S. officials said around a dozen people had been arrested in the Middle East during the previous two weeks. Where the arrests occurred and who carried them out have not been revealed nor have government spokespeople presented evidence to support their scare-mongering assertions.

Washington claims—again without presenting any facts—that those arrested have links to Osama bin Laden, the Saudi-born businessman accused by the U.S. rulers of involvement in bomb attacks on two U.S. embassies in Africa last year. U.S. warships unleashed cruise missiles on a factory in Sudan and several sites in Afghanistan two weeks



Protesters condemn prison conditions for Basque independence fighters held at Paris's Sante jail and demand repatriation to the Basque Country, a region located in what is today southern France and northern Spain.

after those August 7 bombings.

South Korea workers battle cops

South Korean riot police assaulted a December 7 demonstration of 20,000 people organized by the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions. The workers defended themselves with bamboo sticks and metal rods. The confrontation left 160 people injured. The cops launched their assault to prevent demonstrators from marching into the streets from their rallying point in a downtown Seoul plaza. The call for a shorter workweek headed the workers' demands. Unionists in south Korea are also calling for state assistance to industries threatening layoffs and the abolition of the antilabor National Security law. Some 24,000 workers employed by the Electric Power company have threatened to strike if the government carries out plans for its privatization, which will likely lead to job losses.

Working people in south Korea have endured two years of the "IMF era," as they call it. This began when the government signed a deal in December 1997 for an International Monetary Fund loan of \$60 billion and agreed to a range of reforms, including dispensing with unprofitable companies. The imperialist powers, and especially Washington, use the IMF as a vehicle for imposing policies that profit foreign investors.

U.S. stored nukes in Japan

Declassified U.S. government papers show that for at least a decade and a half the U.S. rulers stored nuclear weapons on Japanese soil, in spite of publicly vowing never to do so. The military used the islands of Chichi-jima and Iwo Jima for storage of the weapons in the 1950s. On Okinawa island the weapons were stockpiled until 1972. The U.S. Defense Department claims that no legal obligations were violated because the islands were occupied by U.S. forces at the time.

The authors of an article analyzing the documents state that it appears Washington had told Tokyo of the deadly stockpiles, and both governments kept the arrangement secret. The agreement would have been extremely unpopular among Japanese working people, the victims of Washington's atom bombs at Nagasaki and Hiroshima.

Filipino sailors win solidarity

In a dispute in November, sailors from the Philippines forced their employers, a German shipping company, to agree to increase their wages and to fork out back pay. On board the *Hea*, the sailors had to put up with inadequate food, lack of medical attention, and no supply of fresh water. River water was used for wash-

ing. Second mate Lucio Digal spearheaded the complaint to the International Transport Workers Federation. While the boat was working the Great Lakes, Cleveland longshore unionists responded to the sailors' fight by threatening to stop unloading the steel wire carried by the vessel. The company caved in.

The settlement of the dispute states that the sailors will be paid when the ship arrives in England. The captain of the *Hea* has already paid Digal the \$5,000 back wages he is owed. The second mate plans to return to the Philippines. A sailor for 20 years, he expects to be black-listed by ship-staffing agencies. "That's capitalism," commented the captain.

Cop gets 30 years in Louima case

On December 13 a federal district judge handed former New York cop Justin Volpe a 30-year prison term for the torture of Abner Louima. In August 1997 Volpe brutalized the 32-year-old Haitian worker by forcing a broken broom handle up his rectum, inflicting severe internal injuries. The incident occurred in a police station bathroom in Brooklyn, New York. The savage attack prompted street protests of up to 15,000 people. Volpe, like the other cops involved in assaulting Louima, initially denied any wrongdoing. He confessed before the court in May of this year. One other cop, Charles Schwarz, who faces sentencing, and two others will go to stand trial for trying to cover up Schwarz's role in holding down Louima during the assault. Louima spoke before the court, rejecting Volpe's continuing claims that he had acted under provocation. The prosecution had called for life imprisonment. Volpe's attorney said he will appeal the 30-year term as excessive.

New Zealand gov't less stable

New Zealand's newly installed governing parties saw the outright majority they won November 27 evaporate over the following two weeks. The social democratic Labour Party and the Alliance, whose leader is a former Labour MP, united in a coalition after election day. The final counting of special votes, however, saw the Green Party take the seat of Coromandel from the National Party and lift its share of the vote nationally to 5.2 percent. This gives the Greens 7 seats in parliament and reduces the number of seats allocated to other parties. The Labour Party now has 49 seats and the Alliance 10 in the 120-seat parliament. To pass legislation they will have to rely on the backing of the Green Party, which supports the new government. The previous conservative government, led by National, also governed without a readymade majority.

Support for the Green Party jumped in the final lead-up to the election after it became a focus of attack by the National Party, which highlighted the party's support for decriminalization of marijuana use. Some prominent Green candidates were targeted as "communists" and supporters of "eco terrorism." The Greens stood on a platform centered on economic nationalism and opposition to genetic modification of animals and food crops.

—PATRICK O'NEILL

THE MILITANT

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N.Y. transit workers

Continued from front page

Transit Authority (MTA) hours after the previous contract expired at 12:01 a.m. December 15. The proposed deal includes wage increases totaling 12 percent over the three-year term of the contract. Transit workers were demanding a 27 percent raise, or 9 percent each year, along with other increases in benefits. The last public offer on wages by the MTA had been to extend the contract to a fourth year, with a 9.5 percent raise spread over that time.

The proposal also includes a decrease in the amount workers have to pay into their pensions, supposedly with no cut in benefits; some improvements in the arbitrary disciplinary procedures of the MTA that had been a major point of contention; and some work-rule concessions by the union. Very few details of the pact have been made public; workers will receive information and contract ratification ballots by mail in the coming days. The results of the vote are not expected until January.

Ranks key factor in fight

From the beginning, the ranks of the TWU have been the key factor in the unfolding fight. One thing is clear: without the membership's resolve in pushing for their demands the MTA, whose last offer many considered to be an insult, would not have moved on the wage and benefits issues, much less on changing the disciplinary procedures transit workers are subjected to.

Workers reaction to the proposed contract is mixed. Regardless of their view on the contract issues, reaction to the anti-strike injunction among workers outside union meetings that took place December 14 was outraged.

Julio, a track worker who is Puerto Rican and who has been 15 years on the job, said,

"They're telling us that if we even mention the word 'strike' to any one, by any method—phone, cell phone, e-mail, whatever—we will be personally fined. We have to stand up to the MTA and Giuliani."

Another worker, who asked that his name not be used, said, "I am an American citizen. We're told that if you open your mouth you can be fired. The union said that they can't even take a strike vote. Man! We can't even talk about a strike!"

Taylor Law and injunctions

The ruling class arrayed all its institutions and weapons against the transit workers—City Hall and the state government, the cops, the board of education, the media, and the courts. Even New Jersey governor Christine Whitman joined in the gang-up against the union. Their aim was to isolate the workers and prevent them from exercising their right to strike.

In two previous contract fights, in 1966 and 1980, transit workers shut down the city's transportation system, which an estimated 3.5 million people use every day. Citing former presidents Franklin Roosevelt and Ronald Reagan as precedents, Mayor Rudolph Giuliani repeatedly insisted that "government employees have no right to strike." Gov. George Pataki likewise declared that any work stoppage would cause "significant chaos" and would be "illegal."

The stakes in the contract fight are high. Contracts for the more than 300,000 city employees will be negotiated in the months ahead. Giuliani declared December 15 that the proposed 12 percent raise for transit workers, who are state employees, "would be much too high for the city."

Transit workers, like all public employees in New York state, are confronted in their fights for contracts by the antilabor Taylor



Laura Gray

Cartoon from January 1966 *Militant* reporting on New York transit strike. Workers stood up not only to state laws but President Lyndon Johnson's attempt to limit wages.

Law, which makes strikes by public employees illegal and allows the state and city authorities to impose fines and jail sentences on the union and its individual members exercising the basic right to withhold their labor power. This law was enacted in 1967, as a supposedly progressive replacement for an even more draconian 1947 antilabor law that called for firing all government employees who struck. That law proved unenforceable, especially in the 1966 transit strike.

In addition to threatening to invoke the Taylor Law, which includes fining individual workers two days' pay for every day on strike, the city administration and the state attorney general, Democrat Eliot Spitzer, got a State Supreme Court judge to issue a temporary restraining order against the union on behalf of the MTA, as well as an injunc-

tion imposing fines and sanctions well beyond the Taylor Law.

The union and each of its members were enjoined from: "in any manner or by any means, directing, calling, causing, authorizing, instigating, conducting, continuing, encouraging, threatening, participating in, assisting in, or approving any work stoppage, sick-out, slowdown, refusal to work as assigned, sabotage, vandalism, picketing with intent to encourage any of these acts, or any other concerted activity intended to or tending to interrupt the normal and regular operations" of the NYC Transit Authority and Manhattan and Bronx Surface Transit Operating Authority.

The court order—imposed in the early morning December 14, hours before mass union meetings that many workers expected would take a strike vote—also expressly prohibits the TWU or any section of its members to hold a strike authorization vote on December 14 or "on any other day." The court also directed the union leadership of Local 100 to institute disciplinary proceedings against any member violating the court's orders, and required that the text be mailed overnight to every union member at the local's expense.

The court also granted an injunction requested by the Giuliani administration that called for astronomical financial penalties against the TWU and its members for any violation of the restraining order. The injunction imposed would fine the union \$1 million for the first day of a strike, and double

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Lessons of 1966 transit workers strike

In January 1966, the Transport Workers Union (TWU) was forced into a 13-day strike that virtually paralyzed mass public transportation in New York City. Below are excerpts from an article by Socialist Workers Party leader Farrell Dobbs, who wrote about the significance of the strike in the January 31, 1966, issue of the *Militant*. This article was also reprinted in the *Militant* during the 1980 New York City transit workers strike.

BY FARRELL DOBBS

Young people today have had little chance to perceive the inherent social power of the working class. All their lives they have seen the unions dominated by a gang of bureaucrats who truckle to the capitalist class. These misleaders of labor support the brutal imperialist foreign policy of the ruling class. They give only lip service to the Freedom Now struggle of the Negro people, the vast majority of whom are workers.

At the point of production the bureaucrats act to cripple the union power, usurping workers' democracy to impose their own dictatorial rule over the union membership. They keep labor tied to capitalist politics, leaving the governmental power in the hands of greedy banks and corporations....

Detractors of labor point to statistics about a relative decline of industrial workers in proportion to the population as a whole. Like a con man short-changing his victim, they juggle these figures around in an effort to show that history is rendering unionism impotent. Again, and once again, the Marxist view of the revolutionary potential of the working class is proclaimed obsolete.

History itself has a way of refuting such theoretical fantasies. A graphic example is the New York transit strike....

Some 36,000 strikers tied up public transportation in a city of eight million and the powers-that-be couldn't move a single train or bus in public service during the walkout. Clearly it was not the sheer weight of numbers that gave the transit workers this impressive strength. The decisive factor was the key functions they perform within the city's economic structure.

Similarly in national terms, it is not the relative numerical weight of the workers in terms of the population as a whole that determines their strength as a social force. It is their strategic role in the total economic complex, plus their distinctive characteristics as a relatively homogeneous social class.

Numerical strength has primary importance in terms of class solidarity among the workers involved in a given struggle, rather than in the relative size of the embattled force. The problem of solidarity begins with the strikers themselves, and it extends from there to a quest for broader labor support according to the needs of the fight. As we shall see, it was in the broader union sphere, especially among the top AFL-CIO bureaucrats, that class solidarity with the transit workers was criminally violated.

Within the Transport Workers Union the ranks stood solid throughout the strike. Not a peep came from inside the TWU that Republican Mayor [John] Lindsay, or his Democratic collaborators at City Hall, could use to smear the strike. It was a case of aroused workers who fought for just demands and who stood united in their common needs as class brothers....

This time the TWU officials didn't capitulate without a fight as they have done before. Instead of making a deal for a union contract on City Hall's terms, they fought at least until the union had won a partial victory....

While giving them due credit for the way they stood up to City Hall, it is important to recognize the real reason they did so. Like everybody else in the line of fire, the TWU officials were up against an aroused membership that wasn't about to hold still for a fast shuffle from anybody, either inside or outside the union. They had to fight, or else.

What a fight the transit workers made! They brushed aside a court injunction based on an antilabor state law and went on strike in defiance of the judge and the whole City Hall gang. When their top negotiators were jailed as "law breakers," a second team stepped in to speak for the union. The strikers remained solid in the face of court proceedings intended to impose massive fines on the union. They stood up against savage smear propaganda in the capitalist news media and against a rising capitalist clamor to call out the National Guard against them.

At a crucial point in the strike the TWU ranks met the capitalist attack by demonstrating their solidarity and fighting spirit through a mass picket line at City Hall. Significant bodies of workers from other unions supported the demonstration....

Unable to break the strike with injunction, jailings and threats of fines, Lindsay appealed to "responsible" top officials of the AFL-CIO for help in stopping the strike....

George Meany responded by approving the jailing of the TWU officials with remark that [TWU president] Mike Quill "wanted to go to jail." As though that scabby comment wasn't criminal enough, he added that Mayor Lindsay, who was trying to break the strike, was "handling himself very well."

After the strike Walter Reuther proved his "respectability" with a statement that "society can't tolerate stoppages" like the transit strike.... Despite all obstacles the transit workers won a partial victory by forcing concessions from City Hall that it hadn't intended to make. The fact remains, however, that the settlement fell far short of the workers' just demands and they remain victims of gross wage inequities.

Unmoved by the serious economic problems still plaguing the TWU ranks, President [Lyndon] Johnson denounced the gains they did win as a violation of his wage "guidelines"... He followed through with a call for further anti-strike laws.

Both the Republican Mayor and the Democratic President proved themselves enemies of the transit workers. The strikers got nothing they didn't fight for and even then the lackeys of capitalism cheated them out of a just settlement. The workers will only get what they can win through militant use of the union power at the job level and through mobilization of their class political strength in an independent labor party.

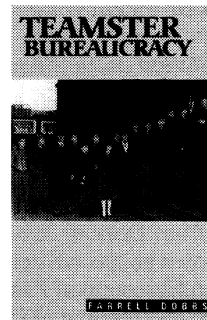
Labor's inherent capacity to take that road is demonstrated by the transit strike, as is the workers' growing desire to do so....

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FARRELL DOBBS

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A fight for pay, dignity

Militant reporters asked transit workers outside the December 14 membership meetings what they saw as the key issues confronting the union in the negotiations.

The vast majority said a major wage increase was their most important demand. They explained that while the MTA cries poverty, the transit authority has turned a profit, even publicly debating how to spend the surplus. This surplus was made on the backs of transit workers, who in the last contract took concessions to "save the MTA." Several workers said that now was the time, while the MTA has the money, to get it. They pointed to Giuliani's hypocrisy in claiming that the 27 percent wage raise over three years was excessive and would force a doubling of the transit fare, when the mayor was just awarded a 28 percent raise.

A 12-year conductor pointed to treatment on the job as a key question. "Discipline is outrageous," he said. "There were 16,000 disciplinary actions this year alone. I personally know of eight to ten people terminated. If they feel like going back over your doctor's notes for several years or for however long you have been employed by the MTA, they can, if they want to get you."

Allis, a single parent with a daughter and granddaughter, has worked eight years in transit. She said, "It's like working in the circus and all they want to offer us is peanuts. What we are doing will set a precedent for everyone. We need to stick together. Don't let Giuliani bully us. We want something we can live on. Hey, Giuliani got his." —O.R.

YS builds chapter in Alabama

This column is written and edited by the Young Socialists (YS), an international organization of young workers, students, and other youth fighting for socialism. For more information about the YS write to: Young Socialists, 3284 23rd St., San Francisco, CA, 94110. Tel: (415) 824-1429.

Email: 105162.605@compuserve.com

BY ROMINA GREEN
AND ROBERTO GUERRERO

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama—Members of the Young Socialists here have made progress over the last month toward building a YS chapter in Alabama.

On November 18 a march and vigil in support of the campaign to free Mumia Abu-Jamal to end of the death penalty took place at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa. Forty-three people participated, including students from the campus, two United Auto Workers members from Pemco Aerospace, two students from the University of Alabama at Auburn, and many more.

YS member Roberto Guerrero was among those who spoke at the rally. He encouraged those there to participate in the upcoming protest against the School of the Americas at Fort Benning in Columbus, Georgia.

Many of the conversations that took place at the table sponsored by the YS at the Tuscaloosa event involved the anti-World Trade Organization (WTO) protest in Seattle. YS members pointed out that the nationalist demands of the protest organizers, including the union officialdom, lead workers and young people into the fold of democratic imperialism, and increase their susceptibility to the America First rhetoric of

ultrarightists such as Patrick Buchanan. Two participants in the rally bought subscriptions to the *Militant*, and others picked up *February 1965: The Final Speeches* by Malcolm X, *Two Speeches* by Malcolm X, and *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* by Frederick Engels.

More than 10,000 people took part in the School of the Americas protest in Columbus, Georgia, November 20-21. The School of the Americas (SOA) is a separate training ground in Fort Benning that teaches methods of torture to paramilitary and other counterrevolutionary armed forces in Latin America. This is a school sponsored by Washington in their interest to repress struggles by workers and peasants in Latin America.

Members of the YS and Socialist Workers Party joined the demonstration and set up literature tables where they discussed politics with the participants. A woman from El Salvador said she was happy to see the books by Karl Marx in Spanish "because they are the basics to understand our struggle." Four copies of the pamphlet *Farmers Face the Crisis of the 1990s* by Doug Jenness were sold almost instantly off the table. Several people bought copies of the pamphlet *Fascism: What It Is and How to Fight It* by Leon Trotsky as well. Fifteen people purchased *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium* over the course of the two days, with the Young Socialists in the southern region, selling five copies of the book.

During the event members of the Young Socialists met with David Klier, a student from Valdosta, Georgia. They had discussions with him and other college students he brought with him about the growing threat of fascism and the importance of join-

ing an organization like the Young Socialists. David asked to join the YS, explaining, "This is exactly the kind of organization I've been looking for!" He had participated in a recent southern regional Socialist Educational Conference sponsored by the Young Socialists.

At the beginning of December, Romina Green went to Seattle to campaign for communism with other members of the YS and joined in a propaganda intervention at the protests that took place. On her return, she spoke at a forum titled "WTO: Why Protectionist Protests are a Trap for the Labor Movement." Several youth and workers came to the event, including a high school student YS members met during the SOA protest. Two youth from the University of Alabama at Birmingham came to hear a communist perspective on the Seattle events, and coming to future events sponsored by the YS. A coal miner also attended who had learned about the forum from a team selling the *Militant* at the mine portal where he works.



Militant/Cindy Jaquith
YS members and socialist workers staffed literature table at School of the Americas protest, Columbus, Georgia.

This week, YS members plan on visiting the picket line at Overnite Transportation in Memphis, Tennessee, with youth interested in the YS. They will also join YS members and other interested youth in Atlanta this weekend in attending a fundraiser for farmers planning a trip to Cuba.

Romina Green is a garment worker; Roberto Guerrero is a textile worker.

Cuban leaders speak at solidarity meetings in Seattle

BY ELIZABETH STONE

SEATTLE, Washington—More than 500 people attended a December 3 rally here featuring members of the delegation of the Cuban government to the World Trade Organization (WTO) ministerial meeting, which ended that day. The event took place at the New Hope Baptist Church. It was sponsored by the Seattle Committee to Welcome the Cuban Delegation and the National Network on Cuba. The forum was part of a three-day "US Cuba 2000 Conference," organized by the National Network on Cuba (NNOC). The NNOC is a coalition of about 70 national, regional, and local groups in the United States that organize activities to broaden opposition to Washington's policies against revolutionary Cuba.

Felipe Pérez Roque, Cuba's foreign minister who headed his government's delegation to the WTO meeting, was featured at the December 3 event. He was welcomed at the meeting by Joan Campbell of the National Council of Churches and Lucius Walker of Pastors for Peace, among others.

Pérez Roque said the Cuban government raised its voice at the WTO summit on behalf of the Third World. He pointed to United Nations statistics that show the richest 20 percent of people on the planet control 86 percent of the world economy.

This system of domination and superexploitation of most nations—the majority of humanity—by a handful of imperialist powers is responsible for expanding poverty and social inequality, increasing joblessness, and destruction of the environment, he said. "This is the world that Cuba believes it is possible to change, that we have the duty and the right to change."

Washington's 40-year-long economic war on Cuba is not only aimed at the Cuban people, Pérez Roque said. It also violates rights of people in the United States, like Cuban Americans who are prevented from having normal relations with their relatives in Cuba. "The U.S. blockade has brought difficulties," he said, "but it hasn't been able to kill our hope. We are more optimistic than ever that time is on our side."

Hassán Pérez, president of the Federation of University Students (FEU) in Cuba, also gave brief greetings to the December 3 gathering. He had addressed several dozen students the day before at the University of Washington. Campus officials had previ-

ously reserved a large auditorium and had announced a public meeting there to be addressed by Cuban president Fidel Castro, who the press had said might be part of the Cuban delegation to the WTO meeting. U.S. president William Clinton, however, who addressed the trade summit, failed to convince any other heads of state to attend it. The Cuban government decided not to send Castro as part of its delegation either.

The conference on December 4-5 was attended by about 150 people and consisted of several panel discussions. Its main aim was to build and help organize a U.S. delegation for a World Meeting of Friendship and Solidarity with Cuba, scheduled for Havana, November 10-14, 2000.

Fernando Remírez de Esteño, First Deputy Minister of Cuba and chief of the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, D.C., gave the main presentation on the panel on U.S.-Cuba relations. Despite claims in the media that the U.S. government has eased some of its sanctions against Cuba, Remírez said, "the embargo is not only in place but has been enforced vigorously in recent months." This year the U.S. government has taken action against three companies from Spain, Germany, and Jamaica, attempting to force them to curtail or end their investments in Cuba, Remírez said.

Cuba continues to face a severe economic crisis, however, triggered at the opening of the 1990s from the sudden cutoff of trade at preferential prices and aid from the former Soviet Union and Eastern European countries. Since then, Cuba has had to trade largely in the capitalist market.

The difficulties have been exacerbated by an intensified economic war by Washington, which began immediately after workers and peasants overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista in 1959 and opened up the first socialist revolution in the Americas.

Other panels discussed the gains of the Cuban revolution, and the challenges to maintain these gains today, in health, education, and culture. Panelists from the United States included David Apsey, a dentist from Detroit, Jane Franklin from New Jersey who has written books on Cuba, and Ellen Bernstein of Pastors for Peace.

On the evening of December 4, a delegation of nine arrived from Cuba. It included representatives of the Cuban Institute of

Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP), Federation of Cuban Women (FMC), and Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC). They had been invited to take part in the US-Cuba 2000 conference, but the U.S. government delayed giving them visas. They addressed conference panels the next day.

Rita Pereira, a leader of the FMC, for example, described the impact of Washington's economic war on women in Cuba.

On the morning of December 5, several of the speakers just arrived from Cuba explained the Cuban government's campaign to press for the return to Cuba of 6-year-old Elián González. Julio Fernández Buste, professor of law at the University of Havana, said the case "is a very emotional thing for the Cuban people." González was rescued by fishermen after a shipwreck left him clinging to an inner tube in the Florida Straits for two days. He was one of 13 Cubans who left Cuba outside legal channels aboard an overloaded 20-foot boat. Ten drowned, including the boy's mother.

His father, Juan Miguel González, who Elián lived with, and his grandparents have made it clear they want him back home in Cárdenas, Cuba. The U.S. government, backed by the big-business press and right-wing organizations such as the Cuban American National Foundation (CANF), has projected the framework of a custody battle fought out in Florida Family Court.

The Cuban government has demanded the boy's immediate repatriation. Large demonstrations have been held outside the U.S. Interests Section in Havana to press this demand. Washington has since said it is prepared to send officials to Cuba to meet with the child's family and negotiate his return.

The NNOC conference passed a resolution backing the Cuban government's demand and calling for actions in the United States to press for it. In discussing the proposal, a number of speakers said that the NNOC should not "politicize" the issue and proposed a return-the-child-to-his-family axis for any actions.

Others said that it is the policies of the U.S. government that are responsible for Cubans attempting to leave the island through illegal channels and those policies must be discussed and opposed. Gisela López of the Chicago Cuba Coalition said Washington funds and backs programs like those beamed to Cuba by the so-called Radio Martí

urging Cubans to "flee."

A few participants argued that speaking to workers, farmers, young people and others about this case cannot be divorced from the Cuban revolution and its decades-long face-off with U.S. imperialism. Ernie Mailhot of the Socialist Workers Party in Seattle said the fire of opponents of U.S. policy towards Cuba should be focused on Washington, not on the "right-wing Mafia" in Miami, and urged forums and other educational activities to discuss why Washington's cold war against Cuba doesn't end.

The gathering endorsed the NNOC proposal to build a delegation from the United States for the November 2000 solidarity conference in Havana. During the youth panel, Johana Tablada from the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, D.C., and Luis Enrique Prieto of the Union of Young Communists in Cuba urged participants to help organize students and other youth to take part in the April 1-4 congress in Cuba of the Organization of Caribbean and Latin American Students (OCLAE), which projects participation by a few thousand.

On December 6, about 45 representatives of organizations affiliated to the National Network on Cuba held the NNOC semiannual meeting at the same site. They discussed implementing what had been projected at the conference, including organizing a delegation for the November 2000 gathering in Havana. The NNOC also endorsed efforts by students and other youth to organize a delegation to the OCLAE congress. Network affiliates announced several other projects they are working on, including the next Venceremos Brigade to Cuba and educational seminars in Cuba by the Detroit-based U.S.-Cuba Labor Exchange.

Andrés Gómez of the Antonio Maceo Brigade and the Miami Coalition to End the U.S. Economic Embargo on Cuba announced that five farmers from Georgia and Florida are planning a fact-finding trip to Cuba in February. The Miami coalition and the Atlanta Network on Cuba have backed the trip. The NNOC set its next meeting in New York City June 4-5.

Elizabeth Stone is a member of the International Association of Machinists in Chicago. Angel Lariscy in Miami and Argiris Malapanis contributed to this article.

CAMPAIGNING WITH 'CAPITALISM'S WORLD DISORDER'

Farmers, workers buy book at protests

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

Participants in the international campaign to build the readership of *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium* have been promoting the book at some important political events lately.

Two members of the Transport Workers Union (TWU) bought copies outside a union meeting to discuss their contract fight on December 14 in New York. A number of workers stopped at the literature table set up by socialist workers near the meeting venue. "One worker was from Puerto Rico. He stopped to talk, looked through the book, and decided to buy it," said Olga Rodríguez, who helped staff the table.

A third copy was sold to an internet company worker from Jersey City who was passing by. After expressing his full support for the fight of the TWU for a just contract, he spoke about New York state's antiunion Taylor Law. "It seems blatantly undemocratic," he said. "It's designed to keep labor from doing anything for its members and serves corporate

interests both for the Democrats and the Republicans who serve the bosses."

In the days leading up to December 15, when union members were preparing to strike, supporters of Pathfinder books and the *Militant* sold a number of copies of the socialist weekly to TWU members at subway and bus depots in Manhattan and Brooklyn.

"*Capitalism's World Disorder* takes up the shifts in world politics of the last decade," Rodríguez said. "It helps unionists to see the context of their struggles, and to connect them to other fights." (See ad on front page.)

In August socialist unionists and youth kicked off a campaign to both sell the book and to place it in libraries and bookstores. The campaign is boosting the sales of other Pathfinder titles and socialist periodicals. Promoting *Making History*, Pathfinder's brand new collection of interviews with leaders of the Cuban Revolutionary Armed Forces, fits into this effort too.

"He convinced himself to buy *Capitalism's World Disorder*," Tom Fiske told the *Militant*, describing the response of a farmer he met at the Dec. 13 march in Washington D.C. organized by the Black Farmers and Agriculturists Association.

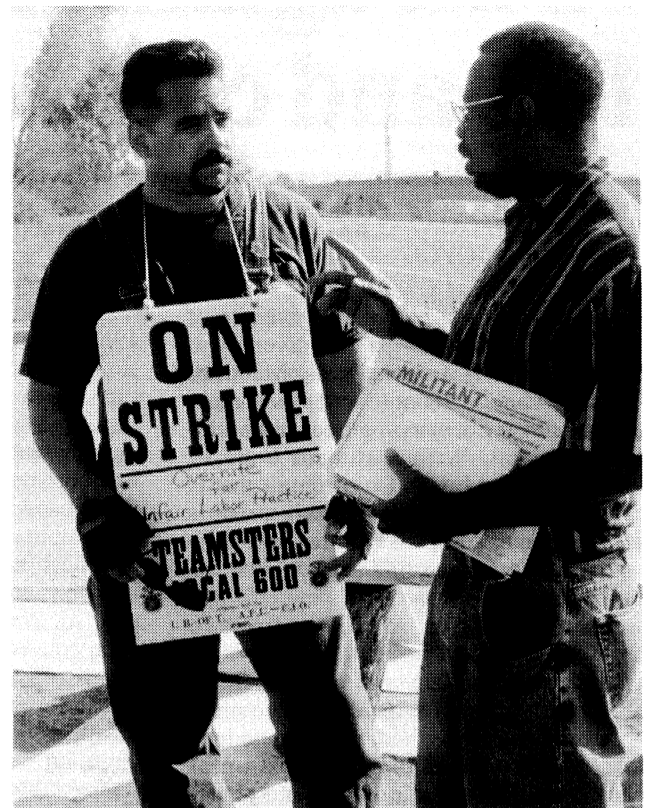
"We had a great discussion. I said some things about the need for workers and working farmers to act as allies. As he looked through the introductory pages of the book, he noted that it centered on the changes working people had begun to fight for in this country. This convinced him to buy it. In the discussions among the farmers he was a leading advocate of the need for independent actions."

Pathfinder supporters in Los Angeles showed the potential to stock bookstore shelves with Pathfinder titles in recent visits. Juan Villagómez and Mark Friedman gained orders from two

Santa Monica shops, including multiple copies of many titles. One major bookstore ordered six copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder*, three of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics*, *Habla Malcolm X* (Malcolm X speaks), and titles by Che Guevara and Leon Trotsky. "The buyer was interested in Marxism, so he ordered a lot of stuff," said Villagómez. A display of *Capitalism's World Disorder* will be mounted on a central table in the front of the store.

A smaller store ordered *Capitalism's World Disorder*, *Making History*, 15 copies of *The Communist Manifesto*, and several titles on the Cuban revolution. Villagómez and Friedman have since placed *Capitalism's World Disorder* and *Making History* in a Hollywood bookstore.

Below we print other reports from campaign participants.



Militant/Tim Mailhot

Militant supporter Shelton McCrainey talking to Overnite picket at trucking company in St. Louis, Missouri.

Campaign to sell *Capitalism's World Disorder* to workers and farmers

Union	Placements	Individual Sales
	Goal/Sold	Goal/Sold
IAM	75/60	50/59
UAW	40/10	35/7
UFCW	42/8	39/16
UNITE	35/3	25/8
USWA	40/39	30/21
UTU	65/61	35/39
TOTALS	297/179	214/134

Teamsters snap up books

BY STEPHEN BLOODWORTH

MEMPHIS, Tennessee—Three Teamsters union members picketing the Overnite Transportation Company bought one copy of *Capitalism's World Disorder* and two of Pathfinder's *Teamster Rebellion*. We visited the line on December 13 to bring solidarity and to find out more about the Overnite workers' struggle.

The pickets, Teamsters from Local 667 employed by Yellow and Consolidated Freight Companies, were walking the line while Overnite strikers attended a Christmas party for themselves and their families sponsored by the union local. Local 667 is a large, amal-

gamated local that includes Teamsters from Overnite, Yellow, Consolidated Freight, and other companies.

After the picket line visit, the team stopped by two local bookstores. One took a copy of *Capitalism's World Disorder* on consignment. The buyers at both stores, one specializing in African-American literature in the heart of Memphis and the other more of a "superstore" type, intend to place orders for more books when the team returns in the near future.

Iowa bookstores order Pathfinder

BY EDWIN FRUIT

DES MOINES, Iowa—Over the past couple of weeks Pathfinder supporters in Iowa have made progress in placing *Capitalism's World Disorder* and other Pathfinder books in stores in the area. Latino food stores in Des Moines and in a town north of the city ordered books and pamphlets for their shelves. One took 14 titles in Spanish and a copy of *Capitalism's World Disorder* in English. The other ordered nine books in Spanish. The Des Moines store reports that three of the books have been sold.

Two stores in a chain selling books, videos, and CDs also placed orders. One, whose customers include many students, took 37 books including six copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder*. The other, located in an industrial town in Central Iowa with a growing Latino population, ordered 55 titles including a good number in Spanish.

The owner of a small store in Des Moines selling mostly clothing and some magazines and catering to the Black community, ordered seven titles including one *Capitalism's World Disorder*. He had met Pathfinder supporters at meeting to organize support for the campaign to free Mumia Abu-Jamal, who was convicted and sentenced to death on frame-up charges of killing a cop. Seeing no bookstore in the Black community, he decided to stock a number of titles related to Black rights.

Tip at Puerto Rico rally pays off

BY NANCY ROSENSTOCK

HARTFORD, Connecticut—Supporters of the *Militant* and Pathfinder books joined a march through Hartford's Puerto Rican community December 4 sponsored by Todo Connecticut Con Vieques (All Connecticut with Vieques). Activists in the organization leafleted the community with information on the fight to get the U.S. Navy out of the Puerto Rican island of Vieques. Participants in the march purchased two copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder* along with 15 other titles published by Pathfinder.

Acting on a tip from a marcher who had traveled from New Haven, Connecticut, the team visited a bookstore specializing in Spanish-language books and immediately placed an order for three titles. The team also visited a university campus in the area, and placed two copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder* to round out a successful day.

Socialist Workers Party supporters raise financial monthly contributions

BY NAN BAILEY

LOS ANGELES—"Supporters of the Socialist Workers Party have raised the monthly pledges to the movement by about \$650 a month since the Active Workers Conference that took place in Oberlin, Ohio, in August," reports Sara Gates, who heads up a committee of supporters in Seattle that organizes the campaign to raise the monthly contributions.

"By the end of that conference, the pledges nationally totaled \$17,500 a month for an annual total of \$210,000. With the raise in pledges over the last three months, the annual level of contributions has risen to a little over \$217,000. This is a victory," said Gates, "and a real reflection of the growing political enthusiasm among supporters for the political ideas and the work of the party."

Gates and the Seattle supporters committee have sent out a monthly letter to party supporters since August. The letter reports on the results of the collection the previous month, and points to challenges for the month ahead.

A December 14 letter sent to party supporters attached a chart listing the amount of contributions collected over the past four months. It showed that \$19,300 was contributed nationally in October and \$17,000 in the month of November. In the December letter to supporters, Gates reported on the progress of the campaign:

"The four-month chart has a new column which gives the pledge levels for each area. These totals show that additional contributions have been raised since the Oberlin Active Workers Conference. The monthly average to shoot for is \$18,146.50, making the annual amount pledged \$217,758.

"The chart also shows that the amount for November is a little lower than last month, but the August to November figures show we are on a steady course toward maintaining a monthly average of over \$18,000.

"So keep up the good work. It is important to pay extra attention to the December collection because of the holidays. Let's enter the third millennium (or the last year of the second, depending on your point of view) on a strong footing!"

The supporters are also taking steps forward in systematically organizing to collect pledges. "In most cities where there are supporters now, one supporter works with others to take responsibility for organizing the collection of money pledged by support-

ers. This has been a step forward," said Gates. "We send the monthly letter on the campaign to this supporter and ask them to share the results we report on each month with other supporters in their area. This has helped us all to get a sense of the national progress we're making and to see the importance of our role in organizing the campaign locally."

If you would like to join this campaign and make a monthly pledge, contact the SWP in your area or write to Gates by E-mail at sjgates@home.com

Actions demand justice for Mumia Abu-Jamal, end to death penalty

BY NANCY COLE

PHILADELPHIA—Supporters of the fight to win justice for Mumia Abu-Jamal are organizing protests and other activities to coincide with legal actions in the federal appeal of his death sentence.

Abu-Jamal, a well-known Black journalist and activist, was convicted in 1982 on frame-up charges of killing Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner.

In late October, U.S. District Judge William Yohn Jr. granted a stay of execution for Abu-Jamal, which set aside the death warrant of December 2 signed by Pennsylvania Governor Thomas Ridge. On December 2, Abu-Jamal supporters organized what was described as an "emergency international press conference" broadcast on WHAT radio and on the Internet. Attorney Leonard Weinglass outlined the expected scenario in federal court, which would lead to a court hearing with Abu-Jamal present no earlier than March of next year.

"Our basic premise is that Mumia never had a trial," explained Weinglass. With 11

qualified Afro-Americans struck from the jury, with the judge having been a member of the Fraternal Order of Police, and with the court-appointed attorney acknowledging he conducted no investigation, it had only the "trappings" of a trial, he said.

Although hampered by the 1996 federal law making it easier to carry through the death penalty, the defense argues for Judge Yohn to grant Abu-Jamal an evidentiary hearing. This would mean setting aside decisions of the judge in the original trial, who basically allowed all witnesses from the prosecution and threw out all testimony from the defense.

Weinglass reported he has now received 15,000 letters from around the world addressed to Judge Yohn, which the defense has agreed to hold and present to the judge at a future date.

In addition to rallies on December 11 in Philadelphia, Chicago, and San Francisco, a November 20 national planning meeting initiated plans for a conference early next year and a spring mobilization tied to the court dates.

Mexico City students strike against tuition fees and cutbacks

BY MANUEL GONZÁLEZ AND LINDA JOYCE

MEXICO CITY, Mexico—The campus of the Autonomous National University of Mexico (UNAM), the largest university in Latin America, is occupied by thousands of students who are about to enter their eighth month on strike demanding free public education for all. With a student body of 268,000 and a Mexico City campus that is called a "city within a city," this strike is making a daily impact on Mexican politics. A *Militant* reporting team visited the campus December 1-3.

The strike began April 20 after two months of protests against the university administration's unilateral announcement of tuition and other fee increases. The strike has continued since then, despite attempts to isolate the strike through a media smear campaign, police intimidation, and physical attacks on protesters. "The fact that we have been on strike for almost eight months shows that we are strong, despite all the state power that has been used against us," one student striker told the *Militant*.

On April 19 the General Strike Council (CGH) issued its "Manifesto to the Nation" that outlined the students' six demands:

- elimination of tuition and a multitude of other university service charges;
- cancellation of measures adopted in 1997 that limited how long students can remain enrolled and ended automatic passage of students from UNAM's high schools to its undergraduate programs;
- a direct, public dialogue with all members of the university community in order to solve its problems and the formation of a student council that has powers;
- no reprisals against strikers or supporters;
- making up for academic time lost due to the strike;
- and cutting ties with the national testing service CENEVAL.

University officials retreated on the tuition hike June 3, making it "voluntary." But the students surprised them by insisting on the complete adoption of their demands before they lift the strike.

The duration and firmness of the strike forced the resignation of the former UNAM rector, Francisco Barnés de Castro on November 12. The new rector, Juan Ramón de la Fuente, came directly from a governmental post as the secretary of health in the administration of President Ernesto Zedillo and is taking a more outwardly conciliatory approach. The CGH is now in negotiations with a committee of the administration, headed by de la Fuente.

'The right to education will be won'

The huge campus is surrounded by barricades. Notably empty parking lots stand in contrast to university buildings ablaze with

banners and red and black flags. The Ernesto Che Guevara auditorium, renamed following the 1967-68 student struggles and government massacre of hundreds of students on Oct. 2, 1968, is the site of the majority of the student strike assemblies. On one wall of the auditorium and over the remnants of an official university seal, students are painting a striking mural with the image of Guevara, an Argentine-born revolutionary who was a leader of the Cuban revolution.

A popular strike poster reads, "The right of education for everyone is not negotiated, it is won and we will win, we will never forget!" All over the university, classrooms have been converted into dormitories and work rooms; offices, phones, and computers are put to use for the strike; brigades are cooking meals in the kitchens; printing presses are churning out strike materials; and "Pirate Radio" is broadcasting strike news. The government has tried several times to shut off the electricity, water, and phone lines in the school. But the engineering students have put their studies into practice and reinstated these services.

The student strikers see themselves in the forefront of the struggle against the increasing privatization of the country's patrimony, including state-owned factories and banks, and against government attempts to roll back social gains such as free access to public education through the university level.

"If they are going to close the public university and raise the tuition, it is our duty not to permit it," said Socari, 20, a student of Latin American studies and member of the strike finance committee who, like many students, requested only her first name be used.

"We need free education for all," she added. "If we don't stand up now, who will? Many died for this right in a series of student struggles. Our fighting flag stands for the people who can not pay—and they are the ones who are supporting us the most."

David, 20, a member of the strike outreach committee, spoke to us from an office he now calls "home" in the Liberal Arts school, where a couch doubled as a bed. He explained that more than 85 percent of the students voted in a referendum for the strike. In huge student strike assemblies, students voted to form a 120 member General Strike Council, with representatives from the different schools within the university, its high schools, and extension campuses.

The students at the Liberal Arts school sent us to the School of Chemistry to talk to some of the students who are running the printing presses. Some of the chemistry students were outside, ready to escort us in when we got there. Their school has had a tradition of being more conservative than Liberal Arts, and it took longer for the strikers to develop self-confidence there. The students told us that while some immediately occupied their academic buildings, others, like at the Law School, camped outside in tents. It was the rainy season that drove the law students inside, they said, laughing, and now they are some of the most resolute in the fight.

The protests have "transformed us," said Pavel, a chemistry major now working in the strike printshop. "Before we concentrated almost exclusively on chemistry, but now we have to learn new skills and read a wide variety of material in order to know about what's going on in the world."

Teachers and parents join in fight

The strikers have organized brigades of students to fan out over the country to spread the word about their fight and help in social causes, they said, including medical students who are providing free health care in the countryside. They have sent several brigades to Chiapas, and are solidarizing with the struggle of peasants there. They also sent representatives to the International Seminar of Youth and Students on Neoliberalism, held in Havana, Cuba.

Professors, high school teachers, and parents are also participating in the strike, and



Militant/Linda Joyce

Teachers and professors join rally outside negotiations with university administration in Mexico City, December 12, in support of striking students. Their signs protest the fact that they have gone unpaid and been replaced for backing the students' fight.

have their own organizations, assemblies, and newsletters. Our reporting team attended a negotiating session between the students and university officials in downtown Mexico City December 2. We talked to professors and teachers who were protesting the fact that they had not received their pay for several months. Though they are not formally fired, the university and high schools have hired replacement teachers. "Since we did not participate in giving the scab classes organized by the administration outside the university walls, we are examples of the political repression," said Lilia, a teacher at one of the preparatory high schools. "Our union is not helping us at all," she added.

At this negotiating session, broadcast live on a closed circuit TV outside the government building where it was being held, one of the student negotiators demanded that the teachers receive their back pay and be reinstated immediately, to the cheers of the 500 people present in the street outside.

Many parents of the students were there to support their children. "We want to let them know that they are not alone," said Rafael, one such parent.

One of the students' main demands in the December 2 round was for the negotiations to be public, open to all students and others, and for them to be held in the Ernesto Che Guevara auditorium on the UNAM campus. Government and university officials do not recognize this name for the auditorium, and said they were reluctant to meet there for "security reasons." The students were quick to point out that it is *their* safety that has been constantly threatened by the cops and extralegal gangs for the last eight months. If the negotiations were held at the university, the students themselves would guarantee everyone's safety.

Since the beginning of the strike, students faced harassment, threats, infiltration, frame-ups, and kidnappings. Police helicopters constantly hover and fly over the university, and on occasion military tanks have been

driven past the school.

None of the major political parties have stated an official position on the strike. "We know they have a plan for us but no one wants to take responsibility for it in this election period," said Victor, a student striker. Many students especially criticize the center-left Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) for not taking a stand in favor of the strike and offering active support. Forces around the PRD are among those pressing to negotiate a settlement to the strike.

While there is popular support for the strike among the students, there are various debates on the way forward for a resolution of the strike, and whether to make concessions on any of the students' demands.

More than 26,000 workers at the university are also affected by the strike. Many are supporters and participate in the protests. We spoke with two who wholeheartedly support the students, José Luis Urbin and Andrés Rodríguez, university technicians and members of a dissident group within the STUNAM, the workers' union at the university. They stated that the union officialdom is saying they support the strike, but doing nothing.

Urbin said, "Workers are being oppressed more than ever, and also weighing us down are the political parties with their politics of privatization. We need good salaries, better contracts, and to really have productive industries workers need to take power in all countries."

They told us that students have participated with the Mexican Electrical Union, SME, in demonstrations against the sell-off of the electrical industry. Many demonstrations against the privatization process, where the Mexican government is turning over state entities one by one, are continually taking place, and the UNAM strikers are part of them with their banners.

A 17-year-old high school student escorted us out of the university. He said he it was an honor to be a striker, and that the students are not afraid.

Teachers and students protest lack of funds at University of Guadalajara

BY BECCA ARENSON AND LUIS RIVERA

GUADALAJARA, Mexico—Students and teachers from the University of Guadalajara held classes outdoors the week of November 29 to December 3 at the Plaza de Armas, a park in downtown Guadalajara, as part of a series of protests against the insufficient funding of the university. A different department was planned to be represented in the plaza each day through December 8 to pressure the government to double the budget for the university.

On November 30 the art departments held their classes in the plaza. Their protest was accompanied by a festive atmosphere of music, dancing, and street theater.

The current university budget proposal calls for an increase of 14 percent from the previous year, which according to students and faculty, will not cover the growing demands of the university, which include the need for up-to-date library materials, the upgrading of laboratories, and the maintenance of facilities. "Out of 32 public uni-

versities in Mexico, the budget for the University of Guadalajara ranks the 28th lowest, even though Guadalajara is the second largest city," commented Victor Manuel Silva, a second-year agricultural student.

Another concern is the growing number of applicants being denied entrance to the university due to lack of funding. "This year 30,000 students were turned away," said Salvador Mena Munguáias, director for the College of Biological and Agricultural Sciences. Some students feel that the ultimate goal of the government is to privatize the University of Guadalajara. "This wouldn't be in the interests of most students because we would have to pay more for classes and many of us are not in a position to do that," said Aldo Ulloa Rivera, an 18-year-old high school student.

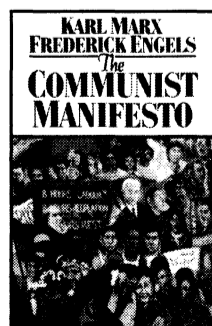
The week-long protest culminated in a rally and march December 8 that included all the colleges and high schools associated with the university. At that action, the students decided to continue their protests another 10 days.

From Pathfinder

The Communist Manifesto

KARL MARX, FREDERICK ENGELS

Explains why communists act on the basis not of preconceived principles but of facts springing from the actual class struggle, and why communism, to the degree it is a theory, is the generalization of the historical line of march of the working class and of the political conditions for its liberation. Also available in Spanish. \$3.95



Available at bookstores listed on page 8

Youth drawn to Pathfinder at Mexico bookfair seek lessons of workers' struggle

BY NORTON SANDLER

GUADALAJARA, Mexico—"Who are you and where do you come from?" I must have been asked that four or five times," said Luis Rivera, an electrical worker and a Young Socialists activist who participated as a volunteer in staffing the Pathfinder Press booth at the Guadalajara International Bookfair.

The young people and others who asked this question were attracted to the books Pathfinder publishes—books that draw on the lessons of the revolutionary workers movement over the past 150 years and also books that both analyze the world today and map the road forward for struggling workers and farmers—and by the volunteers who took time off work and school to distribute them. Eleven Pathfinder supporters from across the United States took a stint staffing the Pathfinder booth during the November 27–December 5 fair.

The books that received the most attention from bookfair participants were Pathfinder's new title *Making History, Interviews with Four Generals of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces*, which was printed just in time for the bookfair; *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working Class Politics at the Millennium* by Jack Barnes; and the Spanish-language *Nueva Internacional no. 5*, featuring the article "U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War."

A major event in Latin America

The fair was attended by 315,000 people, according to event organizers. This annual bookfair is a major event for presenting fiction and nonfiction titles in Latin America. Nearly 1,000 book publishers and distributors from 26 countries had a vast array of titles on display this year. Most were in Spanish, though some booths included titles in Portuguese, Chinese, French, German, and English.

Many prominent writers and reviewers from across the Americas attend the programs that are organized over the eight days of the fair. This year they included Portuguese novelist Jose Saramago, winner of the 1999 Nobel Prize for literature, and Mexican writer Sergio Pitlor, who was awarded the 1999 Juan Rulfo prize for Latin American and Caribbean literature during the fair itself.

Chile was selected as the featured country this year. A large elevated pavilion was dedicated to displaying books from that country. A series of daily programs celebrated the arts in Chile, from literature to dance to film, and a restaurant with Chilean food was installed adjacent to the pavilion.

The fair was divided between days open to the public and those that were open only to those involved in the book trade. This is a major arena in Latin America for book sellers and distributors to do business and exchange book promotional ideas.

There was a big turnout of librarians from Mexico. Some 200 librarians also attended from the United States, including 40 from California alone. They came to the fair to locate and purchase books for the rapidly expanding Spanish-speaking population that use libraries across the United States.

Numerous librarians and others in the book trade visited the Pathfinder booth. Arrangements were made for further discussions with several of them. One San Francisco Bay Area librarian purchased a copy of *Capitalism's World Disorder* for herself and ordered copies in both English and Spanish for the library.

Pathfinder representatives were also able to meet with several potential distributors in Mexico to discuss promotion of Pathfinder's growing list of Spanish-language books as well as its more than 300 titles in English. New this year was the presence at the fair of companies organizing to sell Spanish-language books throughout the Americas across the Internet.

On the public days the fair was jammed with large crowds. On several mornings throngs of children and teenage youth packed the large Expo building where the fair was held. In the late afternoon and evenings until 9:00 p.m., the fair would again be jammed with university students, workers, and others from the area. Wave after wave



Militant/Linda Joyce
Above, students at November 29–December 5 bookfair in Guadalajara, Mexico. Right, Young Socialist member Luis Rivera talking to participant at protest of University of Guadalajara students at Plaza de Armas. More than 250 books and pamphlets were sold, reflecting broad political discussion.

of young people and others visited the Pathfinder booth every evening. The Pathfinder volunteer team distributed 5,000 brochures promoting Pathfinder's new titles.

Fair reflects political climate in Mexico

Several events held during the bookfair reflected the political climate in Mexico and affected political discussions at the Pathfinder booth. The book *Palabras de Cárdenas* (Words of Cárdenas) was launched early in the fair. This title features speeches and writings by Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, presidential candidate of the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) for the June 2000 Mexican presidential election. Cárdenas walked through the exhibition hall escorted by a large entourage. Supported by the Alliance for Mexico, a coalition that includes many left parties, Cárdenas promotes a "third road," a vision of future capitalist Mexico modeled after the United Kingdom under its current prime minister, Anthony Blair.

Another presentation was made on the new book by Vicente Fox, the presidential candidate of the Party of National Action (PAN). The PAN is the major opposition party to the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), which has held the presidency of Mexico since the 1920s. During the bookfair the PAN, the traditional right-wing party in Mexico, announced an electoral coalition with the Green Ecological Party of Mexico (PVEM).

The Pathfinder volunteers also took time to meet workers and students around the city. Members of the team visited the large Corona brewery at shift change. Workers there described the grinding conditions of life in Mexico. These trade unionists and other workers who stopped by the Pathfinder booth explained that the minimum wage in Mexico today is the equivalent of US\$3 a day. Higher paid workers, including some at the brewery, get paid in the range of \$15 a day. Many workers we spoke to stated that conditions have stabilized since the Mexican peso collapsed in 1994, but that they have to work many more hours a week than they did a few years ago to survive, even if this means holding two or three jobs.

We also spoke to numerous cab drivers and others who had lived for stints in the United States, particularly in California. One cab driver proudly explained that he had been active in the dry wallers construction fight in the Los Angeles area several years ago.

Protests by peasants, students

On December 1, small corn farmers announced plans to block roads in 40 towns across

in Mexico City, students have been on strike since last April. On November 30 four striking students stopped by the booth. Within minutes they and four Pathfinder volunteers were engaged in animated discussion about their struggle. The discussion moved from the booth to the floor of the Expo, with about 10 participants sitting down discussing politics.

The next evening these same UNAM students returned to the booth to drop off literature explaining the demands of their struggle. This helped provide the impetus for dispatching Pathfinder team members Manuel González and Linda Joyce to travel to Mexico City for three days to get a first hand feel for the strike. (See article on facing page).

We learned that ferment is spreading at the University of Guadalajara as well. Several teams of Pathfinder volunteers were dispatched to that campus during the bookfair. On the first trip, the team began to display the Pathfinder titles they had with them on the steps leading to a campus building. Within minutes, students provided the team with a table and chairs to make it easier to exhibit the books.

Students at this large university who are protesting the lack of funding from the Federal and state government have been holding classes on a daily basis in the Plaza de Armas, a well-known plaza in the center of the city. Each day a different department moves its classes from the campus.

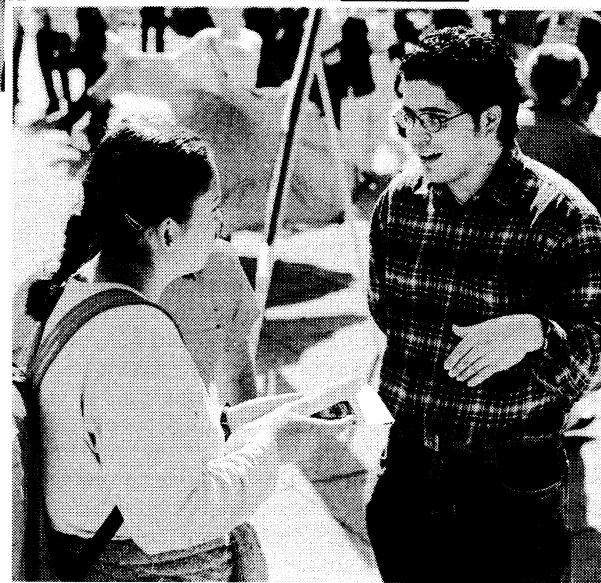
On December 2 Young Socialists activists Luis Rivera and Bobbi Negrón spoke to a Uni-

versity of Guadalajara psychology class of 20 students after they were invited there by a professor who had visited the Pathfinder booth two days earlier. Following the discussion with 20 students about politics in the United States and the goals of the Young Socialists, the professor invited the YS to return to speak to his class next year. The professor said that with more lead time, he will organize a bigger meeting then.

Several students from this university visited the Pathfinder booth directly as a result of the campus visits. Others attending the bookfair were attracted to the displays featuring Pathfinder titles that could be seen down a long aisle from 50 feet away.

One student, Alejandra, visited the booth several times. On December 2, after many members of the Pathfinder team had to re-

Continued on Page 9



the state of Jalisco the next day unless the government addressed their demand to raise corn prices to \$155 a ton. The protests were called off after the state and federal governments reached an agreement to grant the farmers price subsidies of an additional \$13 per ton through Jan. 15, 2000.

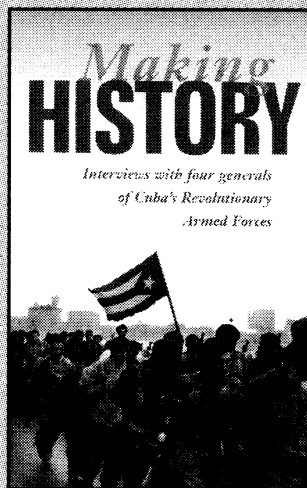
At the same time, ranchers protested with their animals in Mexico City, causing chaos in the country's capital. They were demanding to know how the recent agreement reached between the Mexican government and the countries that make up the European Union would affect farm prices. They also were also demanding an increase in the agricultural budget and agricultural supports.

Student struggles are a big feature of politics in Mexico today. At the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM),

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Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 8, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Fax: (212) 727-0150. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 to cover shipping and handling.

Pennsylvania coal bosses close union mines

UMWA members, retirees petition in defense of lifetime health benefits

BY TONY LANCASTER

INDIANA, Pennsylvania—"We are coal mining people. It's been our life. I really hate this company," Vickie Parks told the *Pittsburgh Post Gazette*. Three members of her family were laid off when the Emilie mine, part of Keystone Coal Mining, closed at Thanksgiving.

"Are the closings money or break the unions?" asks a sign posted near the Lucerne mine, a Helvetia Coal mine that is scheduled to close at Christmas.

In a letter printed in the *Indiana Gazette*, Mary Carcella, the daughter of a miner at Lucerne, asked, "How many are aware of the far-reaching impact that a job reduction of this magnitude will have?"

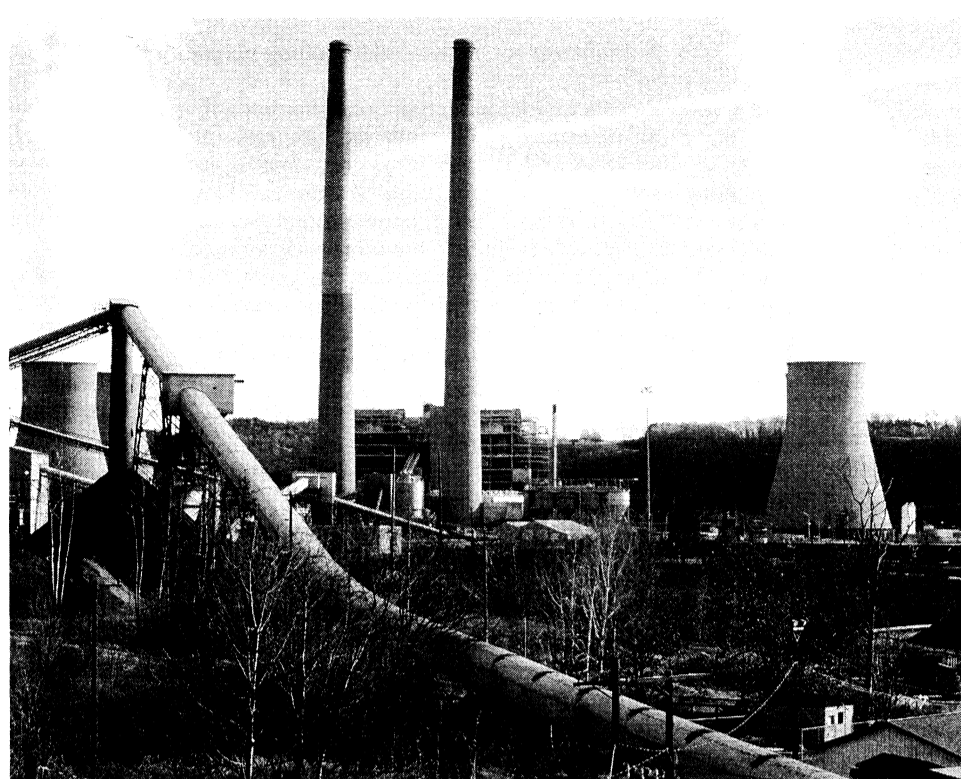
At the end of the year, nearly 300 more members of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) in this area will be out of a job, bringing to 850 the number of miners laid off by coal giant Consol Energy in Indiana and Armstrong counties over the last two months of 1999. Consol Energy acquired the Keystone and Helvetia mines in 1998 as part of its \$150 million purchase of the Rochester and Pittsburgh Coal Co. (R&P). Consol is the largest underground mining company in the United States.

The mine closings decimate the ranks of the UMWA and are a huge blow to the surrounding coalfield communities in this region east of Pittsburgh. Mining has been a mainstay for decades in these rural counties. In 2000 there will be only one union mine left operating.

Most of the other 15 or more mines in the area are small operations. The one other larger coal company, Canterbury Coal, broke the union in a strike that began in 1985. The layoffs will bring the number of underground miners in the area to under 1,000. Total coal employment in Indiana County in 1982 was around 6,000.

The Indiana mines use conventional methods to work the Upper Freeport and Upper Kittanning seams, which are relatively thin seams of coal. In Washington and Greene counties south and west of Pittsburgh, Consol mines work the Pittsburgh seam, which is seven to nine feet thick and suited for longwall operations.

Longwall mining involves more capital expenditure than conventional mining, but is very productive. A shear is used to cut coal from a face that can be 1,000 feet wide on a coal panel two miles long. Consol is the largest



Keystone coal preparation plant and generating station. Belt in foreground runs from now closed Emilie mine to preparation plant. Consol will lay off 800 union miners in Indiana and Armstrong counties by the end of the year.

est longwall operator in the country and more than 80 percent of its 1998 production came from longwall mining.

Both Keystone and Helvetia Coal operated "captive mines" that provided coal specifically for large electric generating stations—Keystone and Homer City respectively—with the coal preparation plants built right next to the generating stations.

Miners explain that when the power stations were built, the local community helped provide roads and land. "We lost the land. We lost roads and everything else," said Gary Parks, who worked at the Emilie mine. "The big payoff was supposed to be that the people in this area would have jobs forever. That was the idea. It was supposed to be here forever."

While Consol talks of the mines being "uneconomic," there are 450 million tons of recoverable reserves within 20 miles of the Keystone generating station. Robin James, a miner at Lucerne, told the *Militant* that to Consol it is simple: "In Greene

County it costs them \$8 a ton and here it costs \$23 a ton" to mine coal.

Dennis Mytrysac, president of the UMWA at the Emilie mine, said, "There are coal reserves out there, but Consol has decided not to open new mines." He explained that there were "problems with mining coal at a competitive price before Consol bought R&P because of the old machinery and equipment we had to work with at the Emilie mine."

Consol invests in nonunion operations

Rich Fink, president of the UMWA local at Keystone's Urling mine, said, "I have never felt that our mines were in the plans for Consol from the time it bought R&P. I always felt that Consol bought R&P to get its foot in the door to sell coal to the Keystone and Homer City generating stations so they could ship coal in from their huge longwall mines in Washington and Greene counties and West Virginia."

Consol has confirmed that they will ship

coal to the generating stations from their mines in Washington and Greene counties. Consol's Enlow Fork and Bailey mines in Greene County are the largest and third largest underground mines in the country. Last year together they produced more than 17 million tons of coal; in one month this year, Enlow Fork alone produced over 1 million tons. The opening of these mines as nonunion operations in 1985 and 1990 was a big blow to the union.

The five underground mines and one surface mine operated by Keystone and Helvetia last year produced about 4 million tons. While Consol has put no expenditure into the Keystone and Helvetia mines since purchasing them, it plowed more than \$200 million into the Bailey/Enlow Fork complex in the four years ending December 1998.

Miners also said that getting other mining jobs in the area at nonunion mines will be hard given Consol's plans to ship coal to the generating stations. Robin James explained that Consol "will put all these one-bucket nonunion outfits out of business too. Consol will flood the market."

Consol's aim with the purchase of Rochester and Pittsburgh Coal is obvious in the company's report on Mine No. 84, a longwall mine in Washington County that was part of R&P. Consol says the mine doubled production while employment was slashed and one longwall machine was pulled from the mine. The coal giant says it will produce 6 million tons from this mine in 1999. The ranks of UMWA miners at No. 84 were halved after Consol took over.

On their Investor Information web page, Consol brags, "We also got some nice contracts to serve new customers—Homer City and Keystone/Conemaugh power plants." Consol also favorably points to the recent purchase of the Homer City plant by Edison Mission Energy, which is planning to spend \$250 million on new scrubbers for the plant so that it can sell "deregulated electricity in two different power grids."

Consol explains that their target is to sell coal to the "deregulating electric generating markets of the Northeast" and that "by being in the right place we can capture economic rent that would otherwise go to the railroads."

Miners petition to defend benefits

The mine closings also highlight the importance of retirement and health benefits won by miners and the need to defend and extend these gains. These provide for pensions after 20 years underground and also lifetime health benefits for miners, retirees, and their spouses. Some of the miners who will be laid off are only a few months short of qualifying. Paul Cravener who worked at the Urling mine said, "[These miners are] the ones getting screwed. [Consol] said we would mine coal until June 2000. But they lied."

District 2 of the UMWA has been circulating petitions in support of lifetime health benefits. One petition has been circulated among miners; the other has been circulated in the coalfield communities, mainly by retirees. Union members and supporters have been collecting signatures at shopping centers and carried out a day of petitioning at Indiana University here.

Les Barnhouse, a retired miner from Blairsville, said it was easy getting support for the petition drive. "We have asked people to sign them at area supermarkets and as far away as the outlet stores in Grove City. Very few people have refused to sign the petitions when we told them we were trying to protect our health-care benefits."

Ed Yankovich, president of UMWA District 2, thinks that government aid is necessary to revive the coal industry in and around Indiana County. He said he approves of state assistance that has gone to stadiums in Pittsburgh and a shipyard in Philadelphia. "Why can't we do the same thing for Indiana County and Armstrong County to keep good-paying coal jobs?" he asked. The UMWA has been pushing career centers, which promote changing careers for coal miners.

Consol says it is opposed to state intervention and lobbied against legislation in Ohio for a tax credit. Consol spokesman Thomas Hoffman stated, "We're simply in favor of letting the marketplace work."

Bookfair in Guadalajara, Mexico

Continued from Page 7

turn to work, Alejandra spent two hours helping out in the booth, and enthusiastically introducing bookfair participants to Pathfinder titles.

Cuban publishers draw interest

Several publishing houses from Cuba participated in the bookfair. Stopping by this booth, you could often hear animated political discussions taking place, reflecting the fact that many in Mexico are attracted to the Cuban revolution. On November 30, some 20 organizations in Guadalajara sponsored a citywide meeting in solidarity with the Cuban revolution and against imperialism to celebrate the Cuban publishers' participation in the bookfair. A resolution recently passed by the Mexican Senate calling for an end to the U.S. economic embargo of Cuba was distributed to the 300 participants.

During the fair itself, a press conference was held featuring Omar González, president of the Cuban literary institute, and Cuban writers Miguel Barnet, and Eduardo Heras León. They discussed plans for the upcoming international bookfair in Havana and answered questions on the Cuban book publishing industry, which burst forward with the 1959 Cuban revolution. They also discussed the impact that the "special period," brought on by the collapse of preferential trade agreements with the Soviet Union in the early 1990s, has had in limiting the number of titles that can be produced under conditions of extreme shortages of printing supplies.

Barnet explained that Cuba's modern publishing industry began with the literacy campaign initiated after the 1959 revolu-

tion, which resulted not only in a massive culture of reading but also generated and gave impulse to a large number of writers, poets, and essayists in Cuba. A special program on Cuban literature was held on December 3 featuring five Cuban writers.

Leaving after our final night there, the Pathfinder team ran into four supporters of the Cuban revolution by the front door of the expo holding up a large banner reading "Solidarity with the Cuban revolution."

Books on the Cuban revolution were among those that drew the most interest at the Pathfinder booth. "Today there is more interest in Che than anything else among the young people," said Francisco, a student and teacher, who along with a friend purchased a dozen Pathfinder titles over the course of a couple of days. "This is a real change," he added. "A year or two ago it would have been Marcos," the central spokesperson of the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN), a peasant movement in the state of Chiapas that has been involved in a protracted conflict with the government.

Political polarization in Mexico

The discussions at the Pathfinder booth also reflected political polarization in Mexico. On at least four occasions booth visitors requested books by Adolf Hitler. "Hitler was a revolutionary too," one young man told us.

We asked Francisco about this. "In the markets you can not only find pins and badges with Che Guevara's picture on them, but you will also find some of the same vendors selling pins with swastikas," he said. The most prominent fascist group is called Aurora 2000. Francisco said he had seen groups of teenage youth putting their posters

on walls in the city a couple of times recently. "When you ask them what they are doing, they run off," he concluded.

Many youth who came back to the booth wanted to know where a publishing house like Pathfinder comes from, how long it had been in operation. Others asked questions about the team staffing the booth, which reflected several different political generations with the youngest being in their late teens and early 20s.

Also attractive was the fact that the booth was staffed by industrial workers. Several of the volunteers were able to describe their experiences in the airline and rail industries to bookfair visitors.

Participants at the gathering purchased books from the Pathfinder booth at reduced prices. A title that normally costs \$15, even reduced 40 to 50 percent, costs most of a day's pay for a relatively high paid Mexican worker. Nevertheless, we sold more than 250 books at the fair and on campus.

The biggest sellers among the books we sold were *Making History* with 23 copies, 18 copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder*, and 15 copies of *Nueva Internacional* no. 5. Thirty-five people bought copies of the Spanish-language monthly *Perspectiva Mundial*, and four subscribed.

YS activist Bobbi Negrón, present for the entire time the Pathfinder booth was open, summed up her experience saying, "I was fortunate to speak to workers and students in Guadalajara. We addressed the problems inflicted upon us by the enemy we all face, capitalism. This experience with all its aspects has allowed me to realize that it is possible to have Pathfinder books in libraries across Mexico but also to have Young Socialist chapters there."

Gov't hands off the TWU!

Continued from front page

10,000 workers rallied December 8, a week before the contract expiration date. This rally was joined by other unionists, showing the potential to stand up to all the attacks of the bosses, the government, and the big-business media. Leading up to the December 15 contract expiration date, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and City Hall worked overtime to whip up hysteria over the possible effects of a strike, in an attempt to undermine solidarity with the transit workers.

They have been unable to isolate the TWU members, however. In the discussion and debate raging in workplaces throughout the city, many workers agree that the transit workers' demands for better pay and working conditions are just. Their fight is part of the growing pattern of resistance among working people and others in the United States and around the world, from farmers struggling to stay on the land to Puerto Ricans resisting U.S. colonial domination of their country.

The rulers' sudden concern for the millions of working people and school children in New York who rely on the city's mass transportation system is nothing but hypocrisy. Giuliani and his predecessor, Democrat David Dinkins, have slashed funding for hospitals, social services, and schools. They, along with the state's governor, are responsible for a 300 percent increase in subway fares since 1980—lining the pockets of the wealthy bondholders who reap profits from the transit system.

At the same time City Hall has forced tens of thousands of workers onto "workfare," including some in the subway system. Instead of receiving union pay and benefits for a union job, they get a check amounting to less than minimum wage. In an attack on workers who are homeless, the city administration is demanding

"workfare" in exchange for shelter, while jailing people for "vagrancy."

After taking concessions in their previous contract, the transit workers demanded a 27 percent wage increase over the next three years and an end to arbitrary and unjust discipline. New York mayor Rudolph Giuliani and Gov. George Pataki joined the MTA in claiming that pay demand was excessive. Subway and bus workers have been under a virtual wage freeze for the last several years. And the wages they have won over decades of struggle—including two strikes—can only seem high when compared to the pitifully low wages that many workers in New York City receive. Giuliani went so far as to claim the wage increase the transit workers are demanding would force a doubling of the fare, despite the fact that the MTA tops, city, and state officials have debated how to spend the massive surplus accrued over the last decade.

The TWU membership will now be voting on a proposed contract. Whatever gains they make will have been the result of the determined stance of the ranks.

City officials have leveled the baseless accusation that transit workers have engaged in sabotage—charges should be rejected by every worker as part of the attempt to smear workers whose only "crime" is to demand a just contract.

Giuliani has declared that government workers have no right to strike and his senatorial opponent, Democrat Hillary Clinton, has remained silent on this question.

Working people can only rely on our own strength and unity—not the twin parties of the bosses—to stand up to the bosses' attacks on our livelihood and democratic rights. We need to stand in solidarity with the transit workers and their right to strike and demand:

Lift the injunction now! Repeal the Taylor Law! Hands off the TWU!

N.Y. transit workers fight for raise

Continued from Page 3

the amount each successive day. In addition, fines are to be imposed on any individual member of the union deemed to have violated the court order, starting at \$25,000 for the first day on strike and doubling each day.

Warning of the possibility of "wildcat actions" by workers opposed to the tentative settlement, Giuliani has emphasized that transit workers are still subject to these fines, and could be arrested and jailed, if they even talk about striking as they discuss how to respond to the proposed contract. The city deployed 3,000 extra cops in the subway and bus barns and stations to enforce this.

On December 15 Brooklyn Supreme Court judge Michael Pesce extended this order through December 23.

As part of their antiunion campaign, the mayor's office and Police Chief Howard Safir have also charged that transit workers have engaged in sabotage. At the evening meeting of TWU members on December 14, the police presence was extensive, with mounted cops, cops in riot gear, and patrolmen surrounding the building where the meeting was taking place. The following evening, a couple hundred transit workers who rallied to oppose the contract were outnumbered two-to-one by police.

Scare campaign to isolate union

The Giuliani administration, the transit authority, and the big-business press pulled out all the stops in attacking the union and attempting to whip up hysteria against a possible strike. The mayor called the union "immoral" and cautioned city residents that a strike could even cause deaths. Daily papers ran huge displays on the supposed "contingency plan," which include banning cars with less than three occupants in most of Manhattan, placing extra cops at the tunnels and bridges to enforce this, as well as using ferries, commuter trains, and "dollar vans" to try to break a strike. In addition, taxi cabs would be allowed to take multiple fares.

Many workers reacted against this, expressing support for the transit workers' fight for a better contract.

Some of the forces the government counted on as strikebreakers made clear they backed the unionists. New York Taxi Workers Alliance issued a statement calling on all drivers to refuse multiple fares, which they characterized as way to "break the transit workers' strike." Their flyer pointed out that taxi drivers have been target of previous attacks by the city administration. At least one group of van drivers who normally provide transportation in Brooklyn decided not to work in Manhattan to help break a transit strike.

The scare campaign by the media and politicians did get a hearing within the middle class and among some workers. One banker told the *New York Times* he planned to leave town before the strike deadline. "The way the city works, it will probably become the basis for a taxi demonstration," he declared.

The rulers are also playing on divisions in the union officialdom between the grouping around Local 100 president Willie James and a caucus called New Directions, which holds a substantial minority on the executive board and has called for a vote against the proposed contract.

A December 16 editorial in the *New York Post* captures the tone of this campaign, and how it is used against all

transit workers. Accusing New Directions of "attempt[ing] to incite an illegal strike," the editors demand, "Where are the cops when you really need one?"

The press and city officials have tried to reduce the desire by many transit workers to fight for a better contract to an "irresponsible" campaign by a "radical minority."

These assertions were belied by the mobilization of more than 10,000 transit workers and their supporters December 8, who marched to back their demands in the negotiations.

Outside the meetings on December 14, several workers expressed their desire for unity in the face of the broadside attack from the city's and state's rulers. One worker, Wayne, expressed his opinion that prior to the government's attacks on the union, the majority of the union did not necessarily want a strike, but "Giuliani put his foot in it, as he is prone to do." He and other workers *Militant* reporters spoke to expressed real concern that there was no leadership forthcoming from either James or New Directions on how to respond to the injunction and restraining order.

Some workers considered the fines of a piece with Giuliani's "get-tough" stance, which has included attacks on other democratic rights in the city, while others thought that it was part of electioneering in his as yet-undeclared campaign for U.S. Senate against Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Clinton, who had been in and out of the city campaigning before the contract deadline, has made no public statement on the antilabor injunction.

Olga Rodriguez is a member of the International Association of Machinists. Al Duncan contributed to this article.

Farmers protest

Continued from Page 8
done."

The successful action December 13 is part of a growing resistance among small farmers as a whole. Cranberry farmers in Carver, Massachusetts, who are fighting against falling prices; farmers across eastern North Carolina who still have not been aided after the flood disaster earlier this year; Native American farmers who have just launched a class-action suit against the government for its well-known discriminatory practices against oppressed nationalities; and many others from landless rural workers in Brazil to farmers across Europe are all potential allies in the coming battles against the common exploiter—the capitalist class.

Alvin Walker summed it up. "The working class along with the farming class are allies. The only thing we haven't done is to find our common ground. The government is taking money from all of us. The workers and the small farmers are the same. We are the power. You can vote or whatever, but we are the power.

"It used to be that if a farmer was in trouble and was going to lose their land we would just stand by..." Pausing for a second with a gaze of confidence and determination, Walker concluded, "But that has changed."

Continued from front page

for the civilian population. "Russia will pay a heavy price for those actions, with each passing day sinking more deeply into a morass that will intensify extremism and diminish its own standing in the world," U.S. president William Clinton stated December 6.

Russian president Boris Yeltsin delivered a sharp rebuff to the U.S. rulers on December 9 in Beijing. "President Clinton permitted himself to put pressure on Russia," he said after his arrival in Beijing. "It seems he has for a minute forgotten that Russia has a full arsenal of nuclear weapons."

The major capitalist governments in Europe have outdone Washington in their criticism of Moscow's actions. On December 8 leaders of the 15 European Union governments threatened to impose economic sanctions against Moscow until the ultimatum directed at Grozny residents was lifted. British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook referred to a decision by the International Monetary Fund on withhold a promised \$640 million loan from Moscow. "The IMF charter makes it plain that its decision must be grounded in the economic conditions," he said. "But believe me, it will not be lost on Moscow that the decision was taken yesterday."

The capitalist rulers of the United States and these other imperialist powers have substantial interests at stake in the territories of the former Soviet Union, both short and long-term.

Washington has demonstrated its determination to grasp the lion's share of the oil wealth lying beneath the Caspian sea. In November Clinton signed a deal with Turkey, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Georgia for the construction of an oil pipeline that would bypass Russian territory. The present pipeline crosses Russian territory and several republics near the Caucasus mountains, including Chechnya. If it is built, the new pipeline will also bypass Iran, toward which Washington has assumed a hostile stance since the 1979 revolution which toppled the dictatorship of the Shah.

U.S. rulers' target is workers state

More than strictly economic assets are involved, however. Washington is turning up the heat on Moscow in an attempt to force march the pace of "reforms" aimed at increasing the influence and eventually establishing the dominance of capitalist property relations. Minimal progress has been made along those lines, however, even as Russia's economic crisis grinds on. No ruling capitalist class has sunk roots in the country, and workers and farmers resist the layoffs and other attacks that the imperialists want to impose.

An article in the *New York Times* printed in August 1998 titled "Soviet Mindset Defeating Rural Capitalism" illustrated the obstacle to the reintroduction of capitalism formed by social relations in Russia. "The demise of the Soviet Union gave workers an opportunity to break free of the collective," wrote Michael Gordon. "All workers [in the Savino collective farm] received a handsome certificate allowing them to take about 10 acres of tilled land and 5 acres of pasture and farm it for themselves. Instead the workers leased their land back to the farm, keeping only tiny plots for themselves to grow vegetables and perhaps raise a pig or a calf."

After initial high expectations following the end of the cold war, the U.S. rulers are increasingly less susceptible to illusions that they can reimpose capitalist relations in Russia by peaceful means. They are turning more to military and diplomatic pressure. That shift lies behind the eastward expansion of the membership of NATO, the military alliance that Washington dominates, to include Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary. Washington has rejected Moscow's protests at this move, and has refused to pledge that nuclear weapons will not be deployed in the new member countries.

Washington is pressuring Moscow to amend the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty that prohibits the U.S. and Russian military from developing anti-missile missile systems. Clinton is on course to give the nod to the development and deployment of just such a system.

Plans for the installation of such a system in Asia show that this new generation of weapons, designed to give Washington a first-strike capacity, is also aimed at the Chinese workers state.

The U.S. rulers are using their scare campaign over "Chinese spies" to demonize Beijing. Wen Ho Lee, a Chinese-American scientist, was indicted December 10 on 59 counts that included mishandling computer files containing U.S. nuclear weapons "secrets." Earlier this year in March he was fired from his job at the Los Alamos National Laboratory amid a barrage of news reports smearing him as a "suspected spy" for the Chinese government. He was never charged with "espionage" and U.S. government officials have failed to present any evidence backing up the spy claims.

More than a dozen Asian-American organizations have spoken out against these new charges. "From what I've seen so far, this looks like prejudice and overkill," said William Chang, president of the Chinese American Engineers and Scientists Association of Southern California.

At the same time, the U.S. rulers are hopeful that its new trade treaty with Beijing will provide a road to pressing forward market reforms in the still-growing Chinese economy. They have many fewer such illusions in regard to Russia.

Overnite strikers hold rallies, win support

BY DON PANE

ATLANTA—Some 2,000 strikers at Overnite Transportation continue to walk the picket lines at dozens of locations throughout the United States in their struggle for their first Teamster union contract. The national strike is now in its seventh week and continues to attract support and picket line participation from other union members.

Atlanta is one of the centers of the strike. The company has brought in Overnite employees from South Carolina, North Carolina, Florida, and Alabama to drive the trucks and work on the loading docks here.

Jimmy Kersey has 35 years seniority with the company. He is on top of the seniority list here. He told the *Militant*, "I was probably the last one they thought would go out on strike."

Kersey described some of the upcoming activities to build up the strength of the strike. "We now have a food bank at the Teamster Local 726 hall and we are buying Christmas gifts for the children. Other unions' financial contributions make this possible. We are holding weekly membership meetings every Saturday before the \$100 weekly strike benefits are distributed."

The Atlanta Labor Council is organizing a "Rally for Peace, Goodwill, and Justice" at 10:30 a.m. December 21 to back the strike. Kersey said, "Other union members are waking up to the fact that their contract will be affected by the outcome of our strike. This fight is about all of labor. We need more participation on the picket line. We'll never win this by ourselves."

Everett Cole is a Teamster member who works for ABF and joins the picket lines here. He explained, "I'm supporting the strikers to let them know the union brothers are behind them. They are not alone." Another Teamster, Robert Roger, who drives Consolidated Freight said, "If we don't fight back, things will only erode."

The picket line in St. Louis has been beefed up by truck parades recently. On December 7 a convoy of 10 to 15 Consolidated Freight and Beaufort trucks paraded past the Overnite terminal on Hall Street in St. Louis, blowing their horns in support of the strike. Teamsters at the picket line told the *Militant* 10 trucks from CCX, one of the nonunion terminals, joined the caravan one morning.

Gary Graves, a driver at Consolidated Freight in St. Louis for 27 years and a member of Teamsters Local 600, told the *Militant* that every morning since the strike began he and other CF drivers meet at the CF terminal and caravan in front of Overnite.

Overnite strikers reported that Teamster-organized trucking terminals in St. Louis continue to take up weekly collections for the strikers. Office workers at the terminals who are members of Teamsters Local 688 have joined the picket line.

Overnite, the largest nonunion trucking company in the country, has fought tooth and nail against recognizing the union, which nearly half of the 8,200 drivers and loading dock workers have voted to join. The company has tried to get the Teamsters decertified at 19 terminals, without success so far. In October and November the National Labor Relations Board dismissed four more decertification petitions.

Overnite "takes advantage of its workers, with unjust firings and reprimands," said John Crosby, a dock worker and member of Teamsters Local 707 on strike at Overnite's Long Island, New York terminal. "We have to let everyone know what's going on, since there hasn't been much news coverage."

Crosby was addressing a rally of about 200 Overnite strikers, supporters from other Teamster locals, and members of several other unions outside Bed, Bath & Beyond in Manhattan December 9. Speakers at the rally included Teamsters president James Hoffa and AFL-CIO president John Sweeney. Hoffa announced plans to boycott



Militant

Overnite strikers on picket line in Memphis, Tennessee, in fight for union recognition.

the Bed, Bath & Beyond national store chain, which remains a major Overnite customer.

The same day about 100 Overnite strikers from Bensalem, Pennsylvania, and supporters rallied outside a Bed, Bath & Beyond store in Philadelphia to leaflet customers and passersby about the strike.

Rick Wickham, member of Teamsters Local 107 and one of the Overnite drivers who took part in the rally, said, "I'm getting some jobs to get by during the strike, but my fight's here. I show up every morning" at the picket line, and "couldn't go back in there without a union." Other members of Teamsters Local 107 have adopted strikers' families to give

toys for the holidays. "They're doing this because we're all in this together," Wickham said.

Representatives of Teamsters Local 107 also spoke about the strike and invited participation in their rally at the December 7 meeting of International Association of Machinists Local 1776, which organizes workers at the Philadelphia airport.

Alyson Kennedy and Shelton McCrainey in St. Louis, Ruth Robinett in New York, and Nancy Cole in Philadelphia contributed to this article.

LETTERS

Discussions on WTO

I'm writing regarding the article on the WTO [World Trade Organization] protest in Seattle in the December 13 *Militant* under the heading "Socialists mount campaign blitz at WTO events." The sales results detailed in the articles are quite impressive, but as important as the numbers of *Capitalism's World Disorder* and copies of the *Militant* sold were the many discussions held at and around those campaign tables with workers and youth that produced the large number of books sold.

It seems to me a real oversight that not a single person was actually quoted in the article.

By way of rectifying this I offer excerpts from two e-mails received from a young activist from Wilmington, North Carolina. As he indicates in the first one, he has ordered *Capitalism's World Disorder*, along with *Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution*, *Che Guevara and the Imperialist Reality* and *Maoism versus Bolshevism* directly from Pathfinder (see below).

Floyd Fowler
Atlanta, Georgia

Is China a workers state?

12/5/99—Seattle was definitely intense. I was fortunate to attend an ILO [International Labor Organization] conference on the Saturday before the WTO meetings. There was a broad range of labor folks there, mostly union bosses.

It was a lot of the same liberal stance—that capitalism can somehow be made nicer and one step is putting these labor bosses at the WTO table to push the 'core' labor standards... I was largely unimpressed, but a few participants, especially a man who is trying to organize sweatshop workers in the Philippines, were of a socialist stripe. [John] Sweeney spoke there too. Surprisingly (or not, really) no actual workers spoke, and I

doubt that few were even present.

I went to the AFL-CIO demonstration in the arena. I spent a lot of time speaking to people from different "socialist" parties in the parking lot. I spoke to some SWP [Socialist Workers Party] folks for quite some time, but one issue I am still confused about is the reference to China and the former "socialist" bloc as "worker's states." I see the terminology all the time in the *Militant* but if workers truly did wield power in China, then why do they have to battle cops when they are on strike, or why are workers who call for independent labor unions jailed? I don't understand, but I'd like to.

I asked one lady from the party the same question, but I didn't really understand her response. I agree most of all with the SWP stance on the WTO. However, I think that it was important that the protests went on, despite the liberal leadership. When 30,000 workers are shouting anti-free trade slogans, it has to be somewhat significant. I ran out of money and couldn't buy the book (*Capitalism's World Disorder*), but I ordered it, so I'll get it in a few weeks...."

12/7/99—I do remember one very interesting point made by a lady at the SWP table in Seattle (I don't remember her name). She gave a good comparison between the "labor bosses" here and the Chinese "Communist" bureaucracy—that both essentially want to be capitalists, are capitalist minded, but have their base in the workers, and therefore have to talk (and make policies) out of both sides of their mouths. But does that mean that if Sweeney and James Hoffa held state power in the U.S. that this country would be a workers state?"
Matt Skiba
Wilmington, North Carolina

Seattle cops aren't military

I think the article "Cops brutal-

ize thousands during protests in Seattle" (*Militant*, December 13 issue) is wrong to describe police operations in the WTO protests as military-style tactics. Factually, this is not so. Military tactics involve a much greater use or threat of deadly force than do the police crowd-control tactics employed in Seattle.

Not that such police tactics aren't brutal; they are, as described in the *Militant*, and in other reports. But I think the article should have pointed out that such brutality (including the rulers' knowledge that some cops will exceed or ignore their instructions) is the norm, and not exceptional. The point could also have been made that such brutality is going to increase—ultimately to include real military force—as the polarization deepens and the rich more and more rely on brute force against real or perceived threats to their rule.

(Farrell Dobbs, communist leader and organizer of the working class combat units in Minneapolis-St. Paul in the 1930s, wrote in the Teamster series that the cops go through a process of becoming more brutal as the capitalists need more brutality to protect their rule. There is an element of this here in Seattle in the resignation of Police Chief Norman Stamper; many cops and businessmen have criticized him for being too timid in dealing with protests.)

Further, although it is not factually incorrect, the describing of the curfew in Seattle as covering a 50-block area could lead a reader to infer that police brutality was general throughout this area. It was not, but was rather confined to a much smaller part of the city. Elsewhere in the curfew area, it was possible to do the usual things people do, such as travel, work, and shop.

That such ruling-class outrages as cop brutality are foreign to Seattle is a commonly-held view here, but it is wrong. I think the *Militant*

should help combat this idea more than this article did.

George Johnson
Seattle, Washington

Oppose 'Buy American'

The *Militant* series analyzing the anti-WTO demonstrations in Seattle has been excellent. Despite the progressive intent and views of many demonstrators who went to Seattle to protest injustices, the reactionary Buy American character that joined together the trade union officials, Clinton, and Buchanan supporters was loud and clear.

My best discussions were with locked-out Kaiser Aluminum workers, members of the USWA who have been battling for over a year. Their familiarity and support for the *Militant* newspaper and their purchasing *Capitalism's World Disorder* was a high point. Several pointed to the USWA officials' greater interest in the Buy American and anti-China campaign than winning the strike against Kaiser, which they pointed out was never mentioned by USWA president George Becker speaking at the Labor organized rally of 25-30,000 on November 30.

Some union officials call for sanctions against countries that don't live up to the progressive positions taken by the U.S. government on the environment, child labor, and sweatshops, is particularly despicable. Do they want sanctions against China, Malaysia, Mexico, etc. like those levied against Iraq after the brutal U.S. war and bombing campaign that began in 1990 and continues today? Those sanctions have meant devastation of lives and health of workers, farmers, and youth resulting in the deaths of thousands. Is calling for sanctions the way to show labor solidarity to workers in the sanctioned countries as the AFL-CIO officials propose?

Mark Friedman
Los Angeles, California

Working-class perspective

In his letter to the *Militant* of December 13, Brian Miller is concerned that the *Militant* is alienating its allies who are protesting the WTO. I agree that many of the protesters were sincere in their opposition to the anti-working-class character of the WTO. However, despite the best of intentions, their actions support politics which are objectively anti-working-class, anti-internationalist, and benefit U.S. imperialism. They are on the wrong side of the class barricades.

To participate in actions which aid U.S. imperialism or to capitulate in any way to the demands raised by petit bourgeois misleaders is to do a disservice to the workers and youth who are seeking a way to fight the deprecation and exploitation engendered by capitalism. Serious, open-minded protesters are potential allies but need to hear a working-class, internationalist perspective to counter the procapitalist politics of union bureaucrats and misleaders of various stripes who organized the protests in Seattle.

That is why supporters of the SWP and the Young Socialists were in Seattle. Not to be participants but to bring a communist perspective that is available only in the *Militant* and books published by Pathfinder. Not to alienate our "allies" but to win potential fighters to an internationalist, working-class world view.

Gary Cohen
Arlington, Massachusetts

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.

Canada: Reform Party tries to stall treaty rights of Nisga'a people

BY BERNICE BRANDON

VANCOUVER, British Columbia—The right-wing Reform Party waged a highly publicized campaign against the expansion of treaty rights of the Nisga'a people with a 43-hour filibuster in the Canadian Parliament in Ottawa December 7-9. As part of their efforts to slow down passage of the treaty negotiated between the Nisga'a Tribal Council and the British Columbia and Canadian governments, the Reform Party introduced 471 amendments for the House of Commons to vote on—possibly the largest number ever put before one bill in Parliament. The treaty was approved December 14.

"At the end of the day they're going to know that the Reform Party was here, that the Reform Party meant business, and the Reform Party is not going to bend over to the majority here," declared Reform House leader Randy White from Langley, British Columbia, December 6, emphasizing his party's opposition to Native treaty rights.

Reform leader Preston Manning, also leader of the official opposition, delivered an ultimatum with two major conditions to the government before the voting in Parliament started.

Firstly, he demanded a referendum in which all citizens of British Columbia could vote on the Nisga'a treaty—a clear denial of the right of the Nisga'a people to self-determination. Secondly, he called for amendments to give future parliaments the power to alter the treaty's self-government provisions.

The Nisga'a treaty was signed at an official ceremony in Nisga'a territory on Aug. 4, 1998. Although it falls far short of the historical demands of the Nisga'a, the fact that Canadian authorities felt compelled to sign it reflects the decades-long struggle of the Nisga'a and Native people throughout Canada for their rights.

The Nisga'a were confined to a reserve of 76 square kilometers and deprived of their most basic rights under the Indian Act of Canada and by the Province of British Columbia at its founding in 1870. The new treaty grants them title to 2,000 square kilometers, about 10 percent of their traditional lands in Northwestern British Columbia, where an estimated 8,000 Nisga'a lived off salmon from the Nass River before contact with Europeans. Today some 2,000 Nisga'a continue to live in the area, and another 3,500 are in other parts of Canada and Alaska.

Despite the fact that some Nisga'a opposed the agreement because it included only 10 percent of their traditional lands, tribal members voted by 72 percent to ratify the treaty.

The treaty provides the Nisga'a with a Native-run local government, where elected Nisga'a will take over ownership of and management of land and resources as well as social services, education, policing, and the courts—within the confines of Canadian and British Columbia laws. Some \$190 million in cash will be provided by the federal and provincial governments over a 10-year period in exchange for recognizing this as the final settlement of Nisga'a claims.

According to Toronto *Globe and Mail* columnist Brian Laghi, Reform MPs fought a round-the-clock voting marathon on their 471 amendments was a way to get their views into the news media. "Our feeling is that eventually we will be the lone voice on this issue," said Reform environment critic Rahim Jaffer.

Laghi also gave the opinion that "at a time when the party's grass roots are wondering about leader Preston Manning's right-wing credentials, it may help them internally as well." Manning is fighting to build a new conservative coalition called the United Alternative. In addition to steadfast opposition to the national rights of the Quebecois, Manning returned to some key right-wing issues in the cultural war against the gains of working people and the oppressed in his response to the Speech from the Throne—a major government policy address. In his remarks Manning focused on defense of "family values" and opposition to a woman's right to choose abortion, calling on the government to define the "rights of the fetus."

In her column in the December 9 *Vancouver Sun*, entitled "The Reform Party in Ottawa Does B.C. a Big Favour," conservative writer Barbara Yaffee further developed the racist, right-wing argumentation of Reform's campaign. After attacking as "unsettling" the idea that the Nisga'a government has powers superseding those of the provincial government, Yaffee states that British Columbia residents "have misgivings, too, about reinforcing a communal societal system that has served aboriginal people poorly on many reserves. Federal Reformers have shown guts in asking whether it might not be time to consider an alternate system for native Indians, one that would help empower individuals?"

Reform has also charged that the Nisga'a

Puerto Rican students: Not one more U.S. bomb in Vieques!



Militant/Ron Richards

Students from the University of Puerto Rico rally on steps of Capitol in San Juan December 1 in support of the struggle to force the U.S. Navy to leave the island of Vieques, which it has used for bombing practice for decades. Other actions are happening almost daily involving workers, young people, and others in the fight. On December 12 a caravan of 150 protesters passed in front of Washington's Roosevelt Roads Naval Station in Ceiba, and then rallied in the eastern town of Maunabo.

treaty is a template for as many as 50 other comprehensive land and self-government treaties in the province. In response, the Liberal government maintained that such negotiated treaties provide more certainty than letting Native peoples assert their rights in the courts, a reference to a September 17 Supreme Court decision allowing the expansion of Native fishing rights on the Atlantic coast.

The Liberals complained about the extra expenses the Reform filibuster imposed, including the \$26,000 overtime pay. But Bill Blaikie, House leader for the New Democratic Party, and Michel Gauthier, House leader of

the Bloc Quebecois, praised Reform's tactics, while remaining silent on its political content.

Nisga'a Tribal Council president Joe Gosnell attacked Reform for its actions. He told reporters that Reform was attempting to "completely gut the contents of the Nisga'a treaty," adding that it would "leave future aspirations of our nation at the whim of future governments and to the Nisga'a people that is just not acceptable." In a television interview on December 9 after the defeat of all of Reform's amendments, Gosnell described the results as "Nisga'a—471; Reform—0."

Students in Greece protest attacks on education and democratic rights

BY NATASHA TERLEXIS

ATHENS, Greece—On a cold morning December 7, about 100 high school students stood inside their school's courtyard with a thick chain holding the gate shut. The previous week they had voted 186 to 12 to occupy their school. The atmosphere was tense as the Zografou area police chief showed up in plain clothes and asked to speak to the students' elected representatives. He threatened that under the presidential decree signed the day before all those "obstructing the functioning of the school" were liable to arrest. He vowed to come back with a public prosecutor.

After hearing the police chief out, the students went back inside and held an assembly on the cement bleachers to decide what to do. News came from another occupied school—students at all seven in the Zografou district voted overwhelmingly in favor of occupation—that the prosecutor had shown up there. Students there took down their occupation banner and filed out. As soon as the prosecutor left, the banner went back up and the students locked themselves in again. Students here decided to dodge the cops in a similar way.

Meanwhile, parents were clustered outside the gate. Some were supportive; others hurled insults and demanded their son or daughter

"get out of there right now!"

This scene has been repeated with variations in hundreds of high schools as students wage a battle against the education reform law enacted last year and face the latest escalation in court and police attacks on their right to protest. "Now the mobilizations are for both questions," said Artemis, who is a student here. "Students are calm and resolved, not scared" by the threats of arrests.

"We are fighting the [education reform] law because of the incredible increase in subjects you must pass in order to go on to the next grade, as well as in order to enter university," said Georgia Kafetzi.

"There is a 200 percent rise in enrollment in private preparatory schools" for the last three years of school, added Andreas Kiltisiksis.

"Education now plainly depends on your financial situation," said Artemis.

The parents assembly of this school voted to stand by whatever the students decide to do. The Teachers Federation, which supports the struggle, decided to hold three-hour work stoppages at any struck school that the cops open. In response, the government is now threatening to fire teachers who do not immediately enter a school that has been opened and take attendance.

Nearly 10,000 students and some teachers took to the streets the following day. The lead banner read, "Long live democracy: come and arrest us—we fight for our rights." Marches took place in 30 cities with dozens of arrests, though no students or parents remain in custody. "We will continue with marches and occupations," said Artemis. "Each school will find its own way to fight."

Three days later, this reporter witnessed the ongoing skirmish at the Second Zografou High School. Students had been barricaded inside since 5:30 a.m. When the cops came and broke the door chains at 9:00 a.m. the occupation turned into a strike, and students marched to the central square of Zografou and were joined by people from other area schools in blocking the main street.

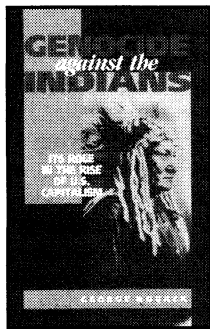
Meanwhile, students at the junior high school, who had participated in the mobilizations up to now, went back in and their classes resumed. Though high school teachers were obliged to go to their classes, word was they were not taking attendance at this time.

With these flexible tactics, said Andreas Simopoulos, the president of the student council at the Second Zografou High School, "We have fought them to a stalemate. Actions are occurring both inside and outside the schools."

Genocide against the Indians

George Novack

Why did the leaders of the Europeans who settled in North America try to exterminate the peoples already living there? How was the campaign of genocide against the Indians linked to the expansion of capitalism in the United States? Noted Marxist George Novack answers these questions. \$4.00



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