

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Cop violence sparks protest in Philadelphia

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 64/NO. 30 JULY 31, 2000

Outspoken rightist to head Canada party

BY JOE YOUNG

CALGARY, Alberta—Stockwell Day, the former treasurer of the Alberta provincial government, defeated former Reform Party leader Preston Manning July 8 in the second round of the contest for the leadership of the Canadian Alliance, a rightist capitalist party. Day received 63 percent of the 91,000 votes cast.

The Canadian Alliance was founded at a convention at the end of January. The main components of the new party are the Reform Party and the ruling provincial wings of the Conservative Party in Alberta and Ontario.

The Canadian Alliance forms the official opposition in Canada's parliament. It has no seats east of Manitoba but hopes to make a breakthrough in Ontario in order to form a government in the next federal elections, expected to be called as early as the fall. Leading figures from the Ontario Conservative government support the Alliance.

More and more leading Conservative politicians have joined the Canadian Alliance, marking the death knell of what was one of the major capitalist parties in Canada since the country was officially constituted

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Minnesota meat packers press fight for union

BY FRANCISCO PÉREZ

SOUTH ST. PAUL, Minnesota—"I believe we're going to win the vote," said Matias Loya, a boning line worker and one of the leaders of the in-plant union organizing committee of workers at Dakota Premium Foods here. "That's what I think based on discussions with other people in the plant." But, he added, "you really have to look at this battle as part of something bigger. Regardless of what we face at a given time, we have to aim to keep a slow but steady march forward" in fighting for our rights.

Meat packers at Dakota Premium have been engaged in a struggle against brutal working conditions and for the right to be treated with dignity on the job. Although this fight has been going on for many months, it took the form of a union organizing drive to join Local 789 of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) as of June 1, when more than 100 workers staged a sit-down strike. Faced with a seven-hour work stoppage in the company cafeteria, despite efforts to intimidate the workers back onto the shop floor, the bosses conceded workers' demand to slow down the production line, and promised to improve the overall treatment of workers.

Stakes are high for both workers and employers in this conflict. Dakota Premium is a subsidiary of Rosen's Diversified, Inc., one of the top 10 beef packers in the country and a multimillion dollar corporation.

The bosses have been doing their best to intimidate and mislead workers into voting

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Striking coal miners reach out for solidarity

Win support from PACE union at Chevron, call rally

BY JACK PARKER

FT. COLLINS, Colorado—On July 13, miners on strike against Pittsburg and Midway Coal Co. at mines in New Mexico and Wyoming decided to take their case directly to the 1,300 workers at the Chevron refinery in El Segundo, California. The coal com-

pany is owned by Chevron. The Chevron plant is organized by the Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical, and Energy Workers International Union.

"The leaflets we handed out explained all about our strikes. Once these workers read

about our struggle, they pledged their full support," Oliver reported. "This means donations of money, food, clothing, and the promise to spread the word about our fight

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JOIN JULY 26 UMW RALLY IN DENVER!

Coal miners on strike against Pittsburg and Midway in New Mexico and Wyoming are planning a joint march and rally—initiated by United Mine Workers of America Locals 1307 and 1332—in Denver on July 26. It will take place at P&M headquarters, off I-25 at Englewood and Arapaho, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. For more information on the action, call the UMW regional office in Denver at (888) 367-8692, or (303) 425-7110, or Local 1307 at (307) 877-1443.

pany is owned by Chevron.

"We are very pleased with the response we received here this morning from our PACE brothers and sisters," said Lawrence Oliver, president of United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) Local 1332 at the McKinley mine near Gallup, New Mexico, who headed up the UMW team to Cali-

Thousands in NY sign to put socialists on ballot



Militant/Hilda Cuzco

Socialist campaigner petitions in Manhattan on July 17. Nearly 13,000 people have signed in support of socialist candidates' right to appear on ballot. Campaigners aim to get 30,000 signatures by August 21. See article page 5.

UN committee backs Puerto Rico independence

BY HILDA CUZCO

UNITED NATIONS—The United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization held hearings here July 12 on the colonial status of Puerto Rico and approved a resolution that "reaffirms the inalienable right of the people of Puerto Rico to self-determination and independence" from the United States. The committee has approved similar resolutions since the 1970s, but it was the first time it was adopted by consensus rather than a divided vote.

The resolution, sponsored by the revolutionary government of Cuba, calls on Wash-

ington to stop U.S. Navy bombing practice on the island of Vieques and to release the six Puerto Rican political prisoners remaining in U.S. jails.

Some 30 representatives of organizations testified. A handful spoke for U.S. statehood, but the big majority testified in favor of independence. They pointed to the mass struggle that has emerged over the last year to get the U.S. Navy out of Vieques.

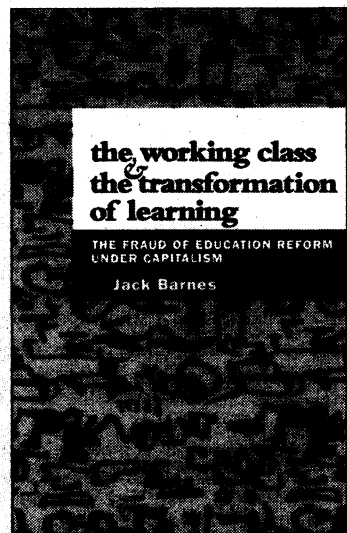
Freddie Marrero, speaking on behalf of the Committee for the Rescue and Development of Vieques, explained that Washington has used the majority of the Puerto Rican island of Vieques as a naval bombing range and ammunition depot for 60 years, devastating the livelihood of fishermen, contaminating the environment, and contributing to a high cancer rate among residents, including through the use of depleted uranium shells.

Speaker after speaker pointed to the fact that when a U.S. warplane dropped two "stray" bombs on Vieques, killing David Sanes, it detonated a sustained wave of protests that has not stopped. For more than a year, hundreds of demonstrators set up civil disobedience camps on Navy land. In May of this year, a force of 300 U.S. marshals and FBI agents, together with 1,200 U.S. marines, detained and evicted the protesters.

"Today there are more than 400 people facing charges in federal court" for defying the Navy, said Jorge Farinacci, a leader of

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NEW! FROM PATHFINDER



The Working Class & the Transformation of Learning

The Fraud of Education Reform under Capitalism
By Jack Barnes

"Until society is reorganized so that education is a human activity from the time we are very young until the time we die, there will be no education worthy of working, creating humanity. That is the historic truth." \$3

Available from bookstores listed on page 12.

Florida UNITE workers score gain in strike — page 11

NAACP endorses march on Washington

BY SAM MANUEL
AND MAURICE WILLIAMS

BALTIMORE—Some 3,700 people attended the 91st NAACP national convention, held here July 8–13. The gathering was dominated by the 2000 election campaign.

On the eve of the event, a press conference was held announcing plans for a national demonstration on August 26, marking the 37th anniversary of the 1963 March on Washington led by Martin Luther King. Alfred Sharpton, who hosted the press conference, along with NAACP president Kweisi Mfume and Martin Luther King III, who is president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, said the focus of the action in Washington will be opposition to cop brutality and the racist police harassment known as racial profiling.

Both issues struck a chord among many participants in the NAACP convention. The delegates approved a resolution that condemned racial profiling and police violence and urged "all NAACP units to support" the August demonstration.

The elections, and support for the Democratic candidates in particular, marked the gathering. In his opening remarks, NAACP chairman Julian Bond declared, "We will recommit ourselves to the most important task we can accomplish this year—registering voters, educating voters, and making sure those voters go to the polls." NAACP president Mfume added that registering 4

million new voters for this election will be the organization's "central arena."

The convention featured presentations by three presidential candidates, Democrat Albert Gore, Republican George W. Bush, and Green Party candidate Ralph Nader, as well as Hillary Clinton, Democratic senatorial candidate in New York, and President William Clinton, among other big-business politicians.

Convention delegates also discussed and passed resolutions on an array of political issues—strengthening public education and opposing voucher programs, protesting assaults on Fourth Amendment rights, and defending school desegregation, affirmative action, Social Security, and health care.

One issue in the discussion was the death penalty. Mfume said the NAACP "calls for a moratorium on the death penalty," although no resolution was presented on that question. Bond said the NAACP has asked governors of all states with death row inmates to order a suspension of capital punishment.

Delegates reaffirmed the association's 1999 resolution condemning "the Confederate battle flag or the Confederate battle emblem being flown over, displayed in or on any public site or space, building, or any emblem, flag standard or as part of any public communication." They also passed a resolution introduced by the Virginia branch condemning state recognition of the Con-



Militant
June 22 protest in Huntsville, Texas, against execution of Gary Graham. NAACP called for a moratorium on capital punishment at its national convention in Baltimore.

federacy. Virginia officially recognizes a holiday for the Confederacy.

Mfume told those attending the meeting, "There will be no compromise. We will continue to boycott the state of South Carolina until the flag comes down!"

Last January the NAACP launched an economic boycott of South Carolina to demand the Confederate flag be removed from atop the state capitol. It also led a Martin Luther King Day demonstration in the state capital of Columbia that drew 50,000 people. In face of the outpouring, state legislators blinked, deciding to remove the flag from the capitol dome and place it in a Confederate memorial on the capitol grounds.

At a well-attended workshop on police brutality, several participants told of encoun-

ters with the police. Edith Meyers of Altoona, Pennsylvania, reported she and her family were stopped while driving to the NAACP convention. "What kind of profile were they using?" she asked. "There was nothing about us to say we were involved in drugs or any crime. They didn't even apologize. Just told us we could go," she reported angrily.

Police agencies across the country use "profiles" that rely heavily on skin color in order to harass Blacks, Latinos, and Asians in the name of looking out for "potential criminal activity." Mfume reported that U.S. Customs agents, using such profiles, had stopped some 400 Black women, some of whom were strip-searched, simply on the basis of their braided hair.

August 26 national march to protest cop brutality

A national march on Washington against police violence and "racial profiling" has been called for noon on Saturday, August 26.

The "Redeem the Dream" demonstration, marking the 37th anniversary of the 1963 March on Washington, was initiated by Alfred Sharpton, president of the National Action Network, and Martin Luther King III, president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC).

The march, to be held at the Lincoln Memorial, will demand "action by the White House and Congress to penalize offenders of racial profiling and police brutality," according to a fact sheet distributed by the National Action Network.

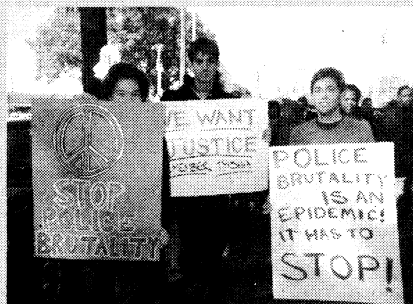
Other Black rights organizations that have endorsed the demonstration besides the SCLC include the NAACP, National Urban League, National Council for Negro Women, and Rainbow Coalition.

For more information about the event, call 1-877-9-REDEEM.

THE MILITANT

The reason for cop brutality

The continued protests against cop brutality are part of the growing labor fightback. The 'Militant' reports on these struggles, and explains why killer cops are not 'bad apples' but instead doing their job for the capitalist rulers in trying to keep working people in check. Don't miss a single issue!



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Medicaid cuts hike number of uninsured

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Government cuts in Medicaid coverage have boosted the number of people in the United States with no health insurance, despite an expanding economy throughout the 1990s, a new study in the July/August issue of the *Journal of Health Affairs* shows.

During the years 1989–1993, the proportion of the population under 65 with no health insurance rose from 16.2 percent in 1989 to 18.2 percent in 1993, as employers provided less coverage to workers.

Over the course of the next four years the number of uninsured workers continued to increase, reaching 18.4 percent in 1998. The number of uninsured children also grew, to 15.6 percent of the population the same year.

One of the biggest factors contributing to the rising rates of those without health insurance was passage of the so-called welfare reform bill that Clinton signed into law in 1996. Programs such as Aid to Families with Dependent Children were eliminated and, with the states following the federal government's lead, hundreds of thousands were cut off from welfare benefits, including Medicaid coverage.

In a related development, a number of health maintenance organizations (HMOs) announced they will be canceling insurance

coverage for more than 700,000 Medicare beneficiaries next year. This comes on top of the dropping of an additional 734,000 Medicare recipients by HMOs over the past two years.

Many elderly people have joined health maintenance organizations to get outpatient drug benefits not available under Medicare. Once they're dropped from HMO rolls, this benefit will be ended.

Medicare provides health coverage for 39 million people who are elderly or disabled. About 6.2 million of them, or 16 percent, are also in HMOs.

PUBLICATION SCHEDULE

The next issue of the *Militant*, no. 31, will be published on Wednesday, July 26, a day earlier than usual. The next day will be the opening of a three-day Active Workers Conference in Oberlin, Ohio. The *Militant* will not publish the following week. Issue no. 32 will be printed on Thursday, August 10.

The *Militant* will also not publish an issue on Thursday, August 31.

The Militant

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

Unionists back plan to end Kaiser lockout

BY SCOTT BREEN

SEATTLE—Members of the Steelworkers union overwhelmingly voted in favor of an agreement with Kaiser Aluminum that will end the 18-month-old lockout and return most of the union workers to their jobs by the end of September.

Union members ratified the plan by a 74 percent majority of the nearly 2,300 members who voted July 12 and 13. The deal allows United Steelworkers of America (USWA) officials to continue negotiations until July 29 with Kaiser on a five-year contract. According to the agreement, if no contract proposal is reached for the membership to vote on, they must submit unresolved issues to binding arbitration. The government-appointed panel would decide on those issues by September; the union and the company pledged to accept the ruling.

Some 2,900 Steelworkers at five aluminum plants in Louisiana, Ohio, and Washington State struck Kaiser in September 1998 to win an acceptable contract. Kaiser locked them out on Jan. 14, 1999, and hired replacement workers after the unionists offered to return to work under the old contract while negotiations continued. Since then the workers have continued their picketing as well as traveling around the country, winning widespread support in the labor movement for their fight.

Most workers interviewed by the *Militant* who voted for the agreement didn't like the proposals, but wanted to get back to work. Buck McGowan, a Steelworker at the Tacoma, Washington, plant for 20 years, explained why he voted yes: "We've been out a long time. I don't really like the contract, but I'd rather have something I'm not comfortable with and a job, than not have a job at all."

Others felt the agreement signified that Kaiser had lost. John Goodman, a worker at the Spokane, Washington, plant who has been a leading activist in the union's "corporate campaign," told the *Spokane Spokesman-Review*, "We should be rejoicing. We took a multimillion dollar company right to the edge." He felt their 22-month fight had severely wounded Kaiser and forced it to back off from its worst takeback proposals.

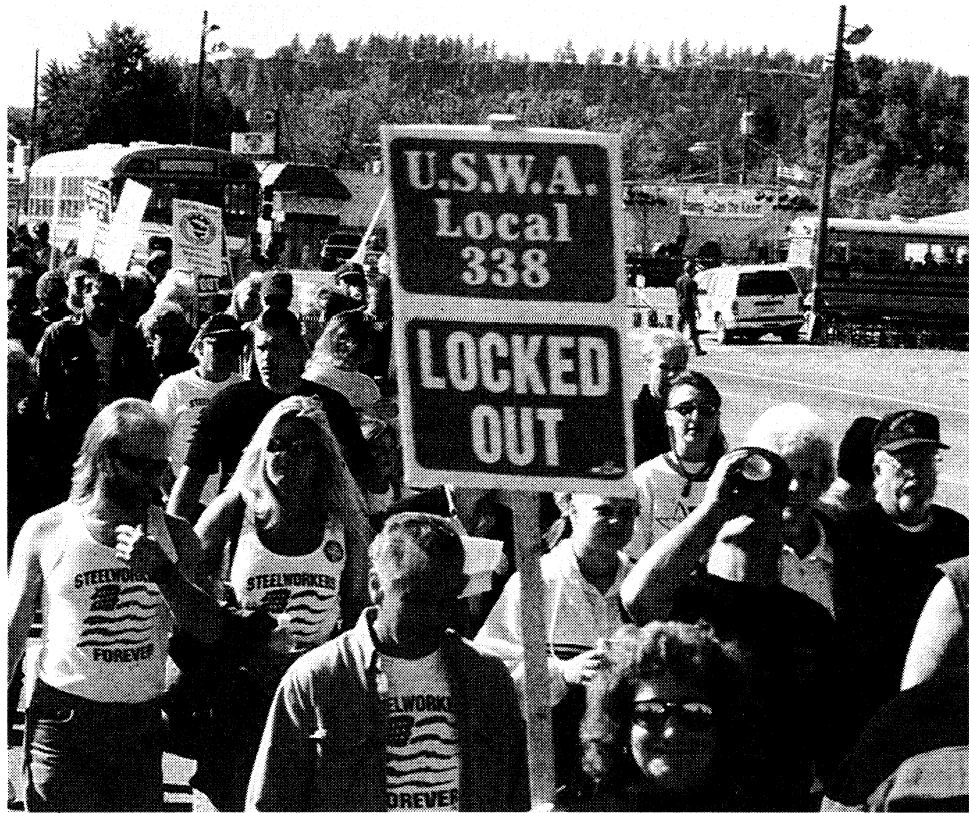
When announcement of the agreement was first made, Mike Yeager, a Spokane Steelworker, stated, "My take is that the company, backed against a wall, defeated on all fronts, facing certain defeat in every respect, blinked and has lost across the board."

David Foster, USWA District 11 director

and chairperson of the union's negotiating committee, praised the agreement. "This is a great day and a significant victory for the Steelworkers in convincing Kaiser to accept finality to the labor dispute."

Dinno Hess, who has worked at Kaiser's Tacoma plant for 10 years, voted against the accord. He said he had to read the 22-page summary of the agreement "three or four

the five local union presidents on the negotiating committee, those representing the Newark, Ohio, and Trentwood, Washington, locals. Workers at Newark rejected the agreement 135-60. According to Wes Beck, president of the Trentwood local, under this agreement "we'll lose 400-some jobs [at the Trentwood plant]. That's not a victory." Trentwood is Kaiser's largest aluminum fa-



Militant/Scott Breen

Steelworkers locked out by Kaiser Aluminum march in Spokane, Washington, in October. Nearly 3,000 Steelworkers at five aluminum plants in three states struck Kaiser in 1998 to win a contract and were later locked out. Since then they have sought and won support for their fight among working people around the country.

times to realize that we're not really gaining anything." He, like many of the unionists, is angry at Kaiser. "The company just wants to take, take, take. I'd rather the union shut them down than take their crap," he declared.

Clint Wells, a Steelworker in Mead, Washington, echoed that sentiment at a Militant Labor Forum he spoke at a week before the vote. "I'm so bitter against Charles Hurwitz [CEO of Maxxam, Kaiser's majority owner], a fair contract isn't enough. I want to crush him," he said.

The agreement was opposed by two of

cility, with more than 1,000 workers.

Floyd Pleger, a Trentwood electrician, was at the union hall urging co-workers to vote no. He was convinced that with only 12 years at Kaiser, he's sure to lose his job there. "If we cast a 'no,' maybe we'll get a better deal," he said.

In a cover letter to the union members attached to the summary, district director Foster urged them to accept the job losses, stating, "There is no question that the company will run the plants with fewer people. However, with a few limited exceptions, those people will all be Steelworkers, not contractors."

Some retirees also spoke out against the agreement because they must now join a "health maintenance organization" to keep their benefits, or pay a monthly premium as a "penalty" to stay with their current plan.

According to Foster's letter to the Steelworkers, Kaiser had dropped 90 percent of its particular contracting-out proposals, eliminated a proposed cap on paying retiree medical costs, and agreed to amnesty in all cases of discharges for strike-related misconduct and that all replacement workers would be fired when the union members returned to work. The company also offered buyouts of up to \$25,000 for any laid-off Trentwood employee, and restored use of seniority in promotions and layoffs.

As a further incentive to vote for the agreement, Kaiser agreed to immediately reinstate health insurance for all locked-out Kaiser workers and their families if the plan was passed.

Unresolved issues include wage raises, contract benefits, and the exact number of workers who would lose their jobs at the Trentwood rolling mill by Spokane due to job combinations, "restructuring," and power-related layoffs at the Mead and Tacoma plants.

In recent weeks Kaiser has cut back on aluminum refining at its Mead and Tacoma plants, laying off hundreds of replacement workers. It has cited huge increases in electricity rates on the West Coast to justify its shutdowns.

Many Steelworkers believe it has been their fight that forced Kaiser to make a deal. Throughout their 22-month struggle, the workers maintained their 24-hour picketing at Kaiser's plants, and won official support from the union movement.

They organized marches and rallies, reached out to other unions for support, and joined other labor fights that broke out around the country. They exposed Kaiser's major owner, Charles Hurwitz of Maxxam Corporation, for his antiunion, anti-environmental stances, taking their struggle to California and Houston, where the headquarters of Kaiser and Maxxam are located. They organized public campaigns to force other manufacturers to cease buying from Kaiser Aluminum, and protested the federal Bonneville Power Administration for selling Kaiser cheap electricity.

On June 30, in face of this gradually accumulating public pressure, the National Labor Relations Board formally charged Kaiser Aluminum with illegally locking out the Steelworkers. It set a hearing date of November 13 and threatened Kaiser with having to pay hundreds of millions of dollars to workers in back pay if the company lost. According to the USWA, the agreement will not stop the NLRB case from going to trial.

Scott Breen, a member of International Association of Machinists Local 751, is the Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Senate in Washington State.

Indiana farmers protest high gas prices



Militant/Joel Britton

MODOC, Indiana—A convoy of about 50 people, mostly farmers on horseback, traveled 22 miles from a farm near here to Selma, Indiana, to protest high gasoline prices July 8. The "non-gasoline" ride was cut eight miles short after police refused to escort the convoy from Selma to the Muncie, Indiana, bypass, in this rural area of eastern Indiana. High gas prices have hit workers and farmers here very hard. Terry Maiden, right, the local farmer who organized the protest, said in an interview, "Before gas prices went up, I had three times as many animals as I have now. I had to sell two bulls, 20 goats, and almost all my chickens, ducks, and peacocks." Maiden farms on just under eight acres. At right is Janet Hasley, who helped organize the protest, which was directed at the oil companies and the federal government. "They work together on this," Maiden said. She told reporters she decided to organize the protest when a family emergency hit and she needed to drive her truck to Kentucky. Gas prices were at \$1.80 a gallon here, costing her \$40 to fill up. Her anger grew when she saw that gas cost \$1.40 in Kentucky. She said, "I wondered how can there be that much of a difference?"

—LOU NEWTON

'We don't want seven-day weeks,' say Chicago strikers

BY MARLEN ORTEGA AND ELIZABETH STONE

CHICAGO—"I'm totally for this strike," said Maria Adan as she walked the picket line with more than 30 other members of Laborers International Union Local 681. The workers, who walked off the job July 10 at Appetizers & Inc., have kept the picket lines strong from early morning until late at night.

A key issue in the strike is the company's demand that the workweek be extended to Saturdays and Sundays. Adan explained that as an afternoon-shift worker if she is forced to work weekends with days off during the week, she would rarely be with her husband and children.

Referring to the company's resistance to the union's wage demands, Adan commented, "They don't think of us as human beings." After four years and eight months in the packing department, she makes \$6.70 an hour. Almost half of the 300 workers at the hors d'oeuvres plant make close to minimum wage.

Another issue is the company's attempt to take away seniority bonuses. For example, Rosa, who makes only \$7 an hour after 23 years with the company, told the *Militant* the company wants to take away her 10 cent-an-hour bonus.

"Si se puede!" (Yes we can) and "What do we want? A raise! What don't we want?"

Seven days!" are chants that echo from the picket lines. There is a constant din of passing cars and trucks honking in solidarity.

A giant inflated rat stands next to the picket line, representing the owner of the company, George King. When King himself drove into the plant the strikers turned up the volume, chanting: "No seven days!"

From Pathfinder

New International no. 4

The Fight for a Workers and Farmers Government in the United States

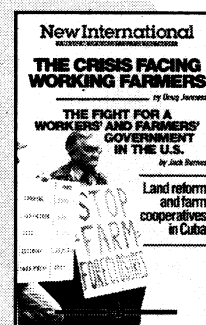
by Jack Barnes

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Michigan protesters condemn racist killing

BY ILONA GERSH

DETROIT—Nearly 1,000 people rallied at the Federal Building here July 17 to protest the racist killing of Frederick Finley at the Fairlane Mall in Dearborn. This was the second rally to take place in two weeks. A week after Finley was choked to death by store security guards outside Lord & Taylor's in mainly white suburban Dearborn on June 22, some 5,000 people turned out for a rally at the mall.

Many of the participants in the rally here were on their lunch hour. One young man carried a United Auto Workers Local 2334 picket sign that said "Fight racism."

"This is a union issue because it's something that affects the lives of union brothers and sisters," he said. "Unions should support this because they support us."

For the first time, the protests against the killing of Finley got official endorsement from the labor movement. Don Boggs, president of the Metro Detroit AFL-CIO, spoke at the rally to explain why his council supported the rally. "There's a history of labor supporting civil rights," he said.

Many of those participating in the rally brought signs they made for the massive outpouring on July 5. One said, "Today you are not alone. There are many voices here today." Another said "Fairlane is not fair." "No justice, no peace" and "No justice, no profits," were popular signs and chants. Another popular slogan on picket signs was "Life is worth more than \$4," referring to the \$4 bracelet that guards accused Finley's daughter of shoplifting.

Leaders of the NAACP, Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and the Na-

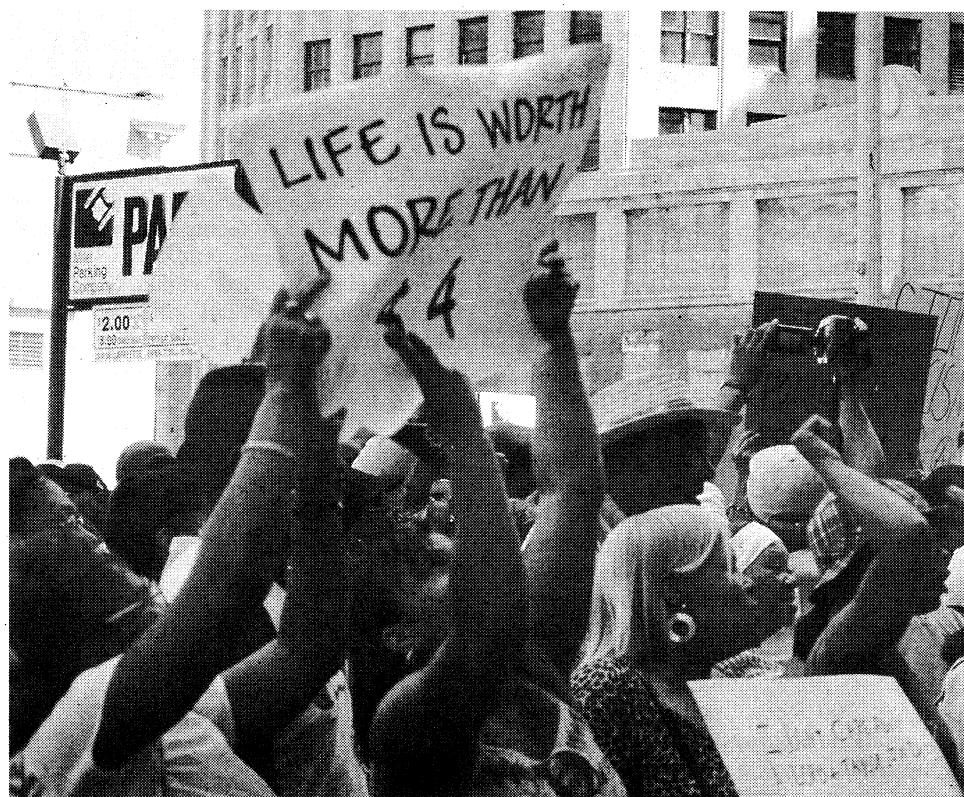
tional Action Network, the organizers of the two protests, pose various strategies to stop racist violence at the mall. These include boycotting Lord & Taylor and the Fairlane Mall, or buying company stocks.

A young woman explained to this reporter that attempts by the media to discredit the character of members of the Finley family have not changed her opinion that more rallies are needed. "The issue is not whether the bracelet was stolen. It's not Frederick Finley's family history. It's not how often family members have been unemployed, or on welfare. The issue is that Frederick Finley was murdered. We need to keep protesting. As long as we are protesting," she said, the cops and guards "will think twice about using violence against other Black people."

The day after the first rally, one of the guards was charged with involuntary manslaughter by the Wayne County prosecutor.

Protest organizers told the rally that they had written to U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno demanding a federal investigation of the killing. Local media reports that Gina Vitrano, of the U.S. Attorney's office in Detroit, said "the preliminary investigation could take anywhere from a couple of months to a couple years."

Among those who spoke were Dick Gregory; Martin Luther King III, president of the SCLC; Rev. Horace Sheffield III, president of the Michigan chapter of the National Action Network (NAN); Rev. Wendell Anthony, president of the Detroit chapter of the NAACP; and Geoffrey Fieger, the lawyer representing the Finley family in a \$600 million lawsuit against Lord & Taylor and the Fairlane Mall.



Militant/Ilona Gersh

Protesters hold placard referring to the \$4 bracelet Finley's daughter was accused of stealing. The 1,000-strong rally was preceded by a protest of 5,000 on July 5.

Another fight against racism scored a victory July 17 when former Detroit policeman Larry Nevers was ordered back to prison for involuntary manslaughter. Nevers was released on bail after his conviction pending appeal. In 1992 he and his partner beat a Black motorist, Malice Green, to death with a flashlight. Amidst widespread community protest of the brutal attack, Nevers and his partner were convicted of second degree murder in 1993 and sent to prison.

State and federal courts threw out the convictions in 1997 on the grounds that the policemen were denied fair trials. In April of this year they were found guilty of invol-

untary manslaughter, a lesser charge. The Michigan Supreme Court revoked Nevers' bond July 17 and ordered him back to prison on the grounds that the state Court of Appeals had erred in releasing him on bail.

Socialist candidate joins Michigan rally

BY ELLEN BERMAN

DETROIT—Margaret Trowe, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. vice president, was in Detroit to join the protest against the killing of Frederick Finley.

Trowe explained that she had just come from Mississippi, where she went to express solidarity with protesters against the recent lynching of a 17-year-old Black youth, and spoke with fighting catfish workers and locked-out steelworkers at Titan Tire.

One woman told her, "Yeah, it's rough down there [in Mississippi]."

"Yes, and in Detroit, Philadelphia, and New York," replied Trowe. "That's why we have to organize working-class protests like these."

Several people explained that the reason they came to the demonstration was because they knew that similar things could happen to them or to members of their families. "I have a 17-year-old granddaughter and a 21-year-old grandson," one older woman told Trowe, "and I fear for them every time they walk out the door."

"How can you possibly understand what it is that I face every day?" asked one worker who came on his lunch hour. "I'm a 21-year-old Black male and I'm an endangered species." He engaged in a lively discussion about the campaign and its perspectives on the root causes of racism and how to organize resistance to it. He bought the latest issue of the *Militant* and gave his phone number to a campaign supporter so she could call him in a couple of days to continue the discussion.

These demonstrators, as well as others interested in the campaign, were invited to an open house at the Pathfinder Bookstore following the rally. They were also encouraged to attend a panel discussion the following Friday night, hosted by The Militant Labor Forum, on "Dearborn... Detroit... Philadelphia... New York: The Fight Against Racist Attacks."

One young Black woman was particularly interested in Trowe's experience working with farmers who are being forced off their land. She explained that her relatives also had been forced off the farm that had been in their family for many years.

A young woman bought the *Militant* after saying she was looking for some way to change what's going on. After a brief discussion about the problems of economic nationalism, she said the attitude of the government is such that, "They ought to change the sign on the Statue of Liberty to say 'Go back, you're not wanted!'"

Supporters of the campaign sold 19 *Militants* and 1 subscription at the action. Four people asked to be put on the mailing list. Campaigners introduced Trowe to reporters at the event, several of whom expressed interest in future interviews and features.

Trowe meets fighters in Alabama, Mississippi

BY SUSAN LAMONT

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama—Socialist Workers vice-presidential candidate Margaret Trowe got a warm welcome from workers, farmers, and youth she met on a recent four-day campaign visit to Alabama and Mississippi.

A campaign meeting here July 14 drew nearly 20 supporters, including three students from the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa. One of the students, Young Socialists member Justin Hovey, joined Trowe on the platform and talked about the fight in Kokomo, Mississippi, to find and prosecute those responsible for the murder of 17-year-old Black youth Raynard Johnson, who was found hanging from a tree outside his home in Kokomo in mid-June.

Hundreds of people protested the police cover-up of his death at two marches in Mississippi the previous weekend. Hovey and other campaign supporters had participated in the marches, including gathering signatures to get the socialist presidential ticket on the ballot in Mississippi. "You could see at this march that the fight for justice for Raynard Johnson is a class question," Hovey said. "It's not just a matter between Blacks and whites. It's a question for all working people."

"The resistance of workers and farmers is growing," Trowe said. "Immigrant workers are playing an important role in this

fightback. There are more working people standing up and saying 'No!' to the bosses and government and police attacks. That doesn't mean there are always victories right now," Trowe said. "But workers are going through important experiences and more fighters are finding each other and reinforcing their struggles. They're showing what can be done if you stand up and fight." More than \$500 in campaign contributions and pledges was raised at the meeting.

That morning Trowe and several supporters had campaigned at a mine portal outside Birmingham where socialists often sell the *Militant* newspaper. Several miners took campaign brochures and one bought a *Militant*.

Trowe and four supporters visited striking members of the United Steelworkers of America Local 303L at the Titan Tire plant in Natchez, Mississippi. Several hundred workers have been on strike there since September 1998, fighting to defend their union and win a decent contract.

Strike activists Willie Evans and James White welcomed the visitors to the picket line. Evans introduced the socialist campaigners to other pickets, who signed petitions to put Trowe and Socialist Workers presidential candidate James Harris on the ballot in Mississippi. Evans explained how much support the Titan strikers have received from Socialist Workers activists over the course of the strike on the picket line, at rallies, and on bus rides to support the Titan workers on strike in Des Moines, Iowa, and elsewhere.

Strikers gave an especially warm welcome to two campaign supporters who are students at the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa. One of them, YS member Justin Hovey, told the unionists that he will try to organize a meeting for the strikers on campus in the fall.

The following day Trowe and several supporters drove up to the Delta for a meeting at the Mileston Coop in Tchula. They were welcomed by David Howard, president of the coop and an activist in the Black farmers' fight against the discriminatory practices of the United States Department of Agriculture.

Also at the meeting were several workers fired by the nearby Freshwater Farms catfish processing company in November 1998 for protesting conditions in the plant. A few days before the meeting with Trowe, the catfish workers involved in the protest had received notice—after more than a year and a half—that the arbitrator that heard their grievance had upheld their firings. The plant is organized by the United Food and Commercial Workers union. Joann Hogan, a leader of the catfish workers, reported on the arbitrator's decision in their case.

After Trowe spoke, David Howard gave a brief update on the farmers' fight and announced plans for another demonstration at the USDA in Washington, D.C., July 31.

The workers and farmers present at the meeting were also interested in learning more about the meat packers' fight for a union in St. Paul.

The conditions facing farmers and meatpacking workers in Minnesota is similar to what farmers and catfish workers in Mississippi confront, Trowe explained. "The big packing companies are having a devastating impact on both workers and farmers," she said. "These corporations are driving down the price of small hogs and squeezing more out of workers on the line."

"The small farmers are being forced out," said Roy Brown, a farmer who also works full-time on the railroad. He explained that right now prices for cotton and soybeans are so low that "there's no way to make our costs."

Trowe spoke briefly about her trip to Cuba this spring as part of a delegation of U.S. farmers invited by the National Association of Small Farmers of Cuba. "If people knew what happened in Cuba, how Castro took the land and gave it to the people, they might get the idea that should happen here," Howard said. "That's why the government doesn't want people to travel to Cuba."

The July 13-16 tour helped build momentum in the petitioning drive to get Trowe and Harris on the ballot in Mississippi. By the end of the weekend, more than 500 signatures had been gathered, out of a goal of 2,000.

Susan LaMont is the Socialist Workers candidate for Congress from the 7th C.D. in Alabama and a member of the United Steelworkers of America. Ardella Blandford, a member of the United Auto Workers, contributed to this article.



Militant/Dave Wulp

Socialist Workers vice-presidential candidate Margaret Trowe speaking at Birmingham campaign meeting.

Thousands sign to put socialists on NY ballot

BY JOE BROOKING

NEW YORK—At the end of the first full week of campaigning, Socialist Workers campaign supporters in New York state have netted a total of 12,773 signatures on nominating petitions. On the first Sunday alone, more than 5,000 people in New York City signed the petitions.

"This is a great start to our drive to win ballot status in New York," said Don Mackle, one of the organizers of the Socialist Workers petitioning campaign here. "At this rate we'll exceed our goal of marching into the Active Workers Conference in Oberlin, Ohio, with well over 20,000 signatures in hand." Campaign supporters plan to turn in 30,000 signatures to place the names of James Harris for president, Margaret Trowe for vice president, and Jacob Perasso for U.S. Senate on the New York ballot by August 21. This is double the legal requirement of 15,000 signatures.

Socialist campaigners have also begun to collect signatures to place Paul Pederson, 24, a worker in Pathfinder's printshop and a leader of the Brooklyn branch of the SWP, on the ballot for U.S. Congress in the 12th District. This working-class district includes sections of Brooklyn as well as the Lower East Side and Chinatown in Manhattan.

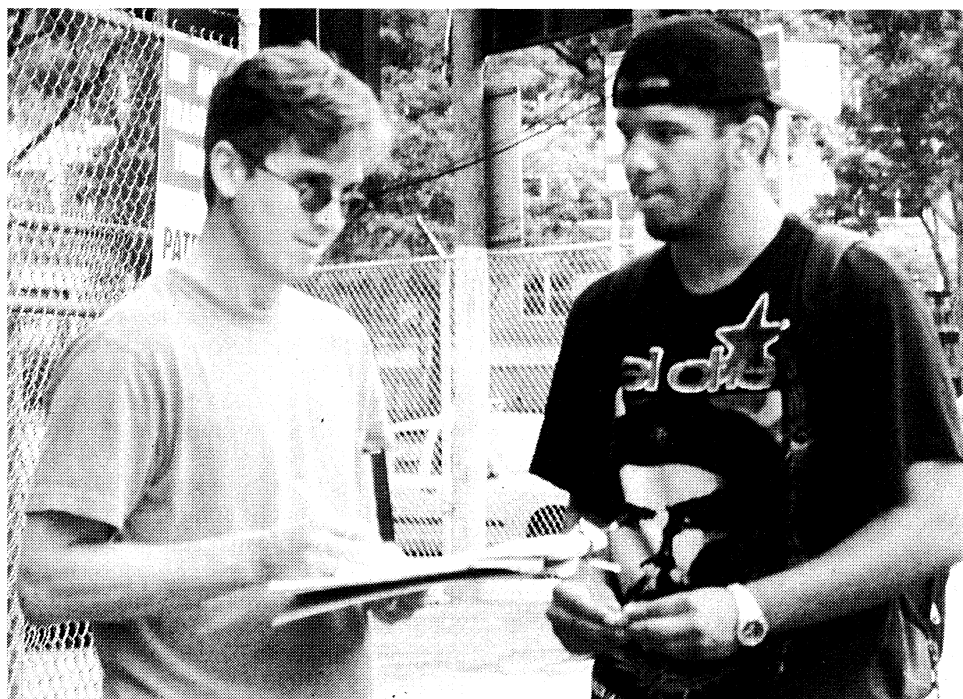
Don Mackle noted, "We will collect signatures for Pederson by 'piggybacking' them with the signatures for the presidential and senatorial candidates. That means asking people to sign two separate petitions on one clipboard. Getting Pederson on the ballot is going to require a concerted effort as part of

the overall campaign we're waging, but we will do it successfully." The socialist campaign plans to file 7,000 signatures for Pederson, twice the legal requirement.

At huddles before petitioning teams hit the streets, and in wrap-up sessions after several hours of work, campaigners have commented on the interest in the socialist campaign's revolutionary perspective expressed by a good number of those who sign the petitions. An even greater number of people readily sign—whether or not they agree with the socialists' political views—out of deeply felt support for the democratic right to be able to consider all the candidates running in the elections, not just the Democrats and Republicans.

John Hawkins, who is the Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress in the 15th District, was the top petitioner on July 16. He collected 195 signatures in five hours on 125th Street in Harlem. Hawkins says he told people that he is running for Congress, and was petitioning to get his running mates on the ballot. "Many people are interested in workers running for office—candidates who are involved in working-class struggles, from the fight to get a union at Dakota Premium Food in St. Paul, Minnesota, to the strike by workers at Domino Sugar in New York. They like the idea of fighting for a government of workers and farmers, which is a new idea for most."

Workers and young people are often drawn to the prominent signs on campaign literature tables demanding an end to the death penalty, jailing of killer cops, that the U.S.



Militant/Hilda Cuzco

Petitioner for Socialist Workers candidates in action on streets of New York

Navy get out of Vieques, Puerto Rico and other issues. They quickly sign the petitions when they find out that there is a political campaign that champions these demands.

Some drop a contribution in collection cans and are pleased to know that the campaign is entirely financed by donations from working people, not wealthy people. Several have signed the special "interest cards" to ensure they will get contacted about upcoming political events sponsored by the socialist campaign or other political activities.

Elizabeth, 23, recently graduated from college, joined her first socialist petitioning team on a busy street corner in Manhattan. After an hour and a half she had collected 37 signatures, a good showing. "Some

people heard the word 'socialist' and said 'No,'" she said. "But most people were pretty dissatisfied with the current system. Police brutality was a big issue. Several people asked me about the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal," who is on death row in Pennsylvania and is fighting for his freedom.

When torrential rain drenched the city on Saturday, July 15, the socialists did not miss a beat. They went into the subway stations to collect signatures, where they reported excellent results. And two campaign teams went upstate, which turned out to be drier.

In Albany, Mindy Brudno, a railroad conductor, hosted the visit of a campaign team. She joined the team, commenting that it went "far better than I expected!"

Another campaign team collected more than 300 signatures upstate in Buffalo. In New York City, Jacob Perasso, socialist candidate for U.S. Senate, joined supporters outside a rally of several thousand home health-care workers organized by the hospital workers union, Local 1199.

On the streets of Manhattan's Garment District, campaigners met a group of young Puerto Rican janitors who said they are interested in starting a union to improve their wages and conditions and be treated like human beings with rights.

"We have also found interest in our political perspectives in every working-class area we've been to," said Mackle. "On Sunday our big hitters were coming back with around 150 signatures after five hours of petitioning. That reflects the changes going on in the working class today, the growing mood of combativity."

Ohio farmers tell Trowe about their struggle

BY EVA BRAIMAN

CLEVELAND—In a two-day sweep around the state of Ohio, Margaret Trowe, Socialist Workers Party candidate for vice president of the United States, met with workers and farmers involved in struggle. They discussed building a fighting alliance among those resisting attacks by the bosses, banks, and agricultural monopolies. Trowe is a packinghouse worker from Minnesota.

The first stop was a meeting with dairy farmers Toby and Fred Heiss and Earl Shaad in Lowell, in southeast Ohio. The dairymen are members of the National Farmers Organization and took part in the July 4 dumping of a day's milk production to protest low prices. Comparing the action to a union strike, Shaad explained that dumping milk was "our way of withholding our labor."

Toby Heiss, who milks 44 Holsteins, told the candidate that farmers in Ohio dumped 36,000 pounds of milk that day, and he looks forward to helping organize more farmers to do the same later in the summer. He is quoted in a recent issue of *Farm and Dairy* saying, "Many people say they can't afford to dump a day's worth of milk. I say we can't afford not to. I don't know how any dairyman with debt can make it in this industry. They must be living on nothing."

Shaad and the older Fred Heiss, Toby's father, have several decades of struggle un-

der their belts. "I've burnt grain, dumped milk, and shot hogs since the 1960s," recalled Shaad. "Why are they trying to move people who are self-supporting, and who bring forth such wealth, onto the welfare rolls?" he asked.

Trowe pledged the support of the Socialist Workers campaign in championing actions like this by farmers. "There are farmers all over the country and all over the world who are facing the exact same conditions as you are. You are not alone," Trowe said. She described a recent trip she participated in with a delegation of fighting farmers from the United States to the congress of the National Association of Small Farmers in Cuba.

The delegation learned about the thoroughgoing land reform that has been one of the central goals of the revolution in Cuba. Land was not only turned over to the peasants, but farmers there cannot be foreclosed on, she said.

The next stop was a coffee house meeting in Mansfield, Ohio, where Trowe met with a locked-out member of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 169 at AK Steel, another USWA member from Mansfield Foundry, and anti-death penalty activist Kathy Foster from Toledo. They discussed the attacks by the bosses against the unions, including recent full-page ads run by AK Steel in the Mansfield paper accus-

ing the Steelworkers union of terrorism in strikes that have taken place in recent years.

Local 169 activist Bonnie Rooks—who is in her 70s and proud to be the oldest locked-out Steelworker in the fight—described the traveling she has done speaking out and building solidarity for the struggle.

She also explained to Trowe her recent change of heart about the death penalty. "I used to be a 'zap 'em' kind of person, until I saw what the police have done in framing up my daughter," who is also a locked-out AK Steel worker. "Now I see how there must be many innocent people in jail," she said. Rooks was anxious to hear from Trowe the latest news from the union-organizing drive among meat packers in St. Paul, Minnesota, which she has been following closely in the *Militant*. Workers at Dakota Premium Foods staged a seven-hour sit-down strike June 1 and have been campaigning to win union recognition since that time.

The next day, eight members of the Union of Needletrades, Textile, and Industrial Employees (UNITE) from the Hugo Boss suit factory in Cleveland met with the Socialist Workers candidate after work. The informal get-together took place in a restaurant near the plant.

Workers told Trowe of the conditions they face in their shop, and were interested in learning about the organizing drive at Dakota Premium Foods. Workers at the plant have been involved in ongoing efforts to strengthen the union at Hugo Boss and were impressed by the unity that the Dakota Premium workers showed that June day.

Later on, Trowe and Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Senate in Ohio, Michael Fitzsimmons, a garment worker, attended and spoke at an annual picnic meeting of the Ottawa County Farmers Union. The socialist candidates were well-received at the meeting, which attracted some 25 farmers.

"What is it going to take to win a decent living for farmers? More organizing?" a farmer asked. Trowe explained that organizing actions like the recent Rally for Rural America in Washington, D.C., is crucial, as is linking up with fighting workers here and around the world.

"These are steps in building a revolutionary mass movement of workers, farmers, and their allies that aims to take state power out of the hands of the capitalist minority," she said.

Eva Braiman is a member of the United Auto Workers. Tony Prince, a member of UNITE, contributed to this article.



Militant/Eva Braiman

SWP vice-presidential candidate Margaret Trowe, left, talks with dairy farmers Earl Shaad, far right, and Toby Heiss (next to Shaad) during July 11 stop in Lowell, Ohio. Farmer Fred Heiss, far left, is speaking with campaign supporter Leroy Watson.

Campaign to put Socialist Workers candidates on New York ballot
Goal: 30,000 signatures by Aug. 21
Requirement: 15,000 signatures

30,000

25,000

20,000

as of July 19:
12,773

15,000

10,000

5,000

**Put Harris,
Trowe, and
Perasso on the
ballot in NY**

Tape shows brutality of Philadelphia cops...

BY JOHN STUDER

PHILADELPHIA—"It was 28 seconds of police fury," the *Philadelphia Inquirer* reported on the front page two days after city cops brutally beat Thomas Jones, a 30-year-old African-American on July 12 after a police chase.

"For that brief period, 10 Philadelphia police pummeled and kicked a suspected carjacker Wednesday, landing 59 blows on a man already wounded from police gunshots," the paper continued. "With a ring of officers jostling for position, police punched the man at least a dozen times and kicked him at least 46 times. The final blow came when an officer slammed the man on the shin with a police radio."

The police beating was videotaped by a local TV crew flying overhead in a helicopter. The video, reminiscent of the tape of the Los Angeles cop beating of Rodney King, was played numerous times on Philadelphia news that evening and on stations all across the country.

Jones, who was driving a car the cops say was stolen, was chased by the police. He stopped and got out. Witnesses reported that he had his hands in the air and was attempting to surrender when the cops began to hit him with their clubs and then opened fire on him.

More than 40 shell casings were found on the ground after the shooting. Jones attempted to flee the murderous gunfire by jumping into an open cop car and driving off. He was shot five times.

The cops took off in pursuit. After a few minutes, Jones came to a stop, remaining seated in the car. Then a swarm of cops descended on him, dragged him out of the car and began hitting and stomping him. In the video, cops can be seen leaping over cars in order to get their licks in. Finally two

plainclothes cops put Jones, shot and beaten, in a headlock, dragged him to their car, and took him away. He is being held in custody at Temple University Hospital where he is reported to be in stable condition.

After swarming over Jones, the cops tried to claim that he had shot at them before they unloosed their barrage of gunfire. Eyewitnesses say there was no gun, and no gun has been found. One cop, Michael Livewell, was injured in the thumb in the police crossfire.

City authorities have reacted by moving to squelch any public outcry against the cop violence. Mayor John Street, who is Black, left the NAACP national convention in Baltimore to hurry home in an effort to head off an explosion of anger against the cops. As part of this move, Street, elected last fall, called Rev. Alfred Sharpton in New York and Jesse Jackson in Chicago. Following Street's lead, many Black clergy made the topic of their Sunday sermons the need for "restraint" and "calm."

While admitting that the videotape was "troubling," Street argued, "We cannot conduct a police witch-hunt by jumping to conclusions in the absence of all the facts."

However, the "facts" on the videotape are hard to ignore, and Street has been moving to defend the cops as a whole even if some have to be sacrificed. "We don't think that the actions taken by the Police Department in that case are typical of the actions of the overall majority of men and women who are on our police force," Street told the media July 14.

City officials have also attempted to deny the incident was racist, claiming that a "frame by frame" study of the videotape showed that the majority of kicks and punches delivered to Jones came from cops who are Black.

The cops have thrown the book at Jones. Besides being charged with stealing the car the cops chased, he has been charged with two counts of attempted murder. One count is for the thumb injury to Livewell and the other is from a cop allegation that in his effort to escape the beating and shooting he drove toward another cop, potentially threatening his life. He has also been charged with aggravated assault, reckless endangerment, a number of recent purse snatchings, and, the cops say, a "host of other offenses." Two days after the assault, the cops claim they have now discovered a "crack pipe" in the car he was driving.

The city's newspapers have obliged the cop campaign to paint Jones as a "career criminal," and, therefore, someone unworthy of protection from police shooting and beating.

The *Philadelphia Inquirer* ran an article entitled "Suspect had a long record," along with a box highlighting every time Jones has been arrested or incarcerated.

Many workers, especially those who are Black, members of other oppressed nationalities, or who have had their own experiences with the cops, whether on strike picket lines or while out on a Saturday night, have cried out against the brutal assault.

"Fue abuso" (It was abuse), a Puerto Rican worker interviewed in a hardware store said. "I've always thought the police are abusive."

"I hope they stick it to those police," said Althea Williams, a Black school teacher's aide. "They expect our young people to respect police officers. Their first reaction when they see them is to run."

"They think because they have a gun, they can do whatever they want," said Kim Nguyen, a Vietnamese-American.

Yvette Kenney, a Black worker at

Athlete's Foot, said she was among about 30 neighbors who marched on their local police station last summer after a young man was beaten by the cops. "When is this stuff going to end?" she asked.

J. Whyatt Mondesire, president of the Philadelphia NAACP, joined members of Jones's family at a July 14 press conference to announce they would be filing a civil-rights lawsuit against the city.

AS WE GO TO PRESS...

July 23 protest rally called

Fifty religious figures have announced a protest rally against the police shooting and beating of Thomas Jones, to take place Sunday, July 23, at 6:00 p.m., at the Morris Brown AME Church, at 25th and Montgomery in North Philadelphia. The church is a few blocks from where the brutalization of Jones was videotaped by a local news team.

"We want to symbolize through the broader public, both African-Americans as well as whites, the outrage, the disgust that many people feel about this beating," Philadelphia NAACP leader J. Whyatt Mondesire told the press as the meeting was announced.

Meanwhile, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* reported July 18 that local cops were selling a T-shirt with a picture of the beating of Jones and the slogan "Welcome America." Alongside it the paper ran a picture of a police badge that read "RNC Welcoming Committee 2000," referring to the Republican national convention scheduled to start here July 31.

The same day, an Amtrak cop shot and killed Robert Brown in the 30th Street train station. The cops allege Brown, a homeless man living in the station, was menacing them with a chair. Glenda Langley, one of numerous witnesses, said, "Everyone screamed: 'You didn't have to shoot him!'"

John Studer is an airport worker and member of the International Association of Machinists.

...as police send agents to spy on activists

BY JOHN STUDER

PHILADELPHIA—City officials here have complained that the timing of the outcry over the videotaped police attack on Thomas Jones couldn't be worse.

The vicious assault, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* said, is "an incident that has thrust the issue of police brutality into the national spotlight and threatened the city's image just weeks before the Republican National Convention." The convention, where George W. Bush will be nominated as the party's candidate for president, is scheduled to take place in Philadelphia the week of August 1.

A number of demonstrations are planned leading up to and during the convention, with the aim of aiding the election campaign of the Democrats as a "lesser evil." Unity 2000, an umbrella coalition of labor unions and protest groups, is focusing on a large march on July 30, the Sunday before the convention. Other groups are aiming to protest during the convention itself. Some have

announced the intention to try to halt the functioning of the convention.

The Philadelphia cops and city government have been on a campaign to raise the specter of potential disruption and violence during the demonstrations in order to justify curtailing democratic rights and winning more leeway for cop violence against demonstrators. They have pointed to reports of "violence" during protests against the World Trade Organization, the World Bank, and other institutions, held in Seattle and in Washington, D.C., earlier this year.

The city has adopted policies for the convention to force demonstrators to protest within specially created "protest pits." The city council voted to make it a crime to wear a mask covering your face during protests.

The Philadelphia cops have sent agents around the country to spy on protest activities, claiming they were trying to "identify troublemakers" who might come to march during the Republican convention.

They sent cops to Washington for the demonstrations there. They sent spies to a May Day rally in New York City, where they conducted what the *New York Daily News* called a "cloak-and-dagger surveillance" of demonstrators. They took pictures to assemble dossiers on activists.

The cops have also been spying on political organizations, bookstores, and activists in Philadelphia, where the convention is going to take place.

Members of the Unity 2000 coalition have sent a letter to the police protesting the fact that two people have been parked outside their offices for weeks taking photos of those who come and go. The TV news has reported that bookstores like the Wooden Shoe and groups such as the Kensington Welfare Rights Organization have also been placed under open police surveillance.

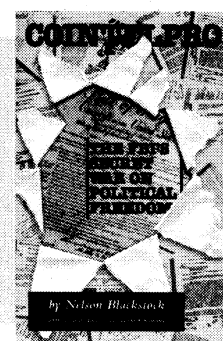
At some times the cops have admitted they were the ones snapping photos, saying that since they were doing it openly, there was no violation of anyone's rights. At other times they have denied it. "What makes [the activists] think the people taking pictures are police officers," one cop spokesperson told a reporter.

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Nelson Blackstock

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Palestinians rally to demand return of occupied territory by Israeli regime



Palestinians demonstrated July 18 in the West Bank to demand Tel Aviv return land it seized in 1967 Mideast war. The action occurred during talks between the Israeli prime minister and Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat in Washington.

'Cops are the criminals,' says socialist candidate

John P. Crysdale, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress in the First District, issued a strong condemnation of the cop assault on Thomas Jones, and encouraged his supporters and all working people to demand the jailing of all the cops responsible. "There is no excuse for police brutality," he said after the beating. Crysdale, a textile worker and unionist, said, "Like the death penalty, cop violence is a tool used by the rulers to intimidate and attack working people, to send the message that if you resist the economic and political attacks of the employers, you will be victimized."

"The videotape makes it perfectly clear—Jones was the victim, the cops were the criminals. No 'investigation' is needed. The city authorities are stalling in the hopes our outcry will dissipate. Meanwhile, they try to paint Thomas Jones as a subhuman brute who got what he deserved. This is just what the politi-

cians and cops in New York tried to do to Amadou Diallo and Patrick Dorismond.

"This is not a case of a couple of 'bad apples' on the police force," the socialist candidate said. "Police violence is a necessity for the cops of the capitalist system. The goal of this brutality is to intimidate workers and farmers from fighting for our rights and for a decent living. As the crisis of capitalism deepens, their brutality will escalate."

"I say: Jail the cops who beat Thomas Jones! Help mobilize public protest to force action against the brutal cops," Crysdale said.

"Join the Socialist Workers campaign to help promote the idea of combining our struggles into a revolutionary movement to fight for our own government, a workers and farmers government, that will dismantle the employers' police and begin to construct a socialist society that puts human needs before profits."

—J.S.

UN committee backs Puerto Rico sovereignty

Continued from front page
the Socialist Front. "Dozens of defenders of Vieques are in jail today, including a large number of leaders of the Puerto Rican Independence Party (PIP); its main leaders, Rubén Berrios and Fernando Martín, were convicted by this imperial court for entering territory illegally restricted by the Navy."

Martín, vice president of the PIP, also testified at the UN hearings, defying the U.S. court's imposition of parole restrictions on his freedom of travel.

Eduardo Villanueva Muñoz, of the Puerto Rican Bar Association, condemned the continuing imprisonment of six pro-independence political prisoners as another example of U.S. colonial rule. In September 1999, as a result of an international defense campaign, 11 Puerto Rican independence fighters were released; many of them had spent almost two decades in U.S. prisons.

Eduardo Pagán, from Pro-Libertad, a New York-based organization that campaigns for the release of the political prisoners, called on Washington to immediately free the six—Antonio Camacho, Carlos Alberto Torres, José Solís, Juan Segarra Palmer, Oscar López Rivera, and Haydée Beltrán."

U.S. invasion in 1898

Marisol Corretjer, vice president of the Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico, pointed out that U.S. colonial rule of the island "results from an act of aggression perpetrated by that country in 1898 and the extension of that

invasion to the present." She condemned the current "Commonwealth" status as a fraud designed to cover up and perpetrate the colonial status of her country.

Also speaking in favor of independence were José Paraltici of All Puerto Rico with Vieques; Julio Muriente, president of the New Independence Movement of Puerto Rico (NMIP); Wilma Reverón Collazo, co-chair of the Hostos National Congress; and long time independent fighters Juan Mari Brás and Lolita Lebrón. Lebrón was one of five Nationalists who spent a quarter century in U.S. prisons until their release in the late 1970s.

Death penalty controversy

One issue that has flared up in Puerto Rico recently is the death penalty. Farinacci of the Socialist Front pointed to "the U.S. government's efforts to impose the death penalty in Puerto Rico through its courts operating in our country. The death penalty is banned in Puerto Rico, as expressed clearly in the 1952 Constitution" of the Commonwealth, he said. Yet "U.S. authorities have certified 11 cases for capital punishment in Puerto Rico," showing Washington's colonial trampling of democratic rights in Puerto Rico.

James Harris, Socialist Workers candidate for president of the United States, said that the people of Puerto Rico and the United States face the same enemy in Washington and Wall Street. "A successful struggle to get the U.S. Navy out of Vieques, and ultimately for the independence of Puerto Rico,



May 5 protest in New York against resumption of U.S. Navy bombing in Vieques

will deal a resounding blow to our common enemy. It will show," he said, "that it's possible to stand up to the most brutal imperialist power in history and win freedom from its rule."

After the UN committee approved the resolution by consensus, the Cuban ambassador called it "a victory—one whose protagonists are men and women who have fought all their lives for the independence of Puerto Rico, those who have faced long prison sentences, those arrested and mistreated these past months for defending

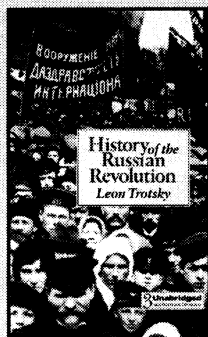
Vieques, those who might be arrested right now in Puerto Rico or who face a future of uncertain freedom, those who are demonstrating now across the United Nations protesting the bombing by the U.S. Navy in Vieques, and those who year after year come before this Special Committee."

Across from the United Nations several dozen people gathered to demand "U.S. Navy Out of Vieques" and the release of the political prisoners. The picket was organized by the Vieques Support Campaign, Pro-Libertad, and other local organizations.

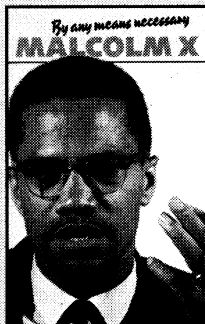
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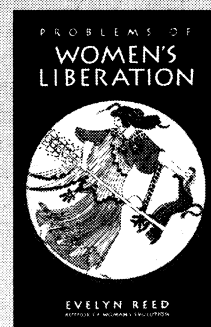
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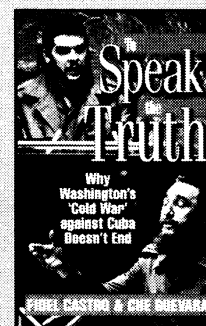
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Outspoken rightist to head Canadian party

Continued from front page
as a nation in 1867.

On July 10, Conservative Alberta premier Ralph Klein stated, speaking of the Conservative Party, "Most of the members of that party, just like most members of the Reform Party, have now gone to the Canadian Alliance, because that is the true unification of the conservative movement in Canada. Joe [Clark] should get on board." Clark, the leader of the Conservative Party, represents the "moderate" Conservative current that is disintegrating as politics in Canada becomes more polarized.

Day is known for having the most outspoken right-wing views of all the candidates who contested the Canadian Alliance leadership. While he played down somewhat his reactionary views on abortion rights, gay rights, the death penalty, immigrants, and other issues during the leadership race, others continually raised them. His election as leader of the Alliance and the emergence of that party as a major force in politics mark a noticeable shift to the right in capitalist politics in Canada.

When asked from the audience if he held anti-Jewish views in a leadership debate on July 5, Day vehemently denied it. But his rival in the Alliance, Preston Manning, seized on the question to portray Day as someone who is too open about his right-wing views. "I simply say," Manning declared, "that on those types of questions that anybody who becomes leader of the Alliance has to be extremely careful in the statements they make, [so] that they do not provide opportunities for the Liberals or the national [press] gallery to malign the Alliance through slip-ups like that."

Three days after Day's election as leader, Dr. Garson Romalis, a doctor who performs abortions in Vancouver, was stabbed in the back in his clinic. While Day condemned the violent attack, a significant part of his support comes from antiabortion and other right-wing groups. In 1995, Day supported an antiabortion group that called on the Alberta government to stop funding abortions unless the mother's life was in danger.

In 1989 Day opposed extending human rights protection to homosexuals. In 1994, when the Supreme Court ordered the Alberta government to amend its human rights legislation to protect homosexuals, he urged Premier Ralph Klein to override the decision using the "notwithstanding" clause in the constitution, which allows provincial governments to set aside constitutional decisions for five years.

He has proposed putting Chinese immigrants on a government plane and sending them back to their country of origin. He advocated putting a man convicted of murder, Clifford Olson, into the general prison population, suggesting that he be killed by other prisoners. He said, "People like myself say, 'Fix the problem. Put him in the general prison population. The moral prisoners will deal with him in a way we don't have the nerve to.'"

Day calls for shifting health care increasingly from a state-funded system to private business. Both the Alberta and Ontario Conservative governments have led the attacks in this country on social services, health care, and education.

On foreign policy he calls for Canadian imperialism to assert its interests in the world. He proposes increasing military funding by \$2 billion over the next two years and wants the Canadian military to be "an organization capable of fighting wars." He supports the U.S. government's efforts to create a missile shield system for North America—one that would give Washington a first-strike nuclear capacity. Day also calls

for a permanent Canadian military presence in Europe, and proposes a review of relations with revolutionary Cuba, with a clear goal of limiting them.

In playing down his more controversial views during the leadership contest in the Canadian Alliance, Day stressed his positions in favor of regressive taxes, beefing up criminal law, more funding for both health care and the military, and an elected senate. He introduced a "flat" tax in Alberta, where everyone who pays taxes is taxed at the same rate—a bonanza for the wealthy and an extra burden on working people. He stands for making it more difficult for prisoners to get parole.

Day proposes granting provinces more autonomy by limiting federal encroachment on provincial jurisdiction, and he argues that

provinces should be able to opt out of federal programs, with full financial compensation from Ottawa. By putting Quebec on the same level as all the other provinces, Day denies the historic oppression of the French-speaking Quebecois, who as a group are subjected to lower wages, higher unemployment, and inferior education and health care than the English-speaking population.

On the fight by Native people for more control over resources, Day's policy platform states, "We will not support race-based allocation of harvest rights to natural resources."

There is no indication that the Alliance has won any significant support in Quebec. The fact that a significant wing of Canada's ruling rich is prepared to support a party that aims to form a federal government with little support in Quebec is a new development in

Canadian politics and a sign of growing weakness.

The *Globe and Mail*, one of Canada's two national newspapers, commented in a July 10 editorial, "The Alliance's goal is valuable: to create a strong party that will give the federal Liberals a true fight. It is in the country's interest that one party not remain in power by default."

In the 1993 federal election, which the Liberal Party won, the ruling Conservative Party was decimated and two new parties won significant support—the Reform Party in the west and the sovereignist Bloc Quebecois in Quebec. This regional and national fragmentation of bourgeois politics in Canada and the absence of any "national" alternative to the ruling Liberal Party are of growing concern to Canada's rulers.

Antiabortion thug stabs Vancouver doctor

BY BRIAN HAUKE

VANCOUVER, British Columbia—Garson Romalis, a doctor who provides abortion in this city, was stabbed in the back outside his office July 11 by an antiabortion rightist. That evening, more than 200 defenders of a woman's right to choose held a rally in front of the Art Gallery in defense of Romalis and a woman's right to abortion. Rally speakers included representatives from the University of British Columbia (UBC) Students for Choice, Pro-Choice Action Network, Hospital Employees Union, and UBC Medical Students for Choice.

This was the second attack on Romalis, and the most recent in a series of attacks on Canadian and U.S. doctors who perform abortions. On Nov. 8, 1994, Romalis nearly bled to death after being shot in the thigh by an antiabortion rightist. He was in critical condition for 48 hours and hospitalized for 10 weeks.

Also targeted for violent attacks in 1994, this time across the border, were two Boston abortion clinics. Receptionists Shannon Lowney and Leanne Nichols were killed and at least five other people injured by a rightist gunman.

Gynecologist Hugh Short had his elbow shattered when he was shot in a second-story room of his Hamilton, Ontario, home in November 1995. A year later, rightists threw butyric acid on Edmonton's Morgentaler clinic. On Remembrance Day (November 11) 1997, Dr. Jack Fainman was shot in the shoulder through a rear window of his Winnipeg, Manitoba, home.

Dr. Barnett Slepian, an obstetrician and gynecologist who provided abortions in Buffalo, New York, was murdered on Oct. 23, 1998. Slepian, 52, was shot through the back with a high-powered rifle as he stood with his wife and 15-year-old son in the kitchen of their home in Amherst, New York.

One day after the stabbing of Romalis,



Militant/Monica Jones

Hours after Garson Romalis was stabbed, 200 gathered to protest the assault. Nearly six years ago Romalis had been shot by anti-choice rightist.

Vancouver doctor Ellen Weibe received a death threat on her office voice mail. Weibe is spearheading a nationwide clinical trial of the abortion drug RU-486.

With the polarization of bourgeois politics in Canada, rightist forces have become bolder. Newly elected Canadian Alliance party leader Stockwell Day is vocally opposed to abortion. As a member of Alberta's Tory government he fought against government funding for abortions.

In spite of two protests in Edmonton and Calgary held April 16 by 9,000 people de-

fending public health care, Alberta premier Ralph Klein's government shut down a number of public hospitals and reduced hospital beds by half under Bill 11, the so-called Health Care Protection Act. These moves have reduced access to safe abortions.

Governments in every province have been following the same course, including dropping nonemergency services such as annual physical or eye exams from coverage by Medicare, Canada's publicly funded health insurance. Prince Edward Island refuses to allow or fund abortion services.

1,000 condemn murder of gay Black man in W. Virginia

BY DIANA NEWBERRY
AND CAITLIN FLAHERTY

FAIRMONT, West Virginia—An angry crowd of nearly 1,000 people gathered at the Marion County courthouse here July 11 to protest the murder of Arthur Warren Jr., 26, a Black gay man from a coal mining family in nearby Grant Town.

According to media accounts, a 15-year-old witness said he was present when two 17-year-old youths beat and kicked Warren to death with their fists and heavy work boots when he showed up at a house they were painting late in the evening of July 3. They then took Warren's body to a nearby road where they ran over it repeatedly to make the death look like a hit-and-run. Afterward the three teens, all of whom are white, cleaned the house, and burned and buried their clothing.

The 15-year-old went to police early the next day and the two others were arrested while attending local Fourth of July activities with their parents, and reportedly confessed. Recent articles in *The Dominion Post* and *Pittsburgh Post Gazette* allege the two youths were enraged because they believed Warren had spoken of a sexual relationship with one of them.

From the beginning the police have acted

with callous disregard for Warren's family. His parents, Brenda and Arthur Warren, learned of their son's death when police chief William Gower came to their house inquiring when their son had left the night before. Only after asking about their son did Gower tell them he had been found dead and his body has been identified.

The West Virginia Lesbian and Gay Coalition called the July 11 protest after repeated statements by Marion County sheriff Ron Watkins that there was nothing to substantiate accusations that Warren was killed because he was gay. On July 10, Marion County prosecutor Richard Bunner told the media he did not charge the youths with a "hate crime" because the state's hate-crimes statute does not cover crimes against gays. First-degree murder charges carry the possibility of a life sentence with no parole; the state hate-crimes law carries a penalty of no more than 10 years in prison.

On July 12, Judge Rodney Merrifield issued a sweeping gag order preventing anyone involved in the case from talking to the media. In response to the rally and the broader community's reaction of outrage, it was announced July 13 that the Marion County sheriff had asked the FBI to look at the department's continuing investigation,

hoping, according to detective Doris James, "to dispel controversy surrounding the case."

In an outpouring of human solidarity, the protest, called as a vigil, filled the center of this small town located in the heart of Appalachian coal country. Hundreds of working people from the area, both Black and white, turned out. They were joined by students and other youth, and members of gay and lesbian organizations, some coming from as far away as Charleston, West Virginia, and Marietta, Ohio. Those interviewed by the *Militant* said they were there to condemn the brutal killing and "to call for justice," as speaker Marcus Lewis put it.

A handful of right-wing counterprotesters, led by Fred Phelps, a minister of the Westboro Baptist Church of Topeka, Kansas, attempted to get into the center of the crowd carrying signs declaring, "God hates fags" and "Matt in hell" with pictures of Matthew Shepard, a young gay man murdered last year in Wyoming. The disciplined crowd silently surrounded the right-wingers and kept them from disrupting the vigil.

Diana Newberry is a member of Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees Local 133H.

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Minnesota meat packers press fight for union

Continued from front page

against the union. They have also organized company meetings where food and liquor are served to workers while management campaigns for a "no" vote. The in-plant union organizing committee has begun to organize workers to participate in these meetings in order to take on the company propaganda.

'So what's up with the line speed?'

"So, what's up with the line speed?" asked José Mateo, a pro-union worker at one such company affair in a hotel near the plant. The question was addressed at a table full of workers to a company supervisor who was recently brought to Dakota Premium from another of Rosen's slaughterhouses because of his antiunion experience.

"We were promised something different, and this is why people talk about the union," he said. The supervisor, known as Andrés, answered by saying the union would get in the way of workers being able to talk to the company and that even if the union won, the company would never agree to a contract. "If that is the case," Mateo answered, "we might have to shut you down."

Issue number 7 of the *Workers' Voice*, the newsletter published by the organizing committee of workers in the plant, explains why, a month later, the company has not lived up to the concessions and promises it made during the sit-down strike.

Under the heading "Why we should vote union," the newsletter points out, "Despite the company's efforts to intimidate us and confuse us, the main questions are the questions we have been fighting for since we struck last June 1: the line speed. After the strike the company slowed the line down for a short while. But the line is going fast again. Why is that?"

Why company will keep pushing

"The company will not stop pushing for a faster line speed ever. All the meatpacking companies are being driven to do this by the pressures of competition in the market. They can give us a few free tacos and free booze, but they will always try to push us to the limit because of their insatiable thirst for profits. Only if we organize ourselves into a union can we be effective in pushing the bosses back when they try to get so much out of us."

"Without a union we are forced to negotiate individually or in small groups and the gains that we make are very temporary, as we have seen in the last month. Organizing our collective power into a union we can make bigger gains and make them last," the *Workers' Voice* stated.

Under the heading "Injuries, job combination and training," the newsletter points out, "We have a high rate of injuries on the job. Examples of how the company ignores our pain and forces us to work while injured are countless and ongoing. Only a union contract where the working conditions and training are written down can give us a tool to defend ourselves on a daily basis."

What has changed

The company has concentrated on trying to convince workers that, even if they win union representation, a contract will never be negotiated. In a letter distributed to all workers at the plant gate, Local 789 president William Pearson stated, "The company continues to tell you that even if you win this election, you won't get a contract. They claim it will be just like eight years ago," he said, referring to a successful decertification drive in the plant that stemmed from the union's failure to win a contract 14 months after the union was voted in.

"They're wrong!!!!" Pearson said in the letter. "I'd like to tell you it's because there's new leadership at the union. Unfortunately that's not enough. The simple fact is that all the union's strength comes from the collective power of the workers. Stop and think about what you did. You shut the line down because you were willing to stand together. It may well have been the bravest act that I have ever seen by a group of workers."

"There are other reasons," he continued. "Eight years ago there were more workers looking for work. You are no longer expendable in the company's eyes. They desperately need you for the plant to run. Unemployment is at an all-time low in the Twin Cities." But "the last piece may be the most powerful," he noted. "Everyone is watch-

ing the outcome of this election and contract negotiations.... This isn't just your fight anymore. It's all of ours."

The workers and UFCW Local 789 organized a prayer service along with Father Hugo Montero on Sunday, July 16, at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in South St. Paul. A potluck dinner took place afterward where many workers, their families, union staff, and other supporters of the fight spent time socializing and discussing their struggle while eating homemade pozole and having a good time.

"Union yes! Si se puede!" T-shirts were distributed among workers and plans began to be made for a "T-shirt day" on the day of

the vote. Many workers took sample ballots to bring to co-workers in order to make sure supporters of the union are clear on how exactly the ballot should be filled out in favor of the union.

As the *Militant* went to press, workers were planning a "Union Yes" rally on the day before the union vote. They called on participation by family, friends, and supporters of the workers at Dakota Premium. An open house was also planned at the union hall after the vote. The election was slated to take place between 2:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. on Friday, July 21. The ballots will be counted immediately after the vote.

"I believe we can and we will win, and I

look forward to the celebration of a victory of winning union representation," said Samuel Farley, a brisket boner and one of the leaders of the organizing committee. "But you've also got to be clear that the vote does not end anything. It will define a stage in our ongoing fight for justice."

Farley added, "I look back at what has been accomplished so far and I tell you I am very proud of so many of my co-workers in the kill and the boning departments because we are today so much stronger than when we started this struggle. And that is the reason I can confidently say that, regardless of the outcome on July 21, this fight will continue."

¡Sí se puede!

ACTIVE WORKERS CONFERENCE

July 27-29 at Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio

Workers, farmers, and fighting youth involved in the resistance of working people that increasingly marks politics in the United States and worldwide are making plans to attend an Active Workers Conference in Oberlin, Ohio. Participants in these fights

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Information
tables ♦ Classes
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Thursday, July 27

8:00 am •Registration
7:00 pm •Welcome and brief reports from frontline working-class struggles
•Feature Political Report – **Mary-Alice Waters**, editor of 'New International'

Friday, July 28

9:00 am •Panel – From the Coalfields to Packing Houses and Garment Shops: Working-Class Vanguard in Action
•Presentation by Cuban Trade Union Leaders
1:30 pm •Feature Political Report – **Jack Barnes**, National Secretary, Socialist Workers Party
7:00 pm •Classes



Saturday, July 29

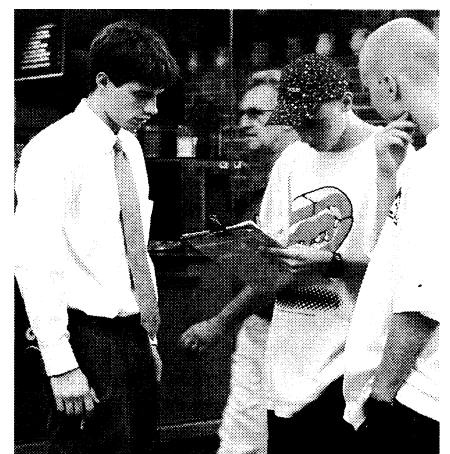
9:00 am •Panel, 2nd session
1:30 pm •Classes
7:00 pm •Active Workers Conference Summary – **Jack Barnes**
•Launching of *Militant* Fund
•Party and social

Sunday, July 30

•Joint meeting of steering committee members of SWP's national trade union fractions
•Meeting organized by the Young Socialists
•Workshops for conference participants volunteering for Pathfinder Reprint Project

CLASSES

The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning ♦ Organizational Principles of the Socialist Workers Party ♦ The Transitional Program: From Sit-Down Strikes to Arming the Proletariat ♦ Left-Wing Communism – an Infantile Disorder ♦ Trade Unions – Past, Present, and Future ♦ Death Penalty: Weapon of Capitalist Class Rule ♦ Class-Struggle Road to Women's Liberation ♦ The Class Struggle in the Pacific ♦ The 1979 Iranian Revolution and Class Struggle in Iran Today



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For more information contact numbers on page 2

Hospital workers strike 'rat' employer

BY AUTUMN KNOWLTON

GARY, Indiana—After 40 days on the picket line, striking hospital workers at the Methodist Hospitals voted 184 to 101 to accept the latest proposed contract and go back to work.

The 600 members of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 73 who work in Gary and Merrillville walked off the job June 1.

The workers won modest wage increases of 40 cents upon ratification of the contract, plus four smaller wage raises over the next three years, lower than the union was demanding, but higher than in the original company proposals.

The new contract includes some modification of the use of temporary workers and of the hospital's three-tier wage scale which has divided workers on the basis of when they were hired.

As reflected in the high number of workers voting no on the contract, many workers wanted to continue the fight.

The striking workers included food service workers, maintenance and instrument technicians, nurses aides, and others.

This was the first strike at The Methodist Hospitals that workers could remember. Workers organized strong picket lines throughout and weekly rallies to draw sup-

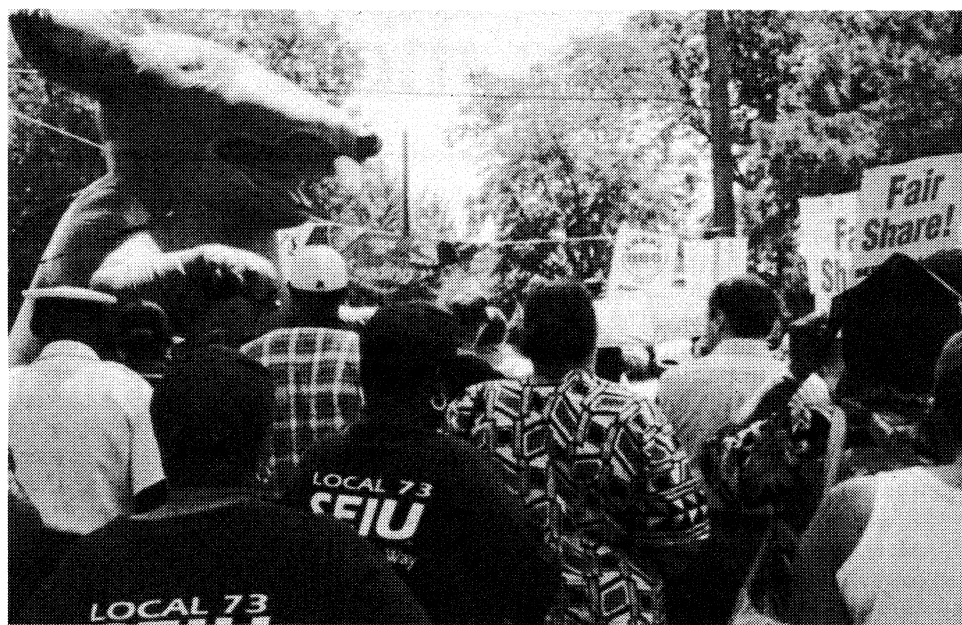
port from the community and other unions.

A march and rally on July 5 drew 300 striking workers. The rally featured the Rev. Jesse Jackson, strikers, local religious leaders, a representative of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA), a Gary city councilman, a representative of the Central Labor Council of Northwest Indiana, representatives of the Gary and East Chicago Teachers Unions, and a representative of the Gary Firefighters Union.

The rally was marked by the workers' determination to stay out until they win the strike. The biggest banner at the front of the rally read, "Patients Before Profits—SEIU Local 73." One homemade sign read, "[Hospital] President Betjemann every year makes more than \$250,000. How much do you make?"

The USWA had an organized presence at the rally, with 30 members participating. USWA members carried signs including, "USWA demands justice for SEIU" and "Stop stalling! Settle now!" Another sign read, "Steelworkers refuse to use Methodist 'til they settle."

Jim Robertson, who represented USWA District 7, addressed the rally and reaffirmed that pledge in his comments. He explained that The Methodist Hospitals are the product of fights by the USWA for medical ben-



Militant/Betsey Stone

300 striking hospital workers join July 5 protest alongside "corporate rat" at Methodist Hospital. After 40 days on strike, workers won wage raises, other modest gains.

efits. He also led the crowd in chanting, "I won't give up, I won't give in, We'll keep fighting 'til we win."

During Jackson's comments he expressed his solidarity with the strike. He told the rally participants, "When we march together, we win together."

Jackson also stated that he would be going to Kokomo, Mississippi, to participate in a march from there to Columbus, Mississippi July 8-9 to protest the recent hanging death of Raynard Johnson, a 17-year-old Black youth.

Nathan Harper, who has worked for nine years in the hospital's X-ray department, said, "The pension plan is a joke." Another striker, Patricia Wilson, who has worked in the Radiology department for three years, said that an important issue for her is the hospital's use of temporary workers, who receive extremely low wages and no benefits. She also thinks the hospital should eliminate the three-tier wage.

As the crowd marched to the hospital's administrative building, they chanted "Hey hey, ho ho, union busting has got to go!" and "No contract, no peace!"

The union organized a "prayer" rally on July 3, featuring several local ministers who support the strike. Workers organize regular picket lines in front of the hospital.

At a June 22 rally, off-duty Gary police officers acting as hospital security arrested two demonstrators. They claimed that the participants were trespassing on hospital property.

According to union representative Lorenzo Cromwell Jr., the pickets were gathered at the park while he was beginning to inflate a 20-foot balloon labeled a "corporate rat" when the cops began harassing the unionists. Bill Silver was speaking at the rally representing the SEIU when the cops arrested him. Also picked up was striker Evangelist Jones who was charged with criminal trespassing and resisting arrest.

Betsey Stone, a member of the International Association of Machinists, contributed to this article.

Alberta newspaper strike ends with union loss

BY ANNETTE KOURI

CALGARY, Alberta—Striking journalists at the *Calgary Herald* decided to end their strike here June 30 after eight months on the picket line, accepting a back-to-work agreement that includes the dissolution of the union.

Members of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union (CEP) Local 115A struck to demand seniority rights, job security, and a wage grid. Of the 91 journalists still on strike, 89 voted by a 68 percent margin to accept the company's demands. The bosses forced the journalists to return to work with only the job security protection allowed under Alberta labor law, or to accept a buyout package.

"A large number of our members have decided not to return to work at the *Calgary Herald*," said CEP local president Andy Marshall.

The CEP underlines two factors in their

decision to end the strike. The *Herald* continued to publish during the strike using replacement workers, which is allowed by Alberta's labor laws. As well, pressmen, distribution, and mailroom workers who are members of the Graphic Communications International Union (GCIU), who had been on strike or lockout during the same period, accepted a new contract and returned to work on June 14.

"We ask the GCIU and trade unionists everywhere to draw the lessons from this dispute, and to understand the critical situation that our members faced after GCIU members accepted separate agreements and crossed the picket line," explained the CEP.

The pressmen, members of the GCIU, won a 10 percent wage increase over the life of the five-year contract and received signing bonuses ranging from \$500 to \$1,000. The distribution center workers, also members of the GCIU, won their first con-

tract that recognizes their union and seniority rights. But the pact also included a wage cut from \$15 to \$11 an hour.

"Our members are proud of the struggle they have waged for fairness and responsible journalism," Marshall said. The *Calgary Herald* is one of two major dailies here. It was purchased several years ago by newspaper magnate Conrad Black, known for his outspoken right-wing views, who owns more than 600 newspapers worldwide.

During the strike, workers said that Black's antiunion policies were undermining the quality of the *Herald* and their ability to do their jobs without fear of reprisal. In February, *Herald* publisher Dan Gaynor stated management's position: "Seniority language doesn't really have any place in a modern newspaper."

Dairy farmers stage 'milk dump'

BY DEBORAH LIATOS

ESCALON, California—A protest to demand higher prices for milk by 50 dairy farmers and their families July 4 featured a "milk dump" at the Faria Dairy Family farm here as part of actions by dairy farmers in 11 states.

"This action today is in solidarity with the Midwest actions. Dairy men across this country are expressing their independence today," said Frank Faria, one of the owners of the Faria family dairy farms. He explained that he would dump 1,800 gallons of milk down the drain to illustrate the plight of dairy farmers.

"We followed the political process and our concerns are falling on deaf ears," Faria said. "Something needs to be done. Milk prices are the lowest in 30 years. They don't cover the cost of production. Small farmers are the backbone of this country. We need to inform people that we see 85 to 90 cents of the \$3-4 dollars a gallon paid by the consumer." The processors and stores get the bulk of the money, he said.

"Today is a ceremonial milk-dump. We are also asking for everyone's support for the milk strike being called by dairy farmers on September 4, Labor Day," he stated.

Among the solutions put forth at the protest are to raise price supports from \$9.90 to \$13.50 per hundredweight, with government purchases restricted to 3 percent of supply; to install either a producer or government milk board that addresses regional differences and manages supply and demand signals; and to change the farmers' current make allowance formula to make it variable according to prices of milk. Make allowance is the fee farmers must pay to processors to process the milk they sell them. Dairy farmers also pay the trucking costs for getting the milk to the processing

facility.

Joe Parreira has owned his farm since 1984 and like many dairy farmers in California, is Portuguese. "Small dairies with 250 cows with the right price can make a living and can live with dignity. That's what we call small farmers. We don't want to get rich, just to make a living," Parreira stated.

Frank Lopes is 34 years old. He lives with his wife and three children and farms 300 cows. "The California Dairy Campaign has been doing protests in the last 10 years against unfair pricing, including one demonstration where we brought some of our cows to the state capitol in Sacramento," explained Lopes.

"I've worked hard and contributed to society. I'd be happy if I knew my land and cows would support me and my family, that I'd be able to live in dignity when I'm older," Lopes said.

Deborah Liatos is a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers union.

♦

BY TOM FISHER

ST. PAUL, Minnesota—Steve Siverling, a farmer in Bloomer, Wisconsin, among those who helped start the call for the July 4 milk action, said, "We chose July 4 because we wanted to make a statement. We are dumping milk to signify that this is our independence day."

He added, "We are demanding \$13.50 per hundredweight floor price for milk. We really need \$18. It's no wonder that our call for action has gotten a response. There is a crisis in the industry. The number of Grade A dairy farmers in the U.S. has decreased from 130,000 down to 80,000 in the last two years."

Milk spilled in Wisconsin protest



Francis Goodman

KENDALL, Wisconsin—Dairy farmer Joel Greeno opens valve on holding tank and drains 240 gallons of milk (about one ton) in July 4 dairy strike protest. Greeno, president of the American Raw Milk Producers Pricing Association, dumped his milk to protest the \$9.37 per hundredweight paid by processors to dairy farmers while the average cost of production in the region is more than \$17 per hundredweight.

Greeno told reporters, "I'm making a statement with this. We have had enough and can't take anymore." He estimated that close to half a million pounds of milk were being dumped in Wisconsin alone as part of this protest, and demanded "an emergency \$14.50 price" per hundredweight. Similar actions took place in half a dozen other states. Joining in solidarity with Greeno's action on his farm were his father Julian and two dairy farmer activists, Randy Jasper and Francis Goodman. "The working poor need milk. People who can't afford to buy milk need to get together with those who can't afford to produce it," stated Goodman.

Greeno said leaders of farmers' organizations met with top officials of the AFL-CIO in May in an effort to win support from trade unions. There will be another milk strike on Labor Day weekend. "We must take a stand," he said.

—LISA POTASH

Florida UNITE workers score gain in strike

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS
AND ROLLANDE GIRARD

POMPANO BEACH, Florida—UNITE members at Tartan Textile here scored a victory through a militant strike that sent out pickets to shut down Tartan plants in other states. The decisive action and solidarity meant that after seven days on the picket line, workers returned to the job July 13 with their union T-shirts and buttons, and with plenty of pride and smiles. "We fought with dignity and won some respect, in addition to some economic gains," said Randal Preddie, a truck driver and member of UNITE—the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees—at the Tartan plant here.

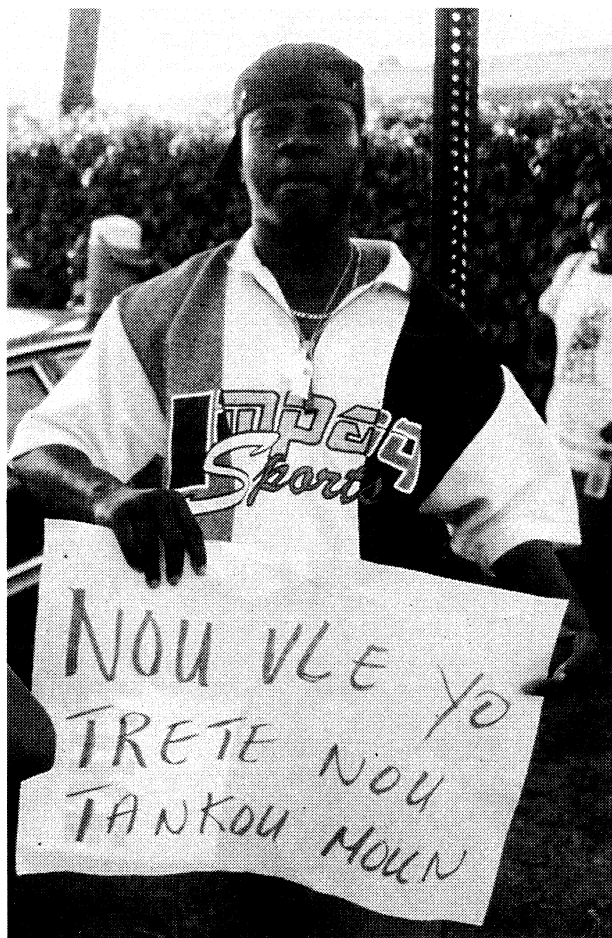
The previous day, the company and union negotiators agreed on a contract that provides a \$1-an-hour across the board raise over three years: 50 cents the first year, and 25 cents each of the subsequent years. The settlement was approved by a large majority of the workers. Among the main demands of the unionists was a \$1 hourly raise this year. Before the strike, the company had offered 25 cent increases for each year.

"We also got a pension plan, which we did not have before, and time-and-a-half pay for weekend work that the company was not paying," said Preddie in an interview with *Militant* reporters. "It could be better. We might not be 100 percent satisfied, but the settlement is definitely a step up from what we had before the walkout. You got to fight to get anything from the bosses," he said.

"The degree of unity in the plant, and the solidarity from Tartan workers in New York and other states that went out to support us, was important for the gains we made," Preddie explained. "We wouldn't have accomplished anything without that. The main credit belongs to the women workers, who are the majority. They were the ones who kept the spirits high on the picket line."

Houston-based Tartan Textile employs more than 3,000 workers at 28 plants across the country. Workers at these factories wash linens and surgical gowns for hospitals and nursing homes. Most of the plants are union-organized, about half of them by UNITE. None of the contracts at those plants expire at the same time as the one here.

As the company tried to bring in some scabs and shift work to other factories, UNITE sent more than a dozen workers from here to set up roving pickets and try to shut a number of those facilities down. Workers in at least four plants located in Freeport and Hempstead, New York; Paterson, New Jersey; and in Virginia, went on sympathy strikes. Job actions in solidarity with the Pompano Beach unionists also took place in Georgia, Maine, and other states. Preddie, who was part of roving pickets for several days at the New York Tartan plants, said UNITE members there kept them shut



Militant/Eric Simpson

Tartan Textile picket. Sign in Creole reads, "We want to be treated like human beings."

for five days.

Workers had walked off the job July 6 protesting low wages and unsafe working conditions. Most of the 220 UNITE members at this industrial laundry north of Mi-

ami made \$6.15 per hour prior to the walkout and took home weekly pay of \$192.

Preddie and others said the majority of workers felt it was wise to go back at this point, even though they had gotten only half the wage raise they wanted, because they thought they could suffer cracks in their ranks after 24-hour picketing for a week. He said workers felt they had strengthened the union and were in a better position to have more control over conditions on the job.

"The company could have given us \$1 but they are really cheap," said Lauverta Adalphonse, a production worker. "But the sun was too hot on the picket line and we decided to go back." She also said workers had agreed that if any of them were yelled at by management when they returned to the job, then they would all stop working. "After a few days on the job, John, the supervisor, has not yelled at anybody," she said in a July 17 interview.

The agreement requires the employer to notify the union president and union steward immediately in the event of a raid by the Immigration and Naturalization Service. The majority of the workers are Haitian women. Many of the rest are immigrants from Latin America and the West Indies.

Other workers expressed reservations and

wanted to stay out longer. Francisco Cruz, a truck driver, told *Militant* reporters outside the plant early on July 18 that he was angry at the company. He also said he didn't like the fact that most production workers voted to go back, even though the drivers, who will make up to \$12.50 per hour under the new agreement, had stuck with them and stayed on the picket lines solid. This worker felt unity on the picket line could have been maintained longer and support from unionists at other Tartan plants would have continued for a while. "If we had stayed out a week longer we would have won the \$1 raise."

Ready to extend solidarity

Some 200 union members voted on the proposed settlement at a July 12 meeting. According to Preddie and other unionists, 10 workers—eight truck drivers and two working in production—voted against the contract proposal and argued for staying on the picket line.

A number of the workers, however, are more encouraged not only about prospects of using union power more effectively on the job, but about extending a hand of solidarity to others in struggle. Preddie, for example, joined a July 16 solidarity picnic of some 300 workers at RC Aluminum and their supporters to tell the story of the strike at Tartan Textile and offer support. The workers at RC Aluminum, a plant in Miami producing aluminum window frames, are in the middle of a union organizing drive and have a representation election for the Iron Workers Union set for July 21.

Argiris Malapanis is a meat packer. Rollande Girard is a sewing machine operator.

UMWA strikers win support in California

Continued from front page

to the Chevron management. Most important, it means solidarity, and that is how we are going to win our fight."

The McKinley miners and those in Kemmerer, Wyoming, have been on strike against Pittsburgh and Midway (P&M) since May. They are resisting demands by the company to institute 12-hour workdays and other concessions.

"The trip was definitely worth it," said John Wilson, a UMWA Local 1332 member who was one of the four miners who went to El Segundo, which is near Los Angeles. "We got a very good response."

"After we leafleted, the union organized a little meeting for us," Wilson added. The local agreed "to help us with funds and organize a food drive."

He reported that the miners "are planning

to go next to San Francisco," where Chevron has another refinery in the town of Martinez. "We haven't set a date yet but we have talked with the union and we know the workers there are willing to help."

On another front, a delegation from UMWA Local 1332 recently went to the New Mexico State AFL-CIO convention, where the miners were warmly received.

UMWA international president Cecil Roberts praised the strikers' initiative, saying, "I applaud this group of UMWA members for having the courage to travel a long distance to let the Chevron brothers and sisters know about their struggle. I pledge the full support of the International Union to ensure that they will be able to continue taking the word of their strike to as many Chevron facilities as they can—for as long as they have to."

voted 148-42 to reject the company's proposal.

"The company has not budged on the Memorandum of Understanding, which calls for the right of the company to set a seven-day, around-the-clock production schedule," Harmon noted. "The company offered very little in wages, pensions, or medical. These and the 12 hours are the same issues that led us to strike in the first place."

Harmon emphasized, "This vote should make it clear to P&M that the membership has spoken—we are together in solidarity."

Matt Krall, a miner for 27 years at Kemmerer, told the *Militant*, "I'm glad we voted this down. The main issues to us are pensions, 12-hour shifts, and wages. The company moved a little but not near enough to what we need. We have gotten a lot of support recently and we greatly appreciate

Union leaders from Cuba tour the U.S.

Three leaders of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC) have begun a month-long U.S. speaking tour. They are:

Olga Rosa Gómez Cortes

General secretary of the Cultural Workers Union and a deputy in Cuba's National Assembly

Leonel González González

Who has been a leader of the health care workers union and is an official in the CTC's foreign relations department. He is also a deputy in the National Assembly, and a member of the assembly's Foreign Relations Commission

Manuel Montero Bistilleiro

Secretary of the union of workers in the sports industry and head of the CTC's International Relations Department relating to the Americas.

The following is the schedule and contact phone numbers for the tour:

- July 19–22 Boston area (617) 254-9070
- July 23–25 New York City (212) 633-6646, (917) 919-2278
- July 26–27 Washington, D.C. (410) 381-4899
- July 28–29 Cleveland (216) 398-6583
- July 30 Toledo
- August 1 Tennessee (865) 933-3443
- August 2 North Carolina (919) 683-3145
- August 3 San Jose (408) 261-4151
- August 4–6 San Francisco (415) 821-6545
- August 7–8 Los Angeles (310) 419-2983
- August 9–12 Chicago (773) 376-7521
- August 13–14 Detroit (313) 561-8330

The tour is being organized by the U.S.-Cuba Labor Exchange.

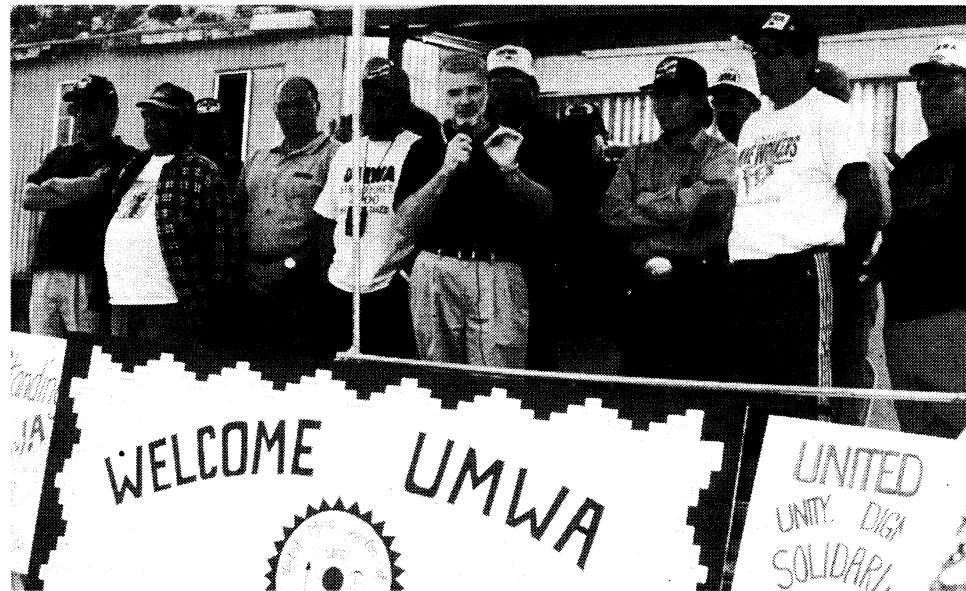
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Militant/Jack Parker

UMWA rally on June 26 rallied solidarity with strike at McKinley mine in New Mexico. International UMWA president Cecil Roberts is at mike. Laurence Oliver, Local 1332 president, stands next to him with arms folded. Refinery workers in California "pledged their full support" to striking miners, who sent a team to their plant near Los Angeles.

Meanwhile, P&M made a new contract offer on July 15 to members of UMWA Local 1307 in Kemmerer. According to Elbert Harmon, president of the local, there was very little difference between the company's first proposal and the new one.

"We decided to take it to the local membership for a vote to make it clear to P&M that we are united and are demanding a fair and decent contract," Harmon said.

On July 18 striking miners at Kemmerer

all the solidarity. The bottom line is that we are all in this together."

UMWA locals 1307 and 1332 are building a July 26 march and rally in front of P&M's headquarters in Denver. (See box on front page)

To send donations and support, or for more information, contact the Kemmerer Miners Relief Fund, c/o UMWA Local 1307, P.O. Box 261, Diamondville, WY 83116-0261, or call (307) 877-1443.

Mexico vote: more class conflict ahead

Continued from Page 16

which has been most brutal in the countryside. The PRI has relied on pro-government peasant organizations as well as the Confederation of Mexican Workers (CTM), the main trade union organization, which is closely tied to the party and the state.

Until the most recent government, each PRI president named his successor as leader of the party, who was assured to become president of Mexico—the notorious *dedazo*, “the finger,” as it was called in popular humor.

This setup began to be undermined in the early 1980s with the onset of the international capitalist economic crisis, which hit the semicolonial world particularly hard. Mexico's foreign debt skyrocketed and imperialist bankers pressed the government increasingly to make concessions.

These pressures ranged from threats to “decertify” Mexico as a government deemed cooperative in Washington's “war on drugs,” to demands for austerity measures to finance the never-ending debt payments. In response, the Mexican regime has among other moves sold off a range of state-owned companies.

Washington has pressed hard on Mexican governments to lower barriers to U.S. investment and goods. The 1994 NAFTA agreement codified the success of that effort, opening up Mexican markets preferentially to U.S. and Canadian investment and goods.

The social and economic crisis in Mexico accelerated when the value of the peso collapsed in December 1994. In return for a promised \$50 billion “bailout” by U.S. banks, Washington extracted deeper inroads into Mexican patrimony and greater sacrifices imposed on the workers and farmers of that country. This included the agreement that all Pemex export revenues would be deposited in an account at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York before being transferred to Mexico—or seized in case of a loan default.

Through the late 1980s and '90s, opposi-

tion capitalist parties have made steady inroads into PRI dominance. The party's share of the vote in presidential elections, which was more than 90 percent in 1976, fell to 36 percent by July 2, 2000.

The PAN was formed in the late 1930s in counterrevolutionary reaction to the land reform, curbs on the wealthy Catholic hierarchy's privileges, and other progressive measures of the Cárdenas government. Since then, to be able to challenge the PRI, it has evolved away from its rightist origins and today functions as a mainstream conservative party.

Fox, a rancher and former head of Coca-Cola's operations in Mexico, served previously as PAN governor of Guanajuato.

The PRD itself came out of a section of the PRI, with much of the left dissolving itself into the PRD. Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, a PRI “reformer” and governor of Michoacán, left that party and mounted a strong challenge for the presidency in 1988. It is widely believed that the PRI stole that election through its control of the electoral system.

In 1997 Cárdenas was elected mayor of Mexico City, in another blow to the PRI. But since then, Cárdenas has been administering the city for the capitalist class, with policies almost indistinguishable from the PRI's.

This time around, Cárdenas finished a weak third. Many PRD supporters from left and liberal circles abandoned it in the rush to back one or the other major contenders. “Some from Mr. Cárdenas's party, and even a handful of former Communists, endorsed Mr. Fox, declaring that since the fall of the Berlin Wall their desire to oust the governing party had come to outweigh ideological considerations,” wrote Sam Dillon in the *New York Times*.

Wall Street has given the newly elected regime the thumbs-up, both in the editorial pages and on the stock markets. U.S. capi-



Militant/Mark Friedman

Marcher in June 10 rights action in Los Angeles carries sign reading, “Immigrants create the wealth in California.” Mass immigration from Mexico to United States ties future of working people in both countries.

talists expect the government's policies will allow them to squeeze even more profits through their domination of Mexico's markets and superexploitation of labor. Mexican capitalists, many of whom made a killing with the sell-off of state-owned companies, are licking their chops too.

Class polarization

For working people in Mexico, however, the story is different. Since the 1994 peso crisis, millions of workers and farmers have been devastated and have not recovered, unlike the capitalists. Class polarization has deepened with soaring unemployment and real wages dropping yearly. The government-set minimum wage in real terms, fell

by a third between 1990 and 1998; it is now the equivalent of \$3 a day. Peasants have been driven off the land and into the cities to seek jobs, a development that spurs ongoing struggles for land in the countryside.

Of the country's 94 million people, 27 million are officially classified as “poor” according to a World Bank report. “Much progress of poverty reduction since the mid-1980s was wiped out by the 1994-95 currency devaluation crisis,” say the report's authors.

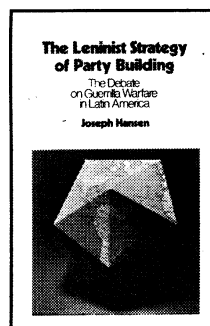
These conditions bred by imperialist rule continue to drive millions of Mexican workers to immigrate to the United States, increasingly linking the fates of workers in both countries. In the last fiscal year, 75,000 immigrant visas were granted to people from Mexico—more than to any other country. At the same time, an estimated 300,000 workers enter the United States each year without papers, seeking work.

To win popular support at home as a champion of immigrants, Fox is calling for Washington to increase its limit on yearly legal migration to 250,000.

Despite the champagne glasses clinking to Fox's electoral victory, some bourgeois commentators express a more sober view. The *Economist* points to “three challenges” it expects Mexico's economy must weather next year: “a likely slowdown in the United States, its main export market; a probable fall in the price of oil, its biggest single export; and an increase in debt payments.” Mexico's foreign debt stands at \$160 billion, roughly the same as it was in 1995 and equivalent to one year's exports.

The one prediction that can be made about Mexico today is that class polarization will sharpen, as the demands of finance capital and the national bourgeoisie collide with the heightened expectations of workers and peasants.

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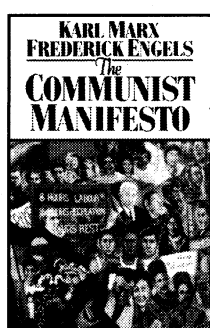
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Rosa Luxemburg: 'The death penalty is capitalist barbarism'

Printed below is an article by Rosa Luxemburg entitled "Against Capital Punishment" that appears, along with the accompanying introductory note, in *Rosa Luxemburg Speaks*. Luxemburg together with Karl Liebknecht were imprisoned by the German government during World War I for their antiwar and revolutionary activity, and freed by the November 1918 revolution in that country. They were leaders of the Spartacus group, a revolutionary current that opposed the social-chauvinist leadership of the Social Democratic Party (SPD) and supported the Bolshevik-led government in Soviet Russia; the group became the Communist Party of Germany. Luxemburg and Liebknecht were murdered in January 1919 at the behest of the right-wing SPD leadership of Friedrich Ebert and Philip Scheidemann.

This book, now in its 11th printing, was edited with an introduction by Mary-Alice Waters. Copyright © 1970 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

In September 1918 Germany's western front collapsed and a new strike wave ensued. The end of the war was clearly in sight. The government, anxious to broaden its base, in an attempt to save itself declared an amnesty for political prisoners. Karl Liebknecht was released on October 23 and carried triumphantly through the streets of Berlin to the Soviet embassy, but Rosa Luxemburg was apparently not covered by the amnesty, as she was being detained by administrative order, not serving a definite sentence.

In late October the sailors at the Kiel naval base revolted, and councils of workers and soldiers, modeled on the Russian soviets, began to spring up throughout Germany, demanding that their authority be recognized. On November 9 a general strike broke out, forcing the government to abdicate. The chancellor, Prince Max of Baden, handed over power to Friedrich Ebert, the leader of the SPD. Under pressure from Liebknecht's call for the construction of a socialist republic, the social democrats abolished the monarchy and proclaimed Germany a democratic republic.

Rosa Luxemburg, still waiting in jail, was freed on November 9, as the masses in Breslau opened the prison gates. Greyhaired and considerably aged by her years in prison, she returned to Berlin to help lead Spartacus for the remaining two months of her life.

One of the first pieces she wrote after her release from prison was "Against Capital Punishment," published in *Rote Fahne* (Red Flag), the new journal of the Spartacus League. In it she condemns the inhumanity

of capitalist "justice" and outlines the humanitarian goals of the socialist revolution and the treatment of prisoners.

"Against Capital Punishment" is reprinted from *Germany After the Armistice: A Report Based on the Personal Testimony of Representative Germans, Concerning the Conditions Existing in 1919* by Maurice Berger, translated from the French by William L. McPherson.

BY ROSA LUXEMBURG

We did not wish for amnesty, not for pardon, in the case of the political prisoners, who had been the prey of the old order. We demanded the right to liberty, to agitation, to revolution for the hundreds of brave and loyal men who groaned in the jails and in the fortresses because, under the former dictatorship of imperialist criminals, they had fought for the people, for peace, and for socialism.

They are all free now. We find ourselves again in the ranks, ready for the battle.

It was not the clique of Scheidemann and his bourgeois allies, with Prince Max of Baden at their head, that liberated us. It was the proletarian revolution that made the doors of our cells spring open.

But another class of unfortunate dwellers in those gloomy mansions has been completely forgotten. No one, at present, thinks of the pale and morbid figures which sigh behind prison walls because of offenses against ordinary law.

Nevertheless these are also the unfortunate victims of the infamous social order against which the revolution is directed—victims of the imperialistic war which pushed distress and misery to the very limit of intolerable torture, victims of that frightful butchery of men which let loose all the vilest instincts.

'Justice' lets sharks escape

The justice of the bourgeois classes had again been like a net, which allowed the voracious sharks to escape, while the little sardines were caught. The profiteers who have realized millions during the war have been acquitted or let off with ridiculous penalties. The little thieves, men and women, have been punished with sentences of Draconian severity.

Worn out by hunger and cold, in cells which are hardly heated, these derelicts of society await mercy and pity.

They have waited in vain, for in his preoccupation with making the nations cut one another's throats and of distributing crowns, the last of the Hohenzollerns forgot these miserable people, and since the Conquest of Liege there has been no amnesty, not even on the official holiday of German slaves, the kaiser's birthday.

The proletarian revolution ought now, by a little ray of kindness, to illuminate the gloomy life of the prisons, shorten Draconian sentences, abolish barbarous punishments—the use of manacles and whippings—improve, as far as possible, the medical attention, the food allowance, and the conditions of labor. That is a duty of honor!

The existing disciplinary system, which is impregnated with brutal class spirit and with capitalist barbarism, should be radically altered.

But a complete reform, in harmony with the spirit of socialism, can be based only on a new economic and social order; for both crime and punishment have, in the last analysis, their roots deep in the organization of society. One radical measure, however, can be taken without any elaborate legal process. Capital punishment, the greatest shame of the ultrareactionary German code, ought to be done away with at once. Why are there any hesitations on the part of this government of workers and soldiers? The noble Beccaria, two hundred years ago, denounced the ignominy of the death penalty. Doesn't its ignominy exist for you, Ledebour, Barth, Daeumig? You have no time, you have a thousand cares, a thousand difficulties, a thousand tasks before you? That is true. But mark, watch in hand, how much time would be needed to say: "Capi-



Rosa Luxemburg speaking at 1907 meeting of socialist workers in Stuttgart, Germany. She condemned brutality of capitalist prisons, draconian sentences, and death penalty.

tal punishment is abolished!" Would you argue that, on this question also, long discussions followed by votes are necessary? Would you thus lose yourselves in the complications of formalism, in considerations of jurisdiction, in questions of departmental red tape?

Ah! How German this German Revolution is! How argumentative and pedantic it is! How rigid, inflexible, lacking in grandeur!

The forgotten death penalty is only one little isolated detail. But how precisely the inner spirit, which governs the revolution, betrays itself in these little details!

Let one take up any ordinary history of the Great French Revolution. Let one take up the dry Mignet, for instance.

Can one read this book except with a beating heart and a burning brow? Can one, after having opened it, at no matter what page, put it aside before one has heard, with bated breath, the last chord of that formidable tragedy? It is like a symphony of Beethoven carried to the gigantic and the grotesque, a tempest thundering on the organ of time, great and superb in its errors as well as in its achievement, in victory as well as in defeat, in the first cry of naive joyfulness as well as in the final breath.

And now how is it with us in Germany?

Everywhere, in the small as in the great, one feels that these are still and always the old and sober citizens of the defunct social

democracy, those for whom the badge of membership is everything and the man and the spirit are nothing.

Let us not forget this, however. The history of the world is not made without grandeur of spirit, without lofty morale, without noble gestures.

Liebknecht and I, on leaving the hospitable halls which we recently inhabited—he, among his pale companions in the penitentiary, I with my dear, poor thieves and women of the streets, with whom I have passed, under the same roof, three years and a half of my life—we took this oath as they followed us with their sad eyes: "We shall not forget you!"

We demand of the executive committee of the Council of Workers and Soldiers an immediate amelioration of the lot of all the prisoners in the German jails!

We demand the excision of capital punishment from the German penal code!

During the four years of this slaughter of the peoples, blood has flowed in torrents. Today, each drop of that precious fluid ought to be preserved devotedly in crystal urns.

Revolutionary activity and profound humanitarianism—they alone are the true breath of socialism.

A world must be turned upside down. But each tear that flows, when it could have been spared, is an accusation, and he commits a crime who with brutal inadvertency crushes a poor earthworm.

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

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

August 1, 1975

BALTIMORE—A three-month rent strike by hundreds of tenants of the Uplands Apartments on Baltimore's West Side was brutally attacked July 9 as dozens of city riot cops, called in to enforce evictions, clubbed two protesters and arrested eighteen.

The evictions mark a new stage in the tenants' struggle against multimillionaire landlord Morton Sarubin and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, which subsidizes the property.

While Sarubin and HUD claim to be providing low-cost quality housing for the overwhelmingly Black tenants of the 989-unit complex, tenants told the real story.

When asked about the quality of the apartments, one woman laughed and said, "Quality? sure. We've got quality leaky roofs, quality overflowing trash cans and quality cockroaches."

The rent strike began in May, when Sarubin announced an 18 percent rent increase, half of which was to be paid for by the tenants and half by HUD. Tired of continual rent hikes and poor maintenance, the tenants formed the Uplands Tenants Association (UTA) and voted to withhold their May rents. More than 500 participated in the strike.

Under this pressure, Sarubin agreed to many of the tenants' demands and the strike was ended. But when he failed to live up to the agreement, the tenants went back on strike in June. Sarubin's response was the brutal evictions.

Sarubin is currently under investigation by a federal grand jury for his connections with [Vice President] Spiro Agnew. It is sus-

pected that Agnew was the key to Sarubin's ability to obtain HUD funds.

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

July 31, 1950

NEW YORK, July 25—The New York State Committee of the Socialist Workers Party today announced the date when its election petition campaign will open and the fact that it has placed Arthur Preis, Labor Editor of *The Militant*, in nomination for the office of Attorney General.

With the nomination of Preis, the party is now contesting all five statewide offices in this year's election. The other candidates are Joseph Hansen for U.S. Senator, Michael Bartell for Governor, Gladys Barker for Lieutenant-Governor, and Harry Ring for Comptroller.

Collection of the petitions to qualify the SWP for a place on the state ballot will begin on Sat., July 29. The New York laws are designed to make it extremely difficult for minority parties and independent candidates to obtain a position on the ballot. In order to be certified, minority parties must secure at least 12,000 valid petitions, with a minimum of 50 from each of the 62 counties in the state, except one.

On this point the SWP committee said: "The membership of our party is fully determined that we shall have a place on the ballot this year, so that the workers of New York State will have the opportunity to cast their votes for a program of opposition to capitalism and its imminent threat of atomic destruction. We will get the required number of signatures, and will in fact demonstrate the attractiveness of our socialist program by obtaining double the required number."

from Pathfinder

Rosa Luxemburg Speaks

Edited by Mary-Alice Waters

From her political awakening as a high school student in tsarist-occupied

Poland until her murder in 1919 during the German revolution, Rosa Luxemburg acted and wrote as a proletarian revolutionist. *Rosa Luxemburg Speaks* takes us inside the political battles between revolution and class collaboration that still shape the modern workers movement. \$22.95

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Fax: (212) 727-0150. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 to cover shipping and handling.

A new working-class weapon

The *Militant* welcomes the publication by Pathfinder Press of *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning: The Fraud of Education Reform under Capitalism* by Jack Barnes. The introduction, published in last week's *Militant*, gives readers a feel for why the pamphlet is a useful political tool to those fighting for social change: it gives clear, unambiguous, and scientific working-class answers to crucial questions in politics today.

It points to the capacities of working people to transform through revolutionary struggle the dog-eat-dog social relations imposed by capitalism, and why the values, class interests, and solidarity manifested through working-class action point the way for all humanity. It expresses the confidence, gained through decades of experience and the history of the working-class movement, of the ability of workers and farmers to fight for and win state power and reconstruct society into one fit for humanity.

We encourage readers in every city to discuss campaigning with this pamphlet and ordering large quantities of it—in the simultaneously published English, Spanish, and French editions—to sell to co-workers, fighters on picket lines, marchers against police brutality, workers and youth demanding equal rights for immigrants, and youth attracted to the working-class struggles.

The booklet offers an opportunity to gain some experience in the long tradition of the revolutionary workers movement of pamphleteering. It can be a point of common discussion, educationals, and exchange, as well as an opening to studying essential works such as *Capitalism's World Disorder*, *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics*, and others. Those attending the Active Workers Conference can place orders on the spot and take home a

box to kick off the effort during the last days of July.

Socialist Workers candidates and supporters of the socialist campaign will especially want to promote the pamphlet as part of the campaign. *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning* explicitly rejects the whole framework posed in the "debate" between the leading candidates in the Democratic and Republican parties on such crucial questions as education, social security, and the death penalty. It sets an example for how to take up such questions and break out of the trap posed by the two-party system: the argument that the "choices" working people have are those within the confines and range of options advanced by either the Democrats or Republicans. Thus, they hope, working people will have to choose between the lesser of evils in the political arena.

From reports in the *Militant* on meetings James Harris and Margaret Trowe are having on the campaign trail, this is exactly the discussion a vanguard layer of workers and fighting youth want to have. Socialist candidates explain that the proposals advanced by Gore and Bush try to get workers and farmers "centered on 'looking out for number one,'" as the introduction to the booklet points out.

Harris and Trowe are getting a serious hearing because they pose every question as a social question and point out the interests of the working class as a whole in it. They put at the center of their campaign the same point made in the pamphlet: that workers and farmers are capable of waging "the greatest of all battles in the years ahead—the battle to throw off the self-image the rulers teach us, and to recognize the we are capable of taking power and organizing society, as we collectively educate ourselves and learn the exploiters in the process."

What Mexico election spotlights

The reason Washington and Wall Street applauded the watershed election of businessman Vicente Fox, leader of the National Action Party (PAN), as president of Mexico, which ended decades of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) in office, has nothing to do with democracy. Despite their rhetoric, the last thing the billionaire sharks are interested in is the democratic right of the Mexican people to decide their destiny. Their hope, backed up by pressure, is that Fox will help break down further obstacles to U.S. capital controlling Mexico's resources, markets, and superexploited labor power. They want an even stronger state in Mexico, one that can keep workers and farmers in check.

But the elections also underscore the problems the U.S. and Mexican capitalists are having in maintaining stable bourgeois rule. For most of the past seven decades it has dominated Mexican politics, the PRI has served the ruling class well. It has relied on a centralized executive power and political demagoguery, presenting itself as standing above conflicting class interests and representing "the Mexican nation" as a way to hold together the bourgeoisie while defusing or cracking down on worker and peasant revolts.

But the world capitalist economic crisis, which has led to shrunken oil revenues, a mushrooming debt squeeze by imperialist banks, and devastating conditions for working people, has led to economic and social volatility. These growing pressures led to the fracturing of bourgeois politics in Mexico and the defeat of the PRI.

Over the past decade, the PRI-led governments increas-

ingly acceded to imperialist demands to break down trade barriers to U.S. goods, sell off state-owned companies, slash state subsidies, and impose other austerity measures. Thousands of workers have been laid off, and many more peasants have been driven off the land and into the ranks of the rural and urban working class. The PAN administration, with collaboration from the PRI, which still remains a powerful force, will seek to continue and accelerate this course.

But this is only part of the picture. What will continue to unfold in Mexico is increased class polarization—both resistance by working people and counter responses by growing rightist formations. Workers and farmers who voted for the PAN as a lesser evil to kick out the hated PRI have expectations that their conditions will improve, and will press their demands. At the same time, to meet the demands of the employers and imperialists, the new government will have to take on more directly the unions and recently emerged peasant organizations.

One consequence of this economic crisis, the accelerated immigration by millions of Mexican workers and peasants to the United States, underscores how the fate of working people on both sides of the border is becoming more and more intertwined. Workers arriving here from Mexico are finding themselves in the middle of the growing labor fightback in the United States, and often part of its leadership. Likewise, working people in the United States have much at stake in supporting the struggles of our class brothers and sisters in Mexico.

Imperialist plunder in Nigeria

The labor actions by oil workers, rail workers, public employees, and others that have rolled across Nigeria over the past two months register a loud voice of protest against the conditions of superexploitation imposed on them. Nationwide strikes demanding a higher minimum wage and protesting austerity measures are a beacon for workers and peasants throughout the African continent. This resistance shows that working people in Africa are fighters, not helpless victims or scavengers, as bourgeois pundits constantly try to portray.

The labor struggles in Nigeria reflect the increasing size and economic weight of the working class in Africa's most populous nation. Through their collective actions and use of union power, millions are gaining more confidence to deepen and extend their struggle against the exploiters at home and abroad.

Nigeria is a prime example of what imperialism has to offer the vast majority of people in the world today. It is a country rich in natural resources where the wealth produced by working people through their labor is transferred out of the country to enrich barons on Wall Street and in other imperialist centers. The imperialists have the audacity to demand the Nigerian government end subsidies on gasoline, a product produced in Nigeria from crude oil pumped from the ground and processed in the country!

The recent pipeline explosion, in which up to several hundred people were incinerated, places a spotlight on the impoverished and deadly conditions Nigerian work-

ing people are forced to endure. This is not the first time hundreds of people have been killed while collecting gasoline from a punctured pipe line.

To maintain this inequality, Washington has backed a series of repressive regimes. They have turned to the Nigerian government to provide troops to police imperialist interests in the region while maintaining abysmal social and economic conditions. But their drive to exploit Nigeria's resources has also led to the development of a relatively large and organized working class, which has begun to put its stamp on politics in the country.

"The only language they understand is the language of struggle, the struggle of the revolutionary classes against those who exploit and oppress the people," explained Thomas Sankara, leader of the Burkina Faso revolution in the 1980s, who began to chart a course to defend the interests of the toilers in Africa. Sankara's legacy of resistance to imperialist plunder is an example for working-class fighters in Nigeria, throughout the African continent, and indeed the world.

The "language of struggle" is something more and more working people resisting exploitation and oppression in the United States are beginning to speak. That we have common allies in Africa, as well as elsewhere in the world, strengthens the fight against the super wealthy minority ruling class—the class that is the beneficiary of the increasingly harsh conditions of life they are attempting to impose on the vast majority of humanity.

Fiji rightists gain concessions, release hostages

BY MICHAEL TUCKER

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—Members of Fiji's Labour Party-led government held captive by rightist gunmen in the country's parliament were released in mid-July following a deal struck between the rightists and the military. The rightists, led by businessman George Speight, had seized the parliament May 19, taking 34 members of the government hostage. The 27 remaining hostages who were released July 12 and 13, including Labour Party prime minister Mahendra Chaudhry, had been held at gunpoint for eight weeks.

Fiji's military asserted control over the country following the May 19 coup, and quickly assented to the rightists' demands, including dismissing the Chaudhry government, revoking the constitution, and granting amnesty to those who carried out the coup. Negotiations bogged down, however, when the two sides failed to agree on the composition of a new government.

The accord signed July 9 by Speight and military commander Frank Bainimarama gave authority to Fiji's Great Council of Chiefs to appoint a new president, vice president, and cabinet. The council met July 13 and appointed Ratu Josefa Iloilo as president and Ratu Jope Seniloli as vice president. Both had been nominated by Speight. An interim civilian government appointed by the military only days earlier, but rejected by Speight, was dissolved.

The Great Council of Chiefs is a body of Fiji's hereditary high chiefs. The head of the council, Sitiveni Rabuka, led two military coups in 1987 that ousted a previous Labour Party-led government.

In a statement following his release, Labour Party leader Mahendra Chaudhry called for his elected government to be restored to office. The Fiji Trade Union Congress has also called for the Labour government to be reinstated. Chaudhry expressed support for a number of sanctions that have been imposed against Fiji by the imperialist powers in the region, Australia and New Zealand.

Speight and the rightist forces he leads call for a government dominated by indigenous Fijians, stirring chauvinism against Fijians of Indian descent. The call for "indigenous" supremacy is raised by the chiefly aristocracy that has traditionally ruled Fiji, backed by prominent local capitalists, as they seek to maintain their power and privilege. In targeting Indo-Fijians they hope to deal a blow to the labor movement by fomenting divisions among working people and restricting the political rights of a large section of workers and farmers.

The core of gunmen who organized the May 19 coup are members of the military Counter Revolutionary Warfare Unit, an elite army squad set up under Sitiveni Rabuka following the 1987 coups to target the labor movement and other opponents of his military regime.

Speight supporters attack Indo-Fijians

As the negotiations between the military and the rightists dragged out over the past two months, schools remained closed, sugar cane farmers and workers refused to harvest the cane crop, and many workers in the garment and tourist industries were laid off.

Gangs of Speight supporters in some parts of the country have organized violent attacks to intimidate Indo-Fijians and supporters of the Labour Party, as well as looting to feed those occupying the parliamentary compound.

A number of land occupations and other actions by Fijian villagers have taken place in recent weeks. This included the takeover of the Monasavu hydro dam, which supplies most of the electricity for the main island of Viti Levu, including the capital Suva. Another action was the occupation of Nanuya Levu island, where the Turtle Island Lodge tourist resort is situated. The island is owned by U.S. millionaire Richard Evanson, who bought it in 1972 without consent of the landowners.

The capitalist media has portrayed such actions as part of the campaign by Speight supporters. However, many involve long-standing struggles over land grievances and other issues.

Prisoners at Naboro prison near Suva rebelled July 11, taking 26 wardens hostage in a protest against ill-treatment. Riot police stormed the prison July 17, seriously injuring 21 prisoners, who were hospitalized.

'The issue is not the whale but our rights'

BY CECELIA MORIARITY

SEATTLE—At a June 30 Militant Labor Forum on the fight to defend Makah treaty rights to hunt whales, Rob Satiacum, a member of the Puyallup Tribe in Washington, explained, "The issue is not the whale but the exercise of our rights. The racists hate us because we're fighting for our rights, not because the Makah want to hunt whales again."

"Self-defense by Indians throughout the years has been called 'massacre.' Now we're accused of massacring whales," he pointed out.

In the latest round in this long battle, the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco on June 9 suspended federal approval of the whale hunting by the Makah, ordering a new study of environmental risks. The federal court ruling aided opponents of Makah treaty rights and sovereignty, who hope whaling will be shut down for at least a few years while federal officials perform a lengthy, detailed "review."

The Makahs secured the right to whale under an 1855 treaty. In the 1920s, after commercial whaling had decimated whale populations, they voluntarily suspended whaling. They decided to resume whale hunting in 1998, four years after the gray whale was removed from the U.S. Endangered Species List and after receiving permission from the International Whaling Commission to take up to 20 whales over a five-year period.

The federal study criticized by the Ninth Circuit Court did conclude that the hunt would not pose any risks to the Eastern Northern Pacific gray whale, which is estimated to number more than 26,000 today.

The president of the Makah Tribal Whaling Commission, Keith Johnson, called the circuit court ruling a "temporary setback" that would have little effect on the whale hunts, the *Seattle Times* reported June 10.

"The Makah have demonstrated the courage, self-confidence, and discipline to defend their right to whale as part of defending their sovereign rights as Makah, including their right to cultural traditions. Their calmness and determination helped win the victory last year against rightist attacks and attacks by some animal rights activists," said Scott Breen, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Senate and a member of the International Association of Machinists.

"The opposition was smaller and more isolated this year. But we shouldn't be lulled into complacency by last year's victory," he said, referring to the first successful whale hunt in more than 70 years. "The labor movement needs to champion the Makah's right to whale and work to educate and mobilize itself to defend the Makah's treaty rights. This attack on their rights is one aspect of the culture war being waged against the working class today."

Emboldened by employer and government attacks on the rights of working

people, right-wing forces have targeted sections of the population, scapegoating them for problems caused by the capitalist system itself, in order to pit working people against each other. Native American whaling and fishing rights have been one such target.

Breen explained that the struggle by the Makah is part of a broader pattern of resistance by working people and the oppressed against the attacks by the wealthy rulers. Other examples he pointed to are the strike by Navajo miners against the Pittsburg and Midway Coal Co. in New Mexico, the popular uprising in Ecuador led by Indian organizations in January, and the meat packers at Dakota Premium Foods in St. Paul, Minnesota, who are fighting to organize a union.

New pride among young generation

Elizabeth Sneatlum, a member of the Quileute Nation who attended the Militant Labor Forum, described the effect of last year's whale catch and the victory potlatch celebration. The potlatch was a gathering the Makah held to celebrate the successful hunt with food and meat from the whale that was caught. It was attended by 1,500 people,

including guests of indigenous peoples from around the world.

"It brought a new wholeness, a renewal of pride, being, and understanding" to those who came, said Sneatlum. This was particularly significant for her because "there are a thousand Quileute in their 30s and 40s who were taken away from their parents as children or at birth by the state. Many people don't even know they're Quileute."

By fighting to restore cultural traditions through exercising their sovereign right to whale, the Makah elders are seeking to instill pride and confidence among Makah young people in Neah Bay, Washington, who face an unemployment rate of 75 percent.

Students at Neah Bay High School are reconstructing the skeleton of the first whale harpooned last year, bleaching and cleaning the bones and rebuilding the 30-foot-long, 700-pound skeleton that will hang in the Makah Nation's museum when they are finished.

Patrick DePoe, 17, who helped haul in the three-year-old whale caught last year, said, "It was humongous, man. I just wanted to be part of it. It was an adrenaline rush."

Eddie McCarty, 16, said, "We're assembling something we're proud of."

A March 24 *Seattle Times* article on the reconstruction reported that "among the more popular clothing at Neah Bay High School are red-hooded sweat shirts and black T-shirts that read: 'May 17, 1999. 6:54 a.m.' " That's the exact moment the Makah harpooned their first whale since the 1920s.

Satiacum added, "There's not a lot to do on the reservation, so when the Makah decided to resume what was theirs, it sent a big ripple among our native community, getting the attention of the young kids. They asked, 'What do we do? What are we? What is our language?'"

Satiacum and Breen encouraged participants at the forum to get out the truth about the Makah whale hunts.

Breen also encouraged people to go to the August 25-27 Makah Days in Neah Bay. Speakers at the forum noted that the Makah have a web site with information on cultural and legal aspects of their whaling rights, at www.makah.com.

Cecelia Moriarity is a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers union.

Hotel workers in Toronto win first contract

BY SYLVIE CHARBIN

TORONTO—Members of Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees (HERE) Local 75 at the Travelodge Airport Hotel here voted July 4 to accept their first contract. The union was certified in March 1999, but it took a 32-day strike, which began with a lockout, to win the contract.

The main issue that sparked the strike was workloads. Room attendants described how before the strike they often worked through breaks and lunch, and even unpaid overtime, to reach fixed room quotas. The contract replaces mandatory quotas with guidelines, and allows workers to ask for extra help to finish their work. The 55 workers at the hotel, mostly immigrant women, also won a union benefits plan and modest wage gains.

The union's efforts were boosted when flight crews from several airlines, who usually stay at the hotel after they arrive on late night flights, refused to cross the picket lines. Airlines were forced to cancel contracts with the hotel.

'I'll miss my picket line'

"I'm really happy that we finally have a union, but I'll miss my picket line because we really had fun," said Regina Fagundes, a laundry worker at the hotel since it opened 15 years ago.

The strong morale of the strikers was obvious in a day-long celebration that took place in front of the hotel July 1. The event began with a march around the hotel and continued with speeches, food, and dancing.

Meanwhile, the victory has not gone unnoticed among other hotel workers. Just up the street from the Travelodge, HERE Local 75 has just won a vote among workers at the airport Holiday Inn, mandating it to replace the company union.

Sylvie Charbin is a garment worker in Toronto.



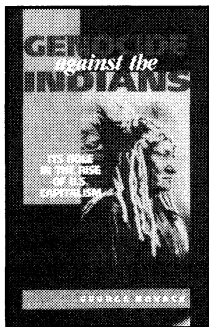
Militant/Bill Fitzpatrick

Hotel workers celebrate their July 1 victory in gaining their first union contract at Travelodge at Toronto's International Airport. The walkout was boosted when airline flight crews who usually stay at the hotel refused to cross the picket lines.

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



Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Fax: (212) 727-0150. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 to cover

LETTERS

Mural gets around

Recently I was at the local Borders bookstore, going through unorganized piles of cut-rate CDs, looking for music that might interest me. As I was leafing through the CDs, I did a literal double-take—and quickly flipped back. I was sure I'd seen the Pathfinder Mural. Yes, there it was, a musical group called State of the Nation, and the cover photo was the entire mural. The flyer inside and on the back showed details of the mural, and the explanation: "The Pathfinder mural ... features portraits of revolutionary leaders whose writings and speeches are published by Pathfinder Press. Painted on the Pathfinder Building ... in Manhattan, the mural is the work of more than eighty artists from twenty countries...."

Malcolm X once commented that he'd seen the *Militant* newspaper in Africa. "I don't know how it gets there. But if you put

the right things in it, what you put in it will see that it gets around." This is true of the Pathfinder Mural, this CD being just one example. Much more to the point, it's true of Pathfinder books. It's a real motivation for volunteers to work on the Reprint Project, the international effort to put all the titles of Pathfinder into digital form, to keep the books in print so they can get around.

*Jane Roland
Greensboro, North Carolina*

Women's fight for equality

I am writing this letter to commend the *Militant* staff on its editorial "Abortion is a woman's right." The editorial interlinked many of the social issues that women face everyday, such as equality in the workplace, jobs and the rate of pay, and of course the choice of sexual reproduction.

Every issue was surrounded by the basic

and human right of the equality of women as compared to their male counterparts. However, the one aspect that needed more attention in the article was the simple fact that women make up only 12.1 percent of congress. That number is a far cry from equality!! We must realize that women need to be equal to men in every way and our government, which is run by capitalist men, can't see that it's time for a revolution, a revolution in the way people think.

*Angela Abernathy
St. Paul, Minnesota*

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people.

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.

Mexico vote: more class conflict ahead

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

The July 2 elections in Mexico, which ended the 71-year grip on the presidency by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), register a political watershed in that country, the second-largest and one of the most industrialized in Latin America. In the vote Vicente Fox Quesada of the National Action Party (PAN) defeated PRI candidate Francisco Labastida.

The U.S. rulers and decisive sections of the Mexican capitalist class greeted the election results with satisfaction. Washington and other powers are counting on a PAN-led government to break down further obstacles to the freer penetration of imperialist capital in Mexico, while domestic capitalists are hoping to profit as their junior partners.

Many working people, hoping that their living conditions would improve, voted for the PAN as a lesser evil to the PRI, which is widely despised for presiding over a deep-going economic and social crisis and spearheading an assault on the living standards and rights of millions.

There was a record turnout in the elections among the country's 58.7 million eligible voters, especially in the cities. The PAN gained its greatest support in the urban areas, much of it among the expanded middle classes, which have been shaken by the economic crisis and sought a change. The PRI's vote held up slightly better in the rural areas, where many working people living on the knife's edge have depended on government subsidies to make ends meet. But even in the PRI's strongholds, its performance was a far cry from the virtual monopoly of the past.

Expectations, skepticism

Fox and his conservative PAN won 43 percent of the vote to Labastida's 36 percent.



1996 Mexico City protest against proposed sell-off of state oil company, viewed by working people as their national patrimony. Washington hopes new government will help accelerate U.S. control of Mexico's resources and markets, while keeping a lid on unrest. Such moves will increase class polarization and struggle.

Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas of the bourgeois liberal Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD), ran a distant third at 17 percent.

The PAN captured 224 seats in Congress to the PRI's 209, although it failed to win an absolute majority. The PRD's share of seats declined from 125 to 67. The PAN added two governorships, increasing its total to seven out of the 31 states. The PRI had ruled all states up until 1989.

In ousting the PRI, many workers, farmers, and middle-class layers were looking for relief from the tightening economic squeeze. "There are millionaires, while everyone else in a town lives in poverty," said María Aurelia Bertha Trejo Cazabes, who voted for Fox. "We just want a change, nothing else," one student told reporters. "We are hoping for a change from the 70 years of oppression, misery, and corruption," said Luz María Padilla, 28, a Chevrolet salesperson in Mexico City.

Many, however, express distrust of all the major parties and politicians, including Fox. "I'm sure he's going to steal. They've all stolen lots," said Ursula Ruiz, 19, a student who voted for Fox.

Fox announced a multiparty "transition team" July 17, including such figures as Porfirio Muñoz Ledo, a former leader of both the PRI and PRD, and liberal professor Jorge Castañeda as foreign policy advisor. He has said he plans to choose a cabinet among all three major parties.

Outgoing president Ernesto Zedillo has called on his backers to support the president-elect as he prepares to assume office. The collaboration of the PRI tops is a precondition to the establishment of a stable regime. Despite the crisis wracking the PRI, the party still commands a powerful political apparatus nationwide and a network of labor and farmer organizations closely tied to it.

Consolidating political police

Talk about democracy notwithstanding, capitalists in Mexico as well as Washington hope the president-elect will enforce a strong central executive power to maintain bourgeois political stability in the country, as the PRI largely did for seven decades. Just minutes after his election Fox announced he would establish a new cabinet-level Department of Public Security—equivalent to the FBI—to consolidate a strong federal police agency—in the name of combating corruption and the drug trade.

There were few differences in the PRI and PAN election platforms. On the economic front, Fox has called for strengthening the North American Free Trade Agreement

(NAFTA), which Mexico entered under the previous PRI administrations. He has projected an economic growth rate of 7 percent to be gained by "doubling foreign direct investment and by helping small and medium-sized firms...so that more of them can be brought into the NAFTA supply-chain," according to the British *Economist*.

Fox proposes to sell off the petrochemical plants of the state oil corporation Pemex, and to open up the electrical industry to private firms. The PRI's Labastida put forward similar policies during his campaign. The president-elect backed off from a highly unpopular suggestion he had made earlier to privatize Pemex wholesale, however.

The Mexican oil industry was nationalized in 1938 by the Lázaro Cárdenas government, which expropriated the holdings of British and U.S. oil corporations by leaning on massive mobilizations of working people. Since then the national oil industry has been deeply viewed by millions of workers and farmers as Mexico's national patrimony. Encroachments on the oil, and even the electrical, industries, will require a more direct confrontation with the trade unions.

Fox has signaled his government will accelerate the shift in foreign policy, which

began under the previous PRI administrations, away from Mexico's longstanding posture of independence from Washington, including its public opposition to U.S. intervention in other countries. But he declared his government would maintain "intense relations with Cuba" while criticizing the revolutionary government for lack of "democracy."

Fox declared he will negotiate with the Zapatista guerrillas in Chiapas and consider withdrawing the army from that southern state, a demand of peasant and Indian fighters and their supporters nationwide. Meanwhile, the sharp polarization between rural toilers and big landlords and their paramilitary groups continues to bubble.

The long rule of the PRI was based on relative political and social stability compared to most other Latin American countries. This stability was based on several factors, including

the history of the PRI, which claimed the mantle of the 1910 revolution; rising oil revenues for many decades after the nationalization of the country's natural resources; and the development of a relatively large middle class.

The PRI was forged in the second decade of the 20th century with the consolidation of bourgeois rule after the end of the Mexican revolution. In the 1910 democratic revolution, peasants and workers fought for a deep-going land reform, public education, democratic rights, and other gains. The various bourgeois factions sank their differences under the PRI, which presented itself as arbiter between the rebellious peasantry and the small but growing industrial working class on one hand, and the traditional landowning class and commercial capitalists most directly linked to U.S. and British imperialism on the other.

The PRI presented itself as the embodiment of the nation, standing above class conflicts. These Bonapartist methods of rule have marked the party from the start, allowing it to survive through a combination of concessions to social struggles, coopting protest leaders, and selective repression,

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20,000 garment workers in Cambodia wage strike

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Some 20,000 workers in Cambodia walked off the job in June to protest low wages and unsafe working conditions. The nationwide strikes, an article in *Time Asia* reported, "were the largest in the country's recent history."

Workers in Cambodia's 200 garment factories were demanding an increase in their \$40 monthly wage. Hundreds of them marched on the capital, Phnom Penh, to protest abysmal working conditions. They demanded a shortening of the workweek and an increase in wages. Garments account for 90 percent of the country's exports.

At one garment factory in the Takhmau district north of Phnom Penh, workers complained to the employers that they were receiving electric shocks from the sewing machines. The bosses ordered them to keep working. In response, workers forced their way out of the factory despite the fact that the managers had locked the gates in an effort to keep them inside.

The strikers nationwide returned to work after six days after the government Labor Advisory Board promised to discuss the workers' demands.

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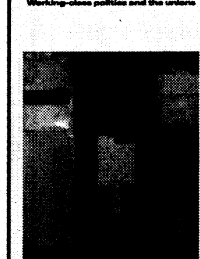
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