

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Gore, Bush debate how to undermine social security

— PAGE 2

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 64/NO. 42 NOVEMBER 6, 2000

Coal bosses' greed leads to pollution catastrophe

BY J. ROSE

BECKLEY, West Virginia—A major environmental disaster has been unleashed in Eastern Kentucky as a result of the reckless profit drive of the coal mining barons.

Just across the border with West Virginia, near the town of Inez, Kentucky, a 72-acre mine sludge pond broke October 11 sending 250 million gallons of water and 155,000 cubic yards of coal wastes down two mine shafts under the pond and from there into two watersheds.

Two streams, Coldwater Fork and Wolf Creek, which feed into the Big Sandy River basin, were fouled. The Big Sandy is a main tributary of the Ohio River and is upstream of two major U.S. cities—Cincinnati, Ohio, and Louisville, Kentucky—as well as a number of smaller cities and towns on the way. Water supplies in many smaller communities have already been affected.

About 10 percent of the pond escaped when water broke through a hole caused by subsidence, a sudden roof fall, in a worked out part of the Martin County Coal mine. The pond holds 2.25 billion gallons. Workers plugged the hole after four and a half

Continued on Page 11

Palestinians stand up to Israeli army repression

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

In the wake of a "cease-fire" agreement between Israeli and Palestinian forces that never materialized, Tel Aviv has continued to try to quell Palestinian resistance through a deadly show of force. Palestinians have not ceased protesting the Israeli army's roadblocks, curfews, and assaults on residents of the occupied territories.

U.S. president William Clinton, who orchestrated the negotiations in Egypt between Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat that declared the October 17 cease-fire, has invited them to meet again in Washington for further talks. Arafat is the president of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), which exercises limited authority over the Gaza Strip and some West Bank towns. As of October 25, neither political leader had responded.

"The clear thrust of the call [inviting Arafat to the White House] was that we need to see more progress on getting the Palestinian security forces to stop the violence," said a U.S. government official. Clinton has backed the Israeli government's repressive actions, consistent with Washington's decades-old policy of massive military, financial, and political backing to the Zionist settler-state and opposition to the Palestinian struggle for national self-determination.

Washington, aware that Tel Aviv's policy of brutal force has failed to crush the Palestinian national liberation struggle, seeks to pressure the Palestine National Authority to keep working people in line in the West

Continued on Page 12

Workers in Yugoslavia press their demands

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS AND CATHARINA TIRSEN

BELGRADE, Yugoslavia—"The manager acted as if he were the owner, not simply the director of a factory that belongs to the workers," said Slobodan Milovanovic. A welder at the Ikarbus bus manufacturing plant, Milovanovic spoke to *Militant* reporters October 25 along with other workers from the factory here.

These workers talked about their campaign to remove the factory manager from his post for bureaucratic abuse of workers, misuse of his power for personal enrichment and other corrupt practices, and subservience to the brutal bureaucratic regime that ruled until October 5. On that day, a mass revolt and general political strike by hun-

drreds of thousands of working people—including those at Ikarbus—forced Slobodan Milosevic to resign from Yugoslavia's presidency and concede victory to Vojislav Kostunica, the candidate of the Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS).

The majority of workers at Ikarbus, for

example, have quit the old trade union, which was tied to the former Milosevic regime, and organized themselves into the metalworkers branch of Nezavisnost (Independence), the largest trade union federa-

Continued on Page 8

EYEWITNESS REPORT

dreds of thousands of working people—including those at Ikarbus—forced Slobodan Milosevic to resign from Yugoslavia's presidency and concede victory to Vojislav Kostunica, the candidate of the Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS).

In the three weeks since the October 5 uprising, workers throughout Serbia have

NY laundry workers score strike victory



Laundry workers in Oceanside, Long Island, struck for three days demanding to be represented by Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees.

BY CAROLE LESNICK AND LUIS MADRID

OCEANSIDE, New York—Some 250 workers at a large industrial laundry, Oceanside Institutional Industries, waged a three-day strike in mid-October that resulted in the bosses agreeing to the workers' demand for union recognition.

The workers' fight to be represented by the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE) is in response to poor working conditions, company abuse, low wages, and no benefits. Some workers with nearly 20 years' service still earn less than \$6 an hour. The company provides no medical or other insurance. Workers also protested anti-immigrant abuse and sexual harassment by management. The overwhelming majority of the workforce at this Long Island factory is Spanish-speaking; most are originally from El Salvador.

Employees at the plant, which washes laundry from hospitals, report being pricked by hypodermic needles found in the linen or being exposed to blood on bedsheets because of a lack of proper equipment.

The company previously claimed that workers were represented by a union called "United Workers of America Local 660." But workers described the pro-company outfit as a "phantom union."

"They told us to put an 'x' next to the box for Local 660," Visitación Humana told the Spanish-language daily *Hoy*. Humana explained that he did so on instructions by his supervisor, who also happens to be one of the leaders of the so-called union.

These conditions led to a demand for real union representation. After some initial meetings with the workers, UNITE representatives gave the bosses a deadline of Thursday, October 19 to recognize the union as the bargaining agent.

"But on Wednesday morning everyone walked out," said Adela Alberto on the

Continued on Page 4

Socialist Workers 2000 election campaign wind-up rally

Forward into the new worker and farmer resistance worldwide

Featuring

James Harris and Margaret Trowe, Socialist Workers candidates for president and vice president

The example of the Cuban revolution for workers and farmers around the world

Building the communist movement today

Argiris Malapanis

Working people in Yugoslavia extend their political space

Paul Pederson

The fight for a democratic and secular Palestine

Jack Willey

The coming transformation of the American labor movement

New York, Sunday, November 5

Reception 1:30 p.m.

Meet and discuss with SWP candidates from around the country

Program 2:30 p.m.

Sponsor: Socialist Workers 2000 National Campaign

Hosts: Young Socialists and the New York and New Jersey branches of the Socialist Workers Party

For more information:

Brooklyn, (718) 398-7850; Garment District, (212) 695-7358; Newark, (973) 643-3341; Upper Manhattan, (212) 740-4611

Vote Socialist Workers — pages 7, 14

Bush, Gore debate how to slash Social Security benefits

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

A hot topic in the presidential debate between the two main capitalist candidates has been how to "reform" Social Security. Both Albert Gore and George W. Bush argue that the "trust fund" for Social Security benefits will go broke in a couple of decades and that changes must be made—threatening its character as a universal entitlement.

"The Clinton-Gore administration has blocked [Social Security] reform at every turn," Bush said at an October 23 rally in Kansas City, Missouri. "For seven and a half years, the vice president has been the second biggest obstacle to reform in America. And now he wants to be the obstacle in chief." Bush did not mention that Gore, as part of the Clinton administration, presided over the biggest assaults on Social Security carried out by any administration for decades.

Despite their varying proposals, the Democratic and Republican politicians advance a similar framework for the debate, presenting Social Security in terms of how individual elderly people can get the best retirement plan or medical care, rather than as a social question of the right to cradle-to-grave coverage for all. Their plans have nothing to do with improving unemployment compensation, pensions, and health care insurance such as Medicare and Medicaid—programs that make it possible for working people to make it through a lifetime.

Both candidates play on the assertion in the big business media that Social Security will begin going bankrupt when the 76 million "baby boomers"—those born between 1946 and 1964—become eligible to draw benefits. This "problem" is exacerbated by the advances in health care, which enable people to live—and collect Social Security benefits—longer. This is why some of the proposals to reform Social Security floated by capitalist politicians and other ruling class figures include raising the legal retirement age for workers who have toiled a lifetime and introducing some type of degrading means testing.

"We are nearing Social Security's greatest test," Bush declared when he unveiled his Social Security reform program last May. "Within two decades there simply won't be enough younger workers to pay the benefits earned by the old," he asserted.

Pressing the idea that Social Security is really an individual retirement account, Bush proposes individuals be allowed to retain a small portion of their Social Security taxes to invest in stocks and bonds. He says that \$1 trillion of funds allocated for Social Security should be trimmed from the national budget by 2010 and transferred to these individual accounts. Bush claims these accounts would earn between 3.5 to 7 percent, a gain that would presumably offset projected cuts in Social Security benefits.

While this scheme may work out for some, most working people would lose much-needed income under this gambling scheme. "Historically rising stock averages mask significant periods of stagnation and loss, such as the 1930s and 1970s, which would affect retiree returns in such periods," noted the *Miami Herald*.

Vice-president Gore has also called for setting up individual retirement accounts, reinforcing the bipartisan offensive against Social Security. Under his plan the government would match deposits into the accounts of low- and middle-income individuals, while supposedly keeping the Social Security program current. Gore, like Bush, portrays Social Security as a fund that will go bust in a few decades, but his plan will supposedly give the government time to work out a solution, his aides insist. Posing as a champion of Social Security benefits, Gore has pounced on Bush's proposals.

Social Security: product of labor battles

On Aug. 22, 1996, the Clinton administration signed into law the Personal Respon-



Philadelphia protest in late 1980s against cutbacks in Social Security. In debate on Social Security "reform," Democrats and Republicans share framework of arguing how individuals can get ahead. Working people must approach question as one of social solidarity.

sibility and Work Opportunity Act, eliminating a federal entitlement program, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), that guarantees cash assistance to poor families with children. This measure opened the capitalist rulers' offensive against Social Security, aimed at undermining working class solidarity and paving the way for more sweeping assaults. The AFDC program was part of the concessions codified in the 1935 Social Security Act, which was pushed through Congress that year under the pressure of rising labor struggles.

The 1996 "welfare reform" legislation replaced federal guarantees of cash assistance with lump sums to be distributed by state and local agencies as they see fit until the funds dry up. The so-called welfare reform act also cut off food stamps and Medicaid to many working people. It placed a five-year lifetime limit on receiving welfare, halted benefits to those who couldn't find a boss to hire them within two years, and forced recipients into demeaning make-work projects often below minimum wage.

Since 1996 the 4.6 million families that were on the welfare rolls have dropped by nearly one-half. Last year welfare recipients who held jobs earned an average wage of about \$7,200 a year—some \$6,000 below the poverty line for a family of three, the average size of a family on welfare.

Meanwhile, the U.S. rulers continue to chip away at Social Security payments. The government announced October 18 that Medicare premiums, deducted from Social Security checks, will increase almost 50 percent next year to \$50 a month. Medicare provides health care to 39 million people who are 65 or older or disabled. The premium rise coincides with a 3.5 percent cost-of-living increase in Social Security checks. The cost-of-living adjustment, however, will

not compensate for the premium hike and the rise in other health care costs, such as prescription drugs, which generally are not covered by Medicare unless a person is hospitalized.

About one-third of Medicare patients have no coverage for prescription drugs, and others purchase expensive private insurance plans that are inadequate. The two presidential candidates have presented proposals that charge monthly premiums for drug coverage under Medicare. But, in harmony with their overall approach, prescription drugs are not to be covered in full for all. Under Gore's proposal the government would pay \$25 per month toward drug costs for citizens who qualify for Medicare. Bush's Medicare plan would require the government to pay 25 percent of the monthly charge from insurance companies. Both plans also include means-testing to determine when a person on Medicare would be cut off from receiving full benefits to pay for medicine.

THE MILITANT

Protest English-only laws

From New York to California capitalist politicians are pushing for English-only laws and pressing the attack on bilingual education. The 'Militant' explains how the bosses use these attacks to try to sow divisions among working people, and why labor must oppose them. Don't miss an issue.



SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

NEW READERS

☐ \$10 for 12 issues

RENEWAL

☐ \$15 for 12 weeks

☐ \$27 for 6 months

☐ \$45 for 1 year

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

UNION/SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION

PHONE

CLIP AND MAIL TO THE MILITANT,
410 WEST ST., NEW YORK, NY 10014.

12 weeks of the Militant outside the U.S.: Australia and the Pacific, \$A15 • Britain, £7 • Canada, Can\$15 • Caribbean and Latin America, \$15 • Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, £8 • Belgium, 500 BF • France, FF80 • Iceland, Kr1,700 • New Zealand, NZ\$15 • Sweden, Kr75 (Send payment to addresses listed in business information box)

The Militant

Vol. 64/No.42

Closing news date: October 25, 2000

Editor: MARTIN KOPPEL
Business Manager: MAURICE WILLIAMS
Editorial Staff: Hilda Cuzco, Greg McCartan, Brian Williams, and Maurice Williams.
Young Socialists column editor: ELENA TATE
Published weekly except for two weeks in August and one week in December by the Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Telephone: (212) 243-6392; Fax: (212) 924-6040.

E-mail: TheMilitant@compuserve.com
The Militant website is: www.themilitant.com

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

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Subscriptions: **United States:** for one-year subscription send \$45 to above address.

Latin America, Caribbean: for one-year subscription send \$65, drawn on a U.S. bank, to above address. By first-class (airmail), send \$80.

Asia: send \$80 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.

Canada: Send Canadian \$75 for one-year subscription to Militant, 4613 St. Laurent, Montreal, Quebec H2T 1R2.

Britain, Ireland: £36 for one year by check or international money order made out to Militant Distribution, 47 The Cut, London, SE1 8LL, England. **Continental Europe, Africa, Middle East:** £40 for one year by check or international money order made out to Militant Distribution at above address.

France: Send FF420 for one-year subscription to Militant, Centre MBE 175, 23 rue Lecourbe, 75015 Paris; chèque postale: 40 134 34 U. **Belgium:** BF 2,400 for one year on account no. 000-1543112-36 of IMei Fonds/Fonds du 1 mai, 2140 Antwerp.

Iceland: Send 5,800 Icelandic kronur for one-year subscription to Militant, P.O. Box 233, 121 Reykjavik. **Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark:** 550 Swedish kronor for one year. Pay to Militant Swedish giro no. 451-32-09-9.

New Zealand: Send New Zealand \$75 to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland, New Zealand. **Australia:** Send Australian \$75 to P.O. Box K879, Haymarket, NSW 1240, Australia. **Pacific Islands:** Send New Zealand \$75 to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland, New Zealand.

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

Workers in Iowa protest English-only law

BY EDWIN FRUIT

MARSHALLTOWN, Iowa—Dozens of workers attended a hearing here October 21 to protest a resolution passed by the Marshall County Board of Supervisors making English the county's official language. Among the 80 people present, many were migrant workers from the ConAgra Swift meatpacking facility in Marshalltown.

Marshall is the 11th county in Iowa to adopt an English-only law. The resolution, which was passed September 26, requires that county documents be printed, and business conducted, in English. A petition signed by some 2,200 people gathered by members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars led to the supervisors' vote.

People came from Ames, Des Moines, Urbandale, Waterloo, Coralville, and Tama to attend the meeting. Speaker after speaker condemned the resolution at the hearing, which was sponsored by the Iowa Commission on Latino Affairs. A number of workers from the Swift plant explained the need for translation and pointed out that this law would make it harder for Latinos to get city or county services. A former IBP worker from Waterloo said that both she and her husband had operations for carpal tunnel syndrome and that they had not been able to obtain benefits.

"They violate our rights when they tell us we have to speak English," said Ramona Chávez López, who works at the Swift plant. She said passing an English-only resolution "only makes it worse and feeds into racism."

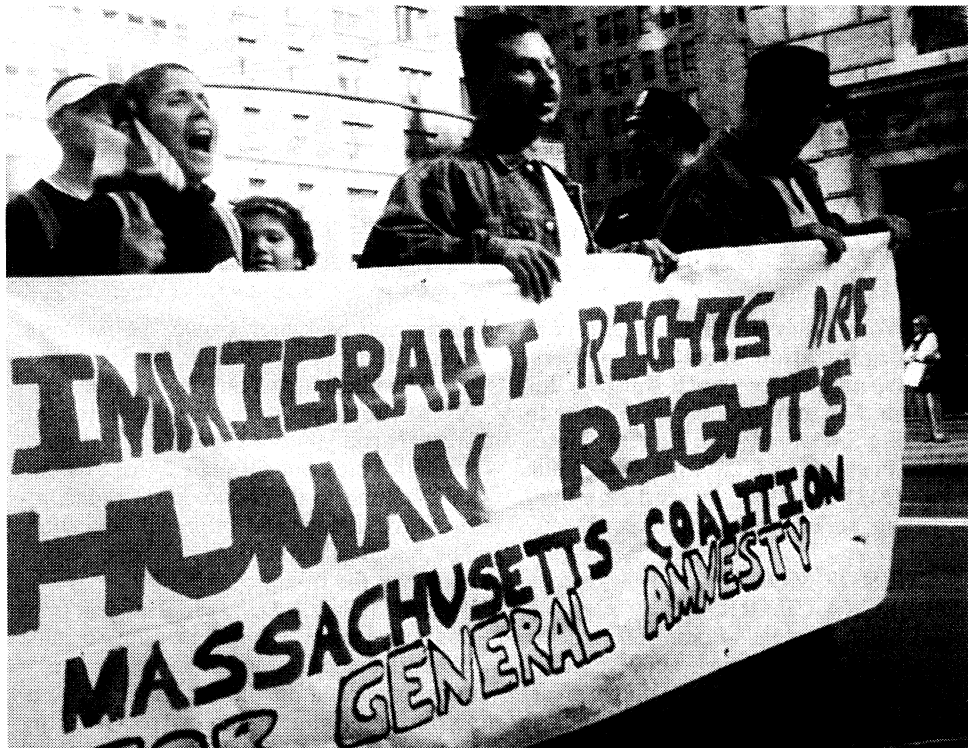
Chávez López said her daughter had been told not to speak Spanish in school, and that her 20-year-old son, who also works at Swift, was told at the cafeteria there that if he didn't speak English he wouldn't be served.

Braulio Pereyra, a vice president of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) local that organizes workers at the Swift plant, said 1,400 of the 2,000 workers there were Latino. "It is humiliating to be told that we can't speak our language and be proud of our roots," he said. "If we are good for labor then our culture and language must be respected."

Sandy Burke, chairperson of the diversity committee of Marshalltown, said that the supervisors had not consulted with their committee or anyone connected to the Latino community before their vote.

Edwin Fruit, Socialist Workers candidate for the 4th Congressional District in Iowa who is also a meat packer, explained that bilingual education needed to be expanded. He also said that the packinghouse companies should provide ESL (English as a second language) classes during the workday with pay and that we needed to demand amnesty for those workers who were constantly under threat from the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) because of their undocumented status.

Sam Carbajal, a former Swift worker, explained how many undocumented workers constantly move from plant to plant to evade the INS, making it difficult for them



October 14 march in New York demanding rights for immigrants. English-only measures are attempts to maintain immigrant workers as second-class citizens.

to obtain any company benefits.

One of the speakers against the resolution was Larry Ginter, a hog farmer from Marshall County. "I have had people from Brazil, Guatemala, South Africa, and other countries visiting my farm," he explained. "They all spoke the universal language against injustice." Ginter said workers and farmers needed their own petition, an idea that was echoed by several other participants. He added that opponents of the English-only resolution should consider a march in defense of immigrant rights.

Others who spoke at the hearing included Ray Young Bear, a member of the Meskwaki Nation and a professor of English at Iowa State University and the University of Iowa,

and Heriberto Godina, an assistant professor of language, literacy, and culture at the University of Iowa. Young Bear explained that he was attending the hearing to show solidarity with Latinos because Native people had suffered similar discrimination.

After the hearing, several people commented on the need to organize against this discriminatory law and said that there were many other problems, including police harassment, of Latino workers.

Edwin Fruit is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1149 and is the Socialist Workers candidate for Congress in Iowa's 4th District. Simone Berg contributed to this article.

Teamsters in N. California strike Safeway warehouse

BY BARBARA BOWMAN

TRACY, California—Workers at the giant warehouse here who distribute groceries and produce to Safeway and Pak 'n Save stores in California, Nevada, and Hawaii went on strike October 18. Many of the nearly 1,600 members of Teamsters Local 439 began massing at the front gate of Summit Logistics hours before the strike. At 1:00 p.m. they grabbed picket signs, began chanting, and formed a human wall that blocked trucks from leaving the warehouse for a number of hours.

Strikers are demanding the company pay drivers by the hour rather than by delivery and end unsafe working conditions.

Royal Airlines Laundry workers fight for union

BY LISA POTASH AND LISA-MARIE ROTTACH

CHICAGO—Workers at Royal Airlines Laundry here are fighting for recognition of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE). Royal has two plants in the Chicago area, as well as laundries in four other cities around the country.

Royal, an industrial laundry, has contracts with United, Delta, and several other airlines, cleaning their napkins and other fabrics used in passenger service. UNITE has held two rallies to support the workers' fight at Royal, including two at the O'Hare airport here, reaching out to airline workers and passengers.

The starting wage at the Royal laundries in the Chicago area is \$5.15 per hour, the legal minimum.

Workers leaving day shift told *Militant* reporters that the main issue driving their interest in UNITE is winning a higher wage. They reported that most of the 55 workers support the union, and that union supporters are hosting individual house meetings to discuss why it's important to win union recognition and how to advance the fight.

Lisa Potash and Lisa-Marie Rottach are sewing machine operators and members of UNITE in the Chicago area. Potash is the Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress in the 5th District.

"We have to run to do our work and the aisles are all congested," explained Rito Luja, who has seven years as a warehouse worker. "We can't go home till our orders are filled so we're forced to work through breaks and lunches and do lots of overtime."

Aaron Urbia, 24, added, "It's impossible for any human being to work like they want you to. If Summit had agreed to better work conditions we wouldn't be out. I've seen honest men come in and do their best and still get fired. By the time you are 40 you can't do this work."

Teamsters vice president Sam Rosas says 3,800 workers have gone through the company in the last three years. Summit president Martin Street admitted last year's turnover included 712 employees, 536 of whom failed to pass their probation.

Working conditions have been a problem since the facility opened in 1992, which is when Safeway began using a third-party distribution company. "Summit is just a mask for Safeway," said striker Luja.

Michael Van Gorder, 28, a warehouse worker for more than five years, explained, "The sign may say Summit Logistics, but the logo on the building, products, and trucks all say 'Safeway.' Summit is just a front."

The strikers called for a boycott of Safeway and are getting a friendly response to their leafleting at Safeway stores in the area.

Strikebreaking moves

Summit has taken out ads in local papers and Safeway is distributing leaflets that the strikers say misrepresent the union's demands, the pay they earned, and their working conditions.

Summit has housed some 1,600 strikebreakers for several weeks in hotels in Tracy and provides buses and vans to transport them into the warehouse.

During the first two days of the strike some windows in the buses and vans were broken and a small number of injuries reported.

Violence-baiting has dominated much of the news. Striker Mike Pacheco put this in perspective, "A few windows got broken but we've put up with a lot of stuff for a long time that has resulted in all kinds of injuries. People are angry and demanding things change."

Van Gorder underscored the strikers' determination. "We voted the company offer down three times. We wanted to do this. This is a strike from below."

"We're not going back until we're treated with respect," vowed Rito Luja.

UNITE members in New Jersey plant oppose bosses' attack on their wages

BY NANCY ROSENSTOCK

PERTH AMBOY, New Jersey—The 175 members of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE) Local 506 who work at Individualized Shirts are facing an attack by the bosses on their wages.

The bosses held a "quality control" meeting in September to complain that they were losing orders and placed the blame on the workers for producing "bad" shirts. The owner of the company made a presentation, with translation into Spanish organized by management. He warned that if the quality did not improve to his satisfaction within six months, he would come back and decree a cut in workers' medical benefits. Not surprisingly, in this intimidating atmosphere in a room lined by bosses, none of the workers spoke.

The next day a letter—in English only—was enclosed with workers' paychecks, declaring that the 20-cent raise due September 1 would not be a raise this year but rather a lump sum bonus to be paid the week before Christmas, based on the number of

hours worked and number of pieces made.

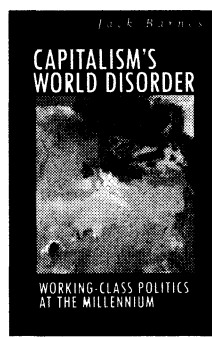
Many of the workers expressed outrage, especially at the delay in the raise. The fact that the letter was only in English added insult to injury.

In the following days some workers, especially in the pressing department, discussed "not working." One floor worker pointed to the central role of the sewing machine operators and said, "If the operators walk, then I will too."

The company held another meeting a few days later and asserted that they "lost a quarter of a million dollars the last two months." They floated the idea that they would close the plant in December if the quality of the shirts did not improve.

As anger mounted, many of the workers, most of whom are paid by piece-rate, turned to their union for answers, and a union meeting was held in response to the company's actions. Workers remain determined to press for a satisfactory solution.

Nancy Rosenstock is a member of UNITE Local 506.



Capitalism's World Disorder

WORKING-CLASS POLITICS AT THE MILLENNIUM
JACK BARNES

The social devastation, financial panics, political turmoil, police brutality, and military assaults accelerating all around us are the inevitable forces unleashed by capitalism. But the future capitalism has in store for us can be changed by the timely solidarity, courageous action, and united struggle of workers and farmers conscious of their power to transform the world. Also available in French and Spanish.

Regular price \$23.95

PATHFINDER

Special Offer \$20

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Please include \$3 for shipping and handling.

Socialist campaigner joins election debate in Arizona high school

The Young Socialists is an international organization of young workers, students, and other youth fighting for socialism. For more information write to the Young Socialists, P.O. Box 33, Times Square Post Office, New York, NY 10108, or call (212) 695-1809, or send an e-mail to: young_socialists@hotmail.com

BY CHESSIE MOLANO
AND BECKA CLARK

TUCSON, Arizona—Some 150 students and others heard Young Socialist Louis Turner speak on the Socialist Workers presidential campaign in an October 2 debate at Catalina High School here. The Democratic, Republican, and Green Parties were represented by teachers for the debate, which was sponsored by the Young Uprising Radicals (YUR), a high school organization.

The Young Socialists have been working together with these youth, inviting them to our weekly class series and participating in their teach-in on Colombia, where we discussed our opposition to U.S. intervention and military aid. This debate was a chance to get deeper into politics on the campus.

Turner began the debate by stating that the Socialist Workers candidates, James

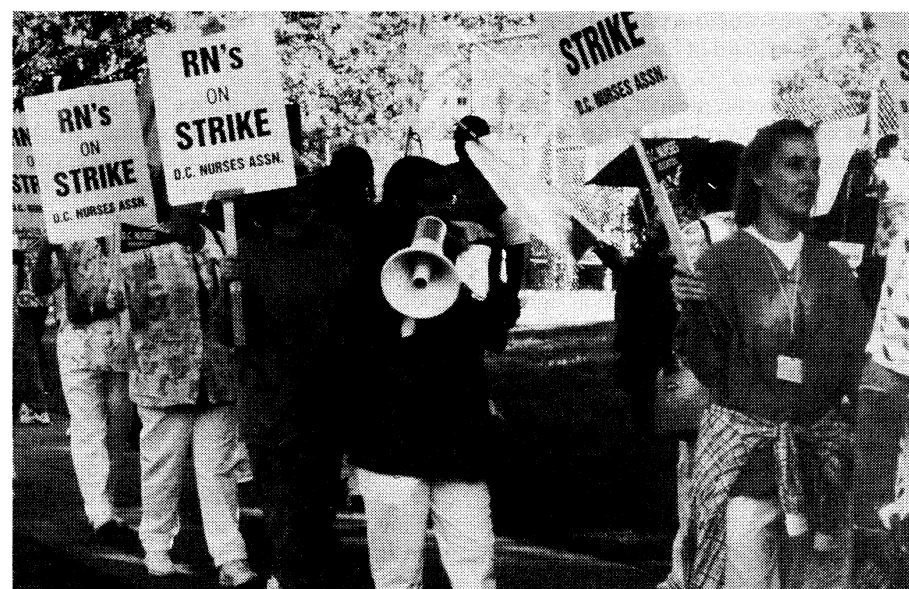
Harris and Margaret Trowe, are workers. "From Reagan to Clinton, the same program had been acted out. Both parties represent the same program of capitalism. Workers and youth will get social gains not through votes but through fights. We are still fighting to defend abortion rights, affirmative action, and bilingual education. The boom of capitalism has been only a boom for the ruling class."

Ana Ramirez, a high school student from Los Angeles and supporter of the Socialist Workers campaign, spoke in response to a question posed on the education system. Explaining what it means for working people, she said, "The purpose of school isn't to educate us, but to train us for entering the workforce and to also train others to be bosses. School teaches students to not ask questions but to follow the rules, and it tries to prevent us from radicalizing."

The government teacher representing the Republican party interjected, "I force my students to participate." The Green Party representative said the problem is that "too much" money is spent on the military budget and not on the education system, while the Democratic Party representative said its nominee, Albert Gore, would hire 1 million new teachers.

The second question was about U.S. aid to Colombia and the "drug war." The only speaker to address the question of Colombia was Turner, who stated, "The so-called war on drugs is an excuse by Washington

Nurses build strike solidarity in D.C.



Militant/Sam Manuel
Nurses in Washington, D.C., picket to build solidarity with their fight for patient safety and against mandatory overtime. More than 1,000 workers struck Washington Hospital Center September 20. Contract talks have broken down.

to have a military presence in Colombia in order to protect U.S. investment and maintain imperialist rule." The Republican representative spoke on drugs, saying that it was an urban epidemic. The Democratic spokesperson declined to talk about Colombia.

A question was raised by an audience member about how each party would find solutions for problems in society such as racism, police brutality, and women's rights. The Green Party representative said the system of government should be made to work for "the people" and not for big business. The Democratic and Republican speakers stressed the need for "good edu-

cation." Socialist Workers campaign supporter Turner stated that capitalism is the cause of the problems facing working people, and that the way forward is a fight for a workers and farmers government through a revolutionary workers movement, one in which young people will play a big part.

After the debate many students came to our table and said that they were interested in the Young Socialists. Many expressed agreement with a number of the positions expressed by the Socialist Workers campaign speaker during the debate, and were eager to learn more about the YS and our literature.

Contribute to Militant and Perspectiva Mundial Fund

	Goal	Paid	%
Sweden*	580	550	95%
Australia	900	642	71%
New Zealand			
Christchurch	520	352	68%
Auckland	1,170	662	57%
NZ Total	1,690	1,014	60%
United States			
Atlanta	4,600	3,932	85%
Pittsburgh	4,000	3,237	81%
Upper Manhattan	3,000	2,250	75%
Chicago	7,500	5,551	74%
San Francisco*	11,000	7,905	72%
Allentown	1,200	850	71%
Chippewa Falls	600	420	70%
St. Louis*	2,000	1,373	69%
Newark	3,000	2,050	68%
Tampa	600	400	67%
NY Garment Dist.	5,000	3,280	66%
Boston	4,000	2,505	63%
Charlotte	2,800	1,735	62%
Detroit	3,750	2,210	59%
Houston	6,500	3,720	57%
Seattle	9,000	4,665	52%
Fort Collins	1,400	719	51%
Brooklyn	3,200	1,545	48%
Philadelphia	2,500	1,200	48%
Washington	3,000	1,246	42%
Los Angeles	6,000	2,400	40%
Miami	2,300	795	35%
Twin Cities	3,500	1,140	33%
Fresno	200	60	30%
Birmingham	3,200	911	28%
Des Moines	1,800	285	16%
Cleveland	1,600	227	14%
Other		175	
U.S. Total	97,250	56,786	58%
Iceland	250	130	52%
Canada			
Toronto	2,840	1,620	57%
Vancouver	1,005	352	35%
Montreal	1,340	228	17%
Canada Total	5,000	2,200	44%
United Kingdom	870	30	3%
France		320	
Int'l Total	\$106,540	\$61,672	58%
Goal/Should be	\$110,000	\$77,000	70%
*raised goal			

Yugoslavia coverage shows importance of fund

Below are messages encouraging contributions to the \$110,000 *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* Fund and a letter from editor Martin Koppel to *Militant* readers.

"The *Militant* informs the working class people of the struggles we are involved in individually and collectively. Otherwise we would be at the mercy of the papers we read every day, that don't give us the real story that there are fights going on all over the world. The farmers' situation is one of a never ending fight. The *Militant* gives us an understanding of the source of the problems we have and what some of the solutions can be."

Gladys Williams, activist in the fight to defend family farmers and member of the *People's Tribunal*, an organization in Valdosta, Georgia, fighting police brutality.

"The reason I support the *Militant* is because it tells more about labor than any paper I've seen. It has news we don't get from our local papers. That's why I like it. That's why I subscribe to it. And that's why I believe in it."

Bonnie Rooks, locked-out worker at AK Steel, member of United Steelworkers of America Local 169.

"The writers of the *Militant* are just common folk, but with a special niche. They speak with a working-class perspective because they are workers who not only toil under the boot heel of capitalism, they recognize its fascist, colonialistic, and imperialistic nature. What is very special and very progressive about those writers is this, they aren't trying to put a human face on capitalism...the very nature of capitalism is carnivorous."

Larry Ginter, hog farmer and member of the Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement.

"I'll tell you what I think of the *Militant*. It is one of the most informative papers for the working person that I have ever read. It has a wide range of articles from all over the country. I am ashamed that other papers do not have this kind of coverage. For a little paper, I don't see how

you can cover so much of importance to workers. Keep up the good work.

Lewis Fitch, president of the National Black Lung Association.

Dear *Militant* readers,

In addition to our ongoing coverage of labor struggles and resistance of working people to the assaults by the employers and the government, the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* are taking special steps to get out coverage of the working-class upsurge in Yugoslavia and the struggle of the Palestinian people for self-determination. And we're producing a special issue of *Perspectiva Mundial* to keep up with these developments.

A three-person international reporting team joined a student correspondent for the *Militant* in Yugoslavia this week and filed its first report, published in this issue. Reading the articles it is easy to see how invaluable they are in learning the truth about Yugoslavia, the results of the imperialist war against the people of that country, and the ways in which workers, farmers, and youth are seeking to defend their interests and historic conquests.

We have also devoted considerable space to reprint articles and documents explaining the Palestinian struggle and the events in Yugoslavia, such as the excerpt this week on the Yugoslav revolution. We hope you will contribute generously to the *Militant*

and *Perspectiva Mundial* Fund, which helps make initiatives such as this possible.

Special events are being organized by supporters of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* in New York City and San Francisco that will feature reports and discussion on these developments and on the extent and character of resistance growing within the U.S. working class. Both meetings are focal points for the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* Fund and where the drive can go way over the top. Please fill in the coupon below and send it in today. Every contribution is welcome and needed. Your comments on the *Militant* will also be appreciated.

In solidarity,
Martin Koppel
Editor, *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*

Enclosed is a contribution for \$ _____
(Make checks payable to the *Militant*.)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Clip and send to: The *Militant*, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014.

New York laundry workers win strike

Continued from front page
picket line October 20.

"We had to be here because we all face the same conditions," said Alberto, who came with two other workers from the nearby Tartan Textile plant to show solidarity. She is the vice president of UNITE Local 330 at that industrial laundry, located in Hempstead, Long Island. In July, Alberto also helped organize a one-week sympathy strike at her plant in support of the strike against Tartan Textile's plant in Pompano Beach, Florida. "That was a successful fight and earned us a lot of respect," he said.

Bosses at Oceanside Institutional Industries initially threatened to fire all those who

walked out. But the strike remained solid, with no more than a dozen people crossing the picket line, strikers reported. In the end the company backed down and no one was fired. Since returning to work, management's conduct has changed noticeably, several workers pointed out.

José Portillo, who has worked 11 years in the pressing department, told Hoy he was proud of what they had accomplished. "We knew that if we remained united, we could win our demands."

The company agreed to join in industrywide negotiations for a contract, which are currently under way in New York State.

5

Minnesota socialist candidate for Senate debates opponents

BY TOM FISHER

ST. PAUL, Minnesota—Four hundred students at the University of Minnesota got a chance to hear a clear working-class alternative to the different variants of capitalist politics at a debate here October 12. The debate included all the candidates on the ballot for U.S. Senate, including Rebecca Ellis of the Socialist Workers Party. Many of the students liked what they heard from Ellis.

Also speaking in the debate, moderated by Gov. Jesse Ventura, were Republican incumbent Rod Grams, Democrat Mark Dayton, David Swan of the Constitution Party, James Gibson of the Independence Party, Erik Pakieser of the Libertarian Party, and David Daniels of the Grassroots Party.

One question asked was whether to change U.S. immigration policy, given the new immigrants from Latin America, East Africa, and East Asia who now live in Minnesota. Sen. Grams stated, "We should defend the laws. I refer to illegal immigration. Too many times the illegal immigrants wind up on welfare." Dayton, a liberal Democrat and millionaire businessman, echoed this view, saying, "There needs to be legal immigration. The INS [Immigration and Naturalization Service] has a backlog of 4 million applications for legal immigration to the United States. However, there are 5 million undocumented immigrants here. This is not fair. There should be enforcement of the laws against illegal immigration."

David Swan, a prison guard and candidate of the Constitution Party, said, "People who come here need to accept responsibility, not public dole. They have to learn English." David Daniels of the Grassroots Party said he supported open immigration and cited the problem of lower wages for immigrants. But he argued his position by condemning the World Trade Organization as the cause of both exploitation in and immigration from third world countries.

Socialist Workers candidate Rebecca Ellis said, "No human being should be called 'illegal' or an 'alien.' Immigrant workers have contributed to the struggles of working people here. Look at the role of immigrant workers in the hotel workers strike here—that was a big blow for justice." She also pointed to the fight by workers at Dakota Premium Foods—in their majority immigrants from Mexico—who waged a sit-down strike in June against a brutal increase in line speed and have been organizing a union. "These are the kind of people I want to be associated with," she said to huge applause.

Energy crisis

Regarding energy policy, one questioner asked, "How should the policy be changed so that we can keep our high standard of living and protect our air and water at the same time?" Dayton answered, "I support

the development of alternative energy sources—the problem is that people consume too much. I call for the conservation of our energy."

Dayton, like Grams, had not a word of criticism of the U.S. energy monopolies. Blaming nations in the Middle East and elsewhere for huge fuel price increases, he argued, "The United States is now 60 percent dependent on foreign oil. I support legislation to boost oil exploration here in the United States. I support research and development of solar, wind, and biomass energy."

In contrast, Ellis said, "The U.S. energy corporations function simply to maximize their profits at the expense of working people. The skyrocketing gas prices are an example of this." She called for an expansion of coal production—done by union coal miners under safe working conditions—to generate electricity through environmentally sound methods. "Scrubbers can be installed in the coal generating plants to burn coal cleanly," she said. "However, this is not done because it would be a subtraction from the profits of the energy companies."

"We need to have a revolution to change society so that decisions can be made for human beings. We need a workers and farmers government."

This was a theme that Ellis emphasized at the start of the debate. In response to the question, "How should the funding of public education be changed to make it easier for students to attend college?" both Grams and Dayton advocated small tax reforms for students. Ellis argued for the right of working people to lifetime education.

"There are two types of education in this country today," the socialist candidate pointed out. "The wealthy have schools for their sons and daughters. Education for the vast majority of people is a sham, it is training for obedience to work for the bosses and make them profits. The bosses don't want educated workers who take an interest in unions and politics. We need a different kind

Socialist candidates join march for immigrant rights in Chicago



Militant/Lisa-Marie Rottach

Socialist Workers presidential candidate James Harris and Lisa Potash, SWP candidate for 5th Congressional District in Illinois, participated in October 14 march for immigrant rights in Chicago. The demonstration was part of similar actions called in several cities across the United States.

of society in this country, a society where education for working people is not training to act as part of a machine. The struggles by workers and farmers today point in the direction of the need for a workers and farmers government in the United States, to replace this government that is responsible to the capitalists."

At the conclusion of the program many students wanted to talk with Ellis, especially a number of young women. Several said they agreed with everything she said.

Five students signed up to learn more about, or to help promote, the Socialist Workers campaign. One person subscribed to the *Militant*, the campaign paper.

Example of Cuban revolution

The debate was covered in short excerpts on the local television news and in long articles in the Minneapolis *Star Tribune* and the University of Minnesota *Daily*.

Coal miner runs for Senate in Pennsylvania

Reprinted below is an article that appeared in the October 19 issue of the *Standard-Speaker*, a daily newspaper in Hazleton, Pennsylvania. The article was entitled, "For the working class—Socialist Workers hopeful Forrestal in Senate bid."

BY KELLY MONITZ

Southwestern Pennsylvania coal miner Frank Forrestal launched a write-in campaign for the U.S. Senate seat held by Republican Rick Santorum this week.

But the Socialist Workers campaign candidate doesn't expect to win a race dominated by the major political parties' picks Santorum and Democratic Congressman Ron Klink.

Forrestal hopes people will see that there's an alternative for the working class.

"The working class doesn't have a party of their own," he said Tuesday when he brought his campaign to the Eastern Pennsylvania coalfields.

"There's a need for a working-class point of view in the senatorial election. "What we're fighting for is a government of workers and farmers," Forrestal said.

The Democrats and Republicans aren't for the working class, but the capitalists class, he said. The Socialist Workers want a class break from both parties, Forrestal said.

He expects that class break to come from working-class struggles that already exist throughout the country and the world, he

said.

On an international level, those struggles include that of the Palestinians who fight for a homeland to the Yugoslavia miners who toppled the Milosevic government, Forrestal said.

Closer to home, he pointed to the struggles of American farmers who are being driven off their land, meat packers forced to triple production and coal miners denied lifetime health benefits.

A United Mine Worker Union member, Forrestal understands the worker, like himself. He works 10 to 12 hours, six days a week in an underground mine.

"The coal bosses are getting away with murder," Forrestal said. "Miners are still dying. The union just hasn't been strong enough."

Unions are the key, though, he said.

Socialist Workers fight for strengthening unions, which will place demands upon businesses for higher wages, better working conditions, and no forced overtime, Forrestal said.

His party also wants to see Social Security benefits as a safety net for everyone throughout their lives, while the major political parties talk about Social Security in terms of privatization or retirement, he said.

"If you work your whole life, it should be guaranteed," Forrestal said.

And the benefits shouldn't come from the taxation of the working class, he said.

"Working people are taxed to death," Forrestal said. "We don't think working people should be taxed at all."

Socialist Workers also believe education shouldn't be just an issue for America's youth, but an issue for everyone throughout their lives, he said.

If elected to the Senate, Forrestal won't change his focus, he said.

"I'll keep doing what I've been doing," he said. "We would be a voice of the working class."

Harris interviewed by Iowa campus paper

Reprinted below is an article that appeared in the October 16 issue of the *Iowa State Daily*, newspaper of the Iowa State University at Ames, Iowa. The article is entitled "Socialist candidate visits exhibit."

BY RYAN BROWN

Socialist Workers Party Presidential Candidate James Harris visited the Palestinian Holocaust exhibit at the Memorial Union Monday afternoon to support the Palestinian community.

"[The Socialist Workers Party] supports the Palestinians and their movement to regain their land," said Harris, a former warehouse worker. "The United States is not an unbiased participant, and U.S. troops should not be in the Middle East."

The exhibit Harris visited was sponsored by the ISU [Iowa State University] Muslim Student Association.

He said Socialists want the working class to mobilize and fight for itself, and he said

he hopes this can be accomplished in the Middle East.

"[The Palestinians'] land was taken away unfairly," said Harris, a member of the Union of Needletrades from Atlanta. "All they want is their land back."

Secretary of State Chet Culver invited Harris to participate in a debate for young people in Des Moines, but Harris supporter Edwin Fruit, candidate for U.S. Congress, 4th district, said the debate process was biased.

"The Republican and Democratic representatives were given a half hour each while the third-party representatives were given 15 minutes for all of them," Fruit said.

Although Harris said he is not in the presidential race to win, he did stress that third-party candidates should be allowed to debate. If he were allowed to debate, he said he would like the American people to know that the working class has not felt the economic boom.

"Farmers have to work two jobs in order for them to support themselves," Fruit said.

"[The farmers] should make enough money from what they produce to support themselves."

He said Socialists want to provide totally free education and health care.

"Health care can be free to everyone from birth to death," Fruit said. "Preventative is less expensive." He said many Americans wait until they are sick before visiting the doctor.

Fruit said Socialists believe there should be no taxes for people who make \$75,000 or less. He said the tax burden should fall on the rich and big corporations.

To accomplish the goals of the Socialist Workers Party, Harris said, would require a collaborative effort of the entire working class. He said this effort would not take place with the election of either of the two mainstream presidential candidates into office.

"By voting for a Republican or Democrat, you are voting for the lesser of the two evils," Harris said. "By voting for them, what have you really won?"

Vote Socialist Workers in 2000

Working-class alternative to parties of big business

Listed below are the Socialist Workers candidates for federal office in the 2000 elections. The socialist presidential and vice-presidential candidates, James Harris and Margaret Trowe, are on the ballot in 13 states—Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont, Washington State, and Wisconsin—and the District of Columbia. Due to undemocratic election laws designed to keep working-class candidates off the ballot, most of the Socialist Workers candidates will not appear on the ballot. In such cases, the candidates are running as write-ins and their names have been indicated with an asterisk (*). Union acronyms are listed at bottom of page.



Militant/Ron Poulsen
SWP candidates Margaret Trowe and Jacob Perasso (right) meet fighters for Aboriginal rights in Sydney during August visit to Australia and New Zealand.

PRESIDENT:
James Harris, 52, UNITE.

VICE PRESIDENT:
Margaret Trowe, 52, UFCW

ALABAMA
Congress, 7th C.D.: **Susan LaMont**, 53, is a garment worker from Birmingham.*

CALIFORNIA
U.S. Senate: **Nan Bailey**, 47, is a meat packer from Los Angeles.*
Congress, 8th C.D.: **Deborah Liatos**, 41, works in a meatpacking plant and

is from San Francisco.*
Congress, 20th C.D.: **Ned Measel**, 45, is a meat packer from Fresno.*

FLORIDA

U.S. Senate: **Argiris Malapanis**, 42, is a garment worker from Miami.

GEORGIA

Congress, 5th C.D.: **Dan Fein**, 55, is a textile worker from Atlanta.*

ILLINOIS

Congress, 4th C.D.: **Elizabeth Stone**, 61, is from Chicago.*

Congress, 5th C.D.: **Lisa Potash**, 48, is a garment worker in Chicago and a member of UNITE Local 39-C.*

IOWA

Congress, 4th C.D.: **Edwin Fruit**, 53,

is a packinghouse worker and member of UFCW Local 1149 from Des Moines.

MASSACHUSETTS

U.S. Senate: **Ted Leonard**, 47, is a meat packer from Boston.*
Congress, 8th C.D.: **Andrea Morell**, 62, is from Boston.*
Congress, 9th C.D.: **Brock Satter**, 29, is a meat packer from Boston.*

MICHIGAN

U.S. Senate: **Christopher Hoeppner**, 47, is a meat packer and member of the UFCW from Detroit.*



Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Senate from Minnesota Rebecca Ellis (third from left) participates in a debate with panel of other candidates for that office October 12.

MINNESOTA

U.S. Senate: **Rebecca Ellis**, 52, is from St. Paul.

MISSOURI

U.S. Senate: **Alyson Kennedy**, 50, is a garment worker and member of UNITE from St. Louis.*

NEW JERSEY

U.S. Senate: **Nancy Rosenstock**, 51, is a garment worker and member of UNITE from Newark.

Congress, 10th C.D.: **Maurice Williams**, 43, from Newark, is a staff writer for the *Militant*.

Congress, 13th C.D.: **Kari Sachs**, 35, is a packinghouse worker from Newark.

NEW YORK

U.S. Senate: **Jacob Perasso**, 24, from the Bronx, is a volunteer in Pathfinder's printshop and a member of the Young Socialists.

Congress, 8th C.D.: **Olga Rodríguez**, 52, is from Manhattan.*

Congress, 10th C.D.: **Glova Scott**, 45, is a garment worker from Brooklyn.*

Congress, 12th C.D.: **Paul Pederson**, 25, from Brooklyn, is a volunteer in Pathfinder's printshop.

Congress, 14th C.D.: **Douglas Nelson**, 25, from Manhattan, is a volunteer in Pathfinder's printshop and a member of the Young Socialists.*

Congress, 15th C.D.: **John Hawkins**, 51, from Manhattan, is a volunteer in Pathfinder's printshop.*

Congress, 16th C.D.: **William Estrada**, 32, from Manhattan, is a packinghouse worker and member of the UFCW.*

OHIO

U.S. Senate: **Michael Fitzsimmons**, 40, is a garment worker and member of UNITE in Cleveland.*

PENNSYLVANIA

U.S. Senate: **Frank Forrestal**, 44, from Pittsburgh, is a member of the UMWA and a coal miner in southwestern Pennsylvania.*

Congress, 1st C.D.: **John P. Crysdale**, 21, is a packinghouse worker and a member of the Young Socialists.*

TEXAS

U.S. Senate: **Lea Sherman**, 52, is a meat packer from Houston.*



Militant
Dan Fein, senatorial candidate in Atlanta, speaks at protest against Israeli repression.

Congress, 18th C.D.: **Dave Ferguson**, 44, is a sewing machine operator from Houston.*

Congress, 22nd C.D.: **Dean Cook**, 37, is a packinghouse worker and locked-out member of the Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical and Energy Workers Union at Crown Petroleum.*

WASHINGTON, D.C.

D.C. Delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives: **Sam Manuel**, 50.

UFCW—United Food and Commercial Workers, UMWA—United Mine Workers of America, UNITE—Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees.

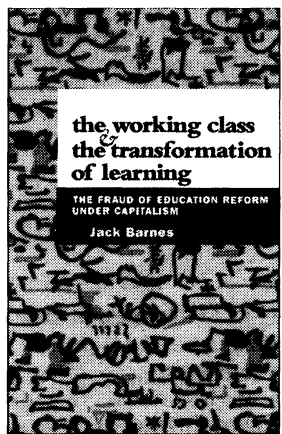


Militant/Bernie Senter
Deborah Liatos, right, Socialist Workers candidate for Congress in California, speaking with workers from Earthgrains bakery in Oakland.

NEW! FROM PATHFINDER

The Working Class & the Transformation of Learning

THE FRAUD OF EDUCATION REFORM UNDER CAPITALISM



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." \$3.00

ONLY \$1
with introductory subscription
to the *Militant*!

Available from bookstores listed on page 12

Workers in Yugoslavia extend poli

Unionists and students describe strikes and protests that brought down

Continued from front page
tion not linked directly to the former ruling party. In the same period, Nezavisnost supporters told us, membership has jumped from 200,000 to as much as half a million. In the last two weeks, beginning October 11, some 640 Ikarbus workers out of 1,022 switched their affiliation to Nezavisnost to better unite and fight for union control of job conditions.

Firsthand report from Yugoslavia

The general manager had the pro-Milosevic trade union under his boot, workers told us, and used it to diffuse or squash any attempts to improve safety and other working conditions.

Zarco Yoksovic, an instructor at the vocational high school on the plant premises, described the poor conditions, including an ancient air conditioning system in place since the firm was founded in 1972 that resulted in brutal heat during the summer months.

Milovanovic noted that inadequate ventilation made the effects of air pollution from steel dust and chemicals used in the plant much worse.

"We never had adequate safety equipment either, like breathing masks or protective uniforms," he said. "At the same time, managers and other administrative personnel worked in nice, well-lit, fully air-conditioned offices. Isn't this difference the same in capitalist factories?"

"What bothered us even more was the low wages for us in production—100 Deutsche marks per month on average—

by coincidence," Yoksovic pointed out, "the manager's wife ran the clinic!" which gave the director inside knowledge he used arbitrarily to punish workers who did not go along with management.

These two unionists, along with Drasko Pavisevic, who works as a dispatcher in the plant, enumerated other examples of bureaucratic and arbitrary practices by the manager.

A year ago many tires were reported stolen from the plant. The manager then deducted pay from every worker's paycheck, equivalent to the value of the stolen tires, "because he claimed without any evidence that the robbery was an inside job and none of the workers would come forward to tell who did it," Milovanovic said. "So we were all collectively guilty. He also offered a bribe of 3,000 DM to anyone who would rat on any other worker. He always tried to come up with informers. To this day, no one knows who did it or how the tires were stolen. We have no proof that someone in management did it, as is true in other cases, but everyone resents deeply what the director did."

In a similar case, the manager fired a worker at the plant's gas station after it was reported that 16 tons of oil were missing, without any evidence of responsibility by that employee. The worker fought back, going to the courts with the support of his co-workers. The pro-Milosevic union was of no use, siding with management. The court found the company had no reasonable cause for the firing and ordered his reinstatement as a full-time employee with all benefits, seniority, and back pay.

"Then the manager told him he could only work for 90 days, and that was it," Yoksovic said.

"We simply had enough."

As workers began to resist, they attracted to their side others who were not production workers. Nikola Demonja is an attorney whose legal advice was available to all

and punish those who did not toe the line. What pushed me over the top was when he decided to kick a woman worker out of one of four apartments recently allocated after she joined Nezavisnost. I asked for a meeting of the housing commission to review this decision. When the manager refused, I resigned from the commission and joined the effort to reorganize into Nezavisnost."

Others working in marketing for the company began shouting at office meetings that they had evidence of payoffs by the manager to certain company clients, Demonja said, and turned over hard evidence to him.

'On October 11 we lost our fear'

Encouraged by the success of the October 5 revolt in bringing Milosevic down, and stories from many enterprises of workers' actions winning the replacement of corrupt and abusive managers, many Ikarbus workers began to sign up for the new union.

Seeing the tide turning against him, the manager made a last attempt to save his skin. "He called a rally of all employees in the plant October 11 where he stated his opposition to Nezavisnost and rattled off the company's 'successes,' having the nerve to take credit and never mentioning the workers," Demonja added. "But he was already behind the times. His rally turned into a loud protest against him, as more and more workers started telling him to shut up."

"That day most of us lost our fear of management," Milovanovic said. From that point, the organizing effort snowballed. A few days later, workers called their own rally in the factory yard. The company did not let them use loudspeakers or other plant equipment for the gathering and prohibited reporters who converged on the scene from entering the premises.

By October 25, however, the company was forced to recognize Nezavisnost as the union representing most workers.

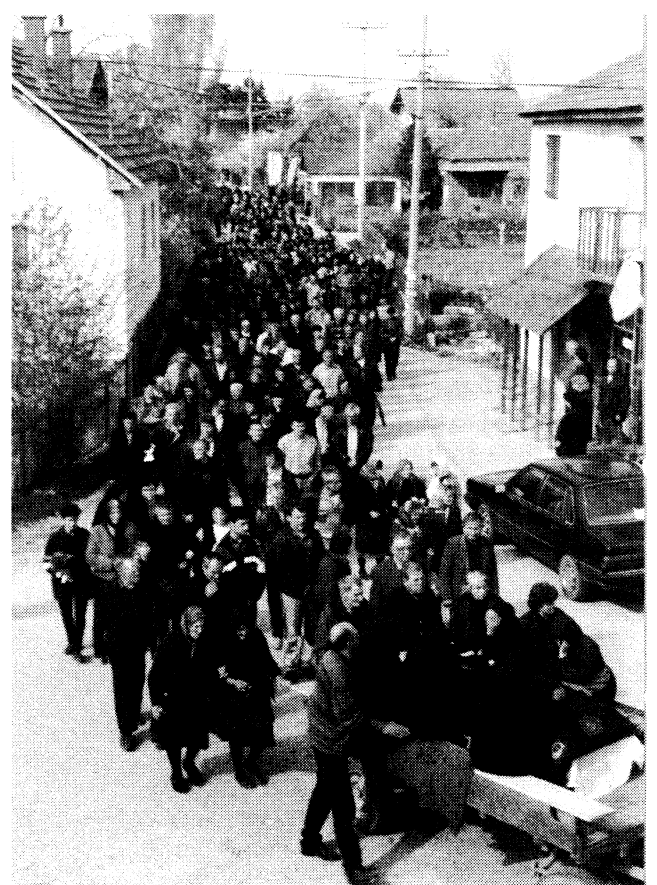
"We demanded the resignation of the manager and asked that a meeting of all workers be called to vote on this by secret ballot and elect our own representatives to the assembly of stockholders," Milovanovic stated. "We have problems as owners of the firm. We are supposed to be the owners and we have had no say on who runs the company."

Under reforms in state-owned industries introduced by the parasitic regime over the last 15 years, a number of plants have been "privatized," with workers holding majority stock and others outside the company awarded the rest of the shares. In practice this meant Milosevic cronies using the setup to siphon off more assets.

At Ikarbus, for example, workers supposedly hold 65 percent of the shares. All "shareholders" were supposed to choose representatives to an assembly that was charged with appointing management. Workers, however, never had anything to do with who was appointed to this assembly. "Authorities picked managers fired from other companies for criminal activities, former foreign ministers, and others from the hierarchy of Milosevic's Socialist Party who had nothing to do with Ikarbus," Yoksovic pointed out.

Class, political differentiation sharpens

In the course of this discussion, a difference emerged between lawyer Nikola Demonja and the production workers interviewed. Demonja said the earlier reforms were a fake privatization. "Stockholders



April 1999 funeral of worker in machine tool factory killed in NATO bombing of Yugoslav city of Nis. "The U.S.-NATO bombing of our plant, and of the whole of Yugoslavia, was directed against us, not against Milosevic," an auto worker told *Militant* correspondents. "We've condemned it with all our hearts and we'll never forget it."

never saw any dividends. We need a real privatization like in the West," he stated.

Milovanovic and Yoksovic, on the other hand, insisted that they intended to use whatever forms existed to increase workers say in how the company is run.

The confusing, but at bottom, class struggle shaping up between and among vanguard workers of action and supporters of the opposition that won the recent presidential elections have also become more evident. At a recent meeting in the municipality of Zemun, where the plant is located, representatives of the Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS) convinced lawyers and others from the administrative personnel to postpone implementation of the demand for immediate removal of the Ikarbus manager and instead build up a criminal case against him first, so he could be prosecuted in the courts and be replaced in "a legal manner."

Workers said they went along with this reluctantly in order to maintain a united front, but refuse to back off the fight. "We haven't forgotten," Milovanovic said. "His time will run out sooner rather than later."

Many working people and others we have met have pointed out that the class struggle at Ikarbus is not atypical compared to the rest of Serbia.

Every day, unexpected and not widely publicized actions of the sort Ikarbus workers have been involved in take place throughout Belgrade.

On October 25, for example, about 40 people were protesting in central Belgrade outside the offices of the Association of the Blind, chanting "Resign, resign," and "He's finished!" referring to the association's director. "We want the director of our organization to resign and hold elections for new officers," said Alievic Ramadan, one of the protesters. "He sold our equipment to people abroad. We needed it to help us read. We pay the rent of 1,600 square meters for his offices, while we all live in basements."

The class and political differentiation evident at Ikarbus was also obvious in discussions with other trade unionists, workers, and youth.

Diverging views on 'market reforms'

In an October 24 interview at the national office of Nezavisnost, Milan Nikolic, a member of the executive board of the federation from the Metalworkers union, said he was glad Milosevic was removed "through democratic means." He stressed



October 4 march in Kolubara. Around 50,000 responded to miners' appeal for help when cops tried to break their strike. The miners stopped work five days earlier.

while the managers lived like rich people," Milovanovic said. Average monthly wages for employed workers in Serbia were about DM150 (\$81) last year, while basic costs of food and utilities such as electricity and telephone for a family of three was around 200 DM per month.

"The worst was the fear the general manager tried to instill among workers, cultivated by abusive supervisors. Often they would forbid us to leave the line to go to the bathroom and order us to stop having coffee on the job."

Milovanovic and Yoksovic pointed to another humiliating practice the management had introduced. A worker who called in sick, even with a doctor's note, had to obtain a double check at the plant clinic to secure a medical excuse from the job. "And

employees, he said, and served on a company commission that allocated state-owned apartments to workers at the factory. This was done through a "solidarity fund," administered by city or federal authorities, that comes from the surplus workers produce in the factories. All workers were supposedly eligible to apply, and the law says those who met certain conditions—higher seniority and larger families—were given priority.

"The manager totally ignored this and proclaimed his decisions the highest authority, giving apartments to whomever he chose arbitrarily," Demonja said. "He also did something completely illegal, not turning over the keys and ownership to these workers but simply allowing them to use the apartments. He did that to blackmail

tical space

Milosevic government

how important he felt it was that the new atmosphere of political freedom is built through negotiations and meetings, including with officials of the old regime.

Nikolic did acknowledge that the key to forcing Milosevic to resign was that workers were at the center of the revolt. But he was not happy with how abruptly some of the hated managers have been removed from factories and other workplaces since October 5, especially where Nezavisnost was not involved, like at the Zastava auto plant in Kragujevac. The task, the very purpose of Nezavisnost is to calm this wave down, he stated, because if all the old managers were removed at once production might be halted altogether and "there would be no work or wages." Corrupt company directors have to be removed through the court system, he insisted.

He also made clear his opinion that massive sales of state-owned industries and other companies to foreign investors are inevitable, and that the Nezavisnost leadership supports that—a goal also shared by DOS leaders.

Dragan Vesic, an officer of the Trade Union of Electric Power Workers of Serbia, expressed similar reservations as Nikolic's about "hasty" actions by workers in replacing administrators of their enterprises. This union has 60,000 members, of whom 31,000 are coal miners, producing the raw material used for most of the country's energy needs. This union split from the pro-Milosevic federation in the mid-1990s but also refused to join Nezavisnost.

Workers may get the wrong idea from some of the recent events that "we can move toward some kind of renewed 'worker self-management' system and a new kind of socialism," Vesic stated. "That's not possible. We need a transition towards Western-type democracies with a capitalism that's not exploitative," he argued.

At the same office, *Militant* reporters spoke to Rado Jovanovic, a member of the strike committee of the miners union at Kolubara. About 7,500 coal miners at four mines in that area, producing most of

year. The factory was one of the largest industrial facilities in Yugoslavia, employing more than 30,000 workers a decade ago. It became a target of repeated NATO bombings, with several sections of it being demolished.

Now production hovers between 10,000 and 12,000 cars per year, compared to 215,000 units annually during the plant's heyday. About 2,000 are employed at the moment in the factory, most of them administrative personnel, workers told us during a visit there October 24.

Nezavisnost today only organizes about 20 percent of the workforce, with the rest of the unionized workers belonging to the formerly pro-Milosevic union federation.

Unionists from Nezavisnost told us how they made a special effort to reach out to fellow workers in the pro-government trade union to join in the October 5 protest in Belgrade. Despite threats from the pro-Milosevic union officials, who switched colors abruptly on October 5 proclaiming a change of allegiance to the new government, about 500 of these workers from Zastava joined other workers in the 10,000-strong contingent from Kragujevac helping swell the ranks of those who streamed into Belgrade. "This helped initiate a move toward unity among the rank and file in Zastava," said Milan Jevric, a welder.

The discussion at the Nezavisnost union hall with 10 workers and a couple of union officers that evening turned quickly to the prospects ahead for turning around economic conditions of rampant unemployment and poor working conditions, caused by the anti-working-class methods of planning and management by the previous bureaucratic regimes and accelerated to intolerable proportions by the sanctions and military assaults by Washington and other imperialist powers over the last decade.

Milija Pavlovic, Nezavisnost's secretary in Kragujevac, argued that the road is now open for rapid steps towards a "European Union-type" society. Selling off Zastava to the French Peugeot or the Italian Fiat, two foreign companies that have expressed interest in a possible acquisition, must be a high priority of the new government in Belgrade.

Gorana Milosevic, a lawyer for the union who arrived late after the meeting was well along, stressed a couple of times, "We are now finished with communism."

After listening to and posing further questions to *Militant* worker-correspondents from the United States, Greece, and Sweden, about working and living conditions workers face in North America and Europe and about labor resistance to the bosses' offensive in these countries, a couple of workers who were initially quiet spoke.

"Marx said proletarians of the whole world unite," said Miladin Djorovic, laid off from the paint line at Zastava. "That's what the union must be guided by. Marxism will win some day, and we have a better chance for that now."

Milan Jevric added that socialism presents the possibility of building the "ideal society," but the kind of "socialism" under Milosevic had failed miserably.

When Bobbis Misailidis, an airport worker from Athens, Greece, described the recent demonstrations and one-day strike in Athens against government attempts to undermine the eight-hour day, another worker, Djordje Jovanovic, responded with a big smile: "Until you burn down the parliament, the main TV station, and some other government buildings you won't get anywhere." He was referring to the events in Belgrade during the October 5 outpouring. Most of the workers had a big laugh



In first week of October working people, students, and farmers mounted a massive wave of protests demanding that President Milosevic step down. Students above were blocked by riot police from marching to Milosevic's house. On October 5 workers led mobilizations in Belgrade that forced his resignation. Right, protesters use bulldozer bucket to enter balcony of parliament building.



over this comment. Several said they agreed that what they accomplished on October 5 and the weeks since then is something that capitalists around the world have good reason to be nervous about and workers everywhere to celebrate.

Most of these workers see no alternative to getting technology from a foreign investor to get production going again at Zastava. But for them that is a different matter than selling the business itself to a company from an imperialist country, which if repeated enough times will change social relations throughout Yugoslavia.

Jevric said he wanted *Militant* reporters to take back a message to ordinary people in the countries where they live. "Tell them the NATO bombing of Zastava was aimed against us, and had nothing to do with getting rid of Milosevic," he said.

When Pavlovic, the union secretary, responded by saying, "Yes, we condemn the bombing, but that belongs to the past as we open up to Europe," a number of workers did not agree. "We won't forget or forgive," Jevric said.

Some of these workers defended the gains of the 1945 Yugoslav revolution, which defeated the German imperialist occupation and went on to abolish capitalist social relations and establish a workers state.

Jevric and Miladin Djorovic likened the military assault by Washington and subsequent economic war on Yugoslavia by the imperialist powers to what working people faced under the Nazis during World War II. They pointed to a massacre of 3,000 people by Hitler's troops in the Kragujevac area. The Partisan fighters defeated the Nazis and made a revolution for good rea-

son, Djorovic said.

These two workers also explained their adamant opposition to the demand by the imperialist-sponsored tribunal in The Hague that Milosevic be turned over for trial as a "war criminal"—a common view among the overwhelming majority of those interviewed by *Militant* reporters. "Only the people of Yugoslavia can try Milosevic for his crimes," Jevric said. Djorovic added that the tribunal in the Hague is used by Washington and other capitalist powers to "violate national sovereignty around the world."

The actions by the working class in Yugoslavia over the last month have opened up greater space for freer political exchanges of this kind.

'Transition government' set up in Serbia

Meanwhile, the new federal president of Yugoslavia, Kostunica, solidified a deal with the former ruling Socialist Party for a transition government in Serbia. On October 24, the parliament of the Republic of Serbia approved the dissolution of the existing regime in the republic—which along with Montenegro comprises the current Yugoslavia—and its replacement with a transition government until new local elections can be held in December. This transition government is composed of representatives of the Socialist Party, DOS, and Serbian Renewal Movement. The resolution ap-

Continued on Page 14

Help fund the 'Militant' reporting team in Yugoslavia

Contributions to help fund the *Militant* reporting trip to Yugoslavia are needed now. They can be made to the *Militant/Perspectiva Mundial* Fund; checks can be made out to the *Militant* (see page 4 report).

Yugoslavia's coal, went on strike September 29. They demanded the resignation of Milosevic and occupied the pits to make their case. After the downfall of the hated regime they maintained the strike committee, presenting demands for a new contract, and successfully pressed for the removal of mine management.

After giving a blow-by-blow account of the strike and subsequent miners' actions, Jovanovic pointed out that most property in Yugoslavia remains state property. "The mines are ours," he said.

Responding to nervous comments in the big-business press abroad about the actions by workers in Yugoslavia since October 5, Jovanovic commented, "They *should* be afraid of us. If foreign investors get here and try to do what they do to miners in other countries they'll face the same thing we did to Milosevic." Jovanovic then asked *Militant* reporters to join him for a fact-finding tour of the Kolubara mines later in the week.

Discussion with workers at Zastava plant

A similar process is unfolding in other parts of the country, with local peculiarities.

Production at the huge Zastava plant in Kragujevac, about 100 miles south of Belgrade in central Serbia, has barely resumed since the U.S.-NATO bombing last

A meeting for the 'Militant' and 'Perspectiva Mundial' Fund

Hear Argiris Malapanis

After the toppling of the Milosevic regime: Working people in Yugoslavia extend their political space

Malapanis is a member of a team of worker-correspondents for the 'Militant' who have gone to Yugoslavia to meet workers, farmers, students, and others who helped lead the revolt that toppled the regime of Slobodan Milosevic.

Marina Room, Fort Mason San Francisco, Saturday, November 11

6:00 p.m. reception, 7:00 p.m. program,
Call (415) 584-2135 for more information

How Yugoslav toilers overturned capitalism

The following account of the Yugoslav revolution is an excerpt from the Pathfinder book *The Truth about Yugoslavia*, by George Fyson, Argiris Malapanis, and Jonathan Silberman. Today, the deep-going impact of this revolution continues to shape the social consciousness and attitudes of millions of workers and farmers in Yugoslavia, including how many, despite the chauvinism fostered by the ruling middle-class strata, identify themselves more as Yugoslavs than as Serbs, Croats, Muslims, Slovenes, or other national groups. Copyright © 1993 by Pathfinder Press; reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

The Yugoslav revolution is one of the historic conquests of the working class, just like the Russian revolution of 1917, the Chinese revolution of 1949, and the Cuban revolution of 1959. It was a mighty "festival of the oppressed," as Lenin described the Bolshevik-led October revolution in Russia. The revolutionary example set by the toilers in Russia and elsewhere in the old tsarist empire inspired generations of working-class leaders in Yugoslavia.

Yugoslavia was an economically backward country at the time of the revolution. Indeed the Balkans, which comprise Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, and Yugoslavia, were the most backward part of Europe. The region accounted for just 2.5 percent of European industrial production, most of this closely connected with agriculture—milling, wine-pressing, and manufacture of vegetable oils. About 80 percent of the Yugoslav population of 16 million were peasants, 1 million of whom were landless and worked as migratory, seasonal farm workers.

The land was in the hands of a few large landowners, and the peasantry was oppressed by the hangovers of semifeudal conditions onto which the harshest of capitalist social relations had been grafted. Agricultural taxes in the Balkans were among the highest in the world. The mortgage and loan debts of the peasants were enormous. Interest rates for seed and tools in the region ran up to 80 percent. In some areas the peasants were still engaged in subsistence farming. The modern working class numbered at most 100,000.

Yugoslavia was dominated by foreign capital, first British and French, and then by growing German interests in the 1920s and 1930s. It was effectively a semicolony of these European imperialist powers, with its economic and social development held back in their interests.

Yugoslavia was united as a country at the end of World War I with the coming together of six republics under the Serbian monarchy. The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, established in 1918, took the name Yugoslavia in 1929. When World War II opened, there was little or no all-Yugoslav industrial infrastructure. Within this framework, the north and west were relatively more modern and advanced, the south more backward.

The legacy of colonial domination by the "European" Austro-Hungarian Empire or by the "Asian" Ottoman Empire—as the bourgeois press insists on designating these pow-

ers—left its mark in the form of different languages and alphabets, ethnic origins, and religions. Serbia, home of the oppressive Karageorgevich monarchy, dominated Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Slovenia, and Vojvodina. National oppression was enshrined in law. There was no separation between the state and the church—between the state and the hierarchy of the Serbian-based Orthodox Church of Yugoslavia, that is.

The workers' movement was weak, beset by both the objective backwardness of the country and harsh repression. Many political oppositionists were imprisoned; some were executed.

Impact of 1917 Bolshevik revolution

Despite the weakness of the organized Communist Party and workers' movement, the 1917 Russian revolution had great prestige there. Yugoslav peasants and youth were attracted by the revolution's agrarian reform and by its broader democratic and social conquests. In the brief democratic interlude following the country's formation after World War I, the Communist Party grew rapidly. By 1920 it had 60,000 members and in the elections of that year the party came in third, winning 12 percent of the vote. But a period of severe repression followed.

By the outbreak of World War II, the Communist Party—which was underground or semilegal from 1921 onward, and whose leadership spent many years out of the country—numbered about 12,000, with 30,000 in the Communist youth organization. It had also gone through a qualitative political transformation through its adherence to the course of the Stalin-led Communist International.

This was the general condition of Yugoslavia at the outbreak of World War II. In April 1941 the Axis powers invaded—primarily German troops, assisted by Italian, Bulgarian, and Hungarian forces. The Axis occupation won the support of the Yugoslav landowners and capitalists in their majority; the rise of German imperialist domination had ensured their pro-Berlin orientation.

Prior to the Axis invasion, the Karageorgevich monarchy had concluded an agreement with Hitler. Forces within the army officer corps then ousted the government in a coup. The king fled, along with the "royal purse." The new government, which proclaimed neutrality, organized no resistance to the Axis forces that soon crossed its borders. After eleven days, including the horrific bombing of Belgrade (which ranks alongside the devastation of Coventry and Dresden), the German occupation was complete.

In the Croatian capital of Zagreb a fascist regime under nationalist colors, the Ustashi, was established. It actively collaborated with the occupation forces, carrying out mass killings of Gypsies, Jews, and Serbs.

The Serbian monarchy set up shop in Britain. Pro-monarchy forces, known as Chetniks, established a guerrilla operation under the royalist general Draza Mihailovic. They received financial and military aid from the Allied powers—the governments of Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union.

The principal opposition to the occupy-



Yugoslav Partisans in 1942. Partisan movement was national liberation army that united workers and peasants of all nationalities to defeat Nazi occupation force in World War II. Yugoslav revolution was a "mighty festival of the oppressed."

ing forces was the armed Partisans. Led by the Yugoslav Communist Party, the Partisan movement was a national liberation army. It was originally set up to harass the occupying forces, not to launch an insurrectionary struggle. This was in line with dictates from the Stalin regime in Moscow, which had recognized the occupation administration and was looking to avert a German invasion of the Soviet Union.

The Yugoslav party, now headed by the Croatian-born Josip Broz Tito, followed Moscow's instructions, establishing small armed units at first. It had no intention then to take power, nor any idea that within four years it would be in power.

Partisans resist imperialist occupation

But the armed resistance to both the homegrown and occupying fascist forces proved tremendously popular, and the peasant masses pressed for broader social goals. Following the German invasion of the Soviet Union, Stalin gave the go-ahead to the Partisans to organize a military struggle, calling on them to act jointly with Mihailovic's Chetniks and all forces opposed to the occupation.

Workers and peasants poured into the ranks of the Partisans, who waged a courageous struggle that tied down thirty-three Axis divisions—some 500,000 troops. The fight was bitter and hard: nearly two million Yugoslavs, more than a tenth of the population, died in the war.

In the course of the successful struggle, popular committees were elected to administer liberated zones, organizing education, health care, and munitions production. Peasants seized the land of landowners who had fled or collaborated with the occupying armies. As liberated zones became linked, a newspaper began to be published three times a week, a railway system was organized, and a mail system established. In November 1942 a broad national body based on elected representatives of the popular committees was established—the Anti-Fascist Council of People's Liberation, or AVNOJ (pronounced Avnoj).

A year later, in November 1943, AVNOJ proclaimed a provisional government and announced that the king could not return. At the same time, at the meeting of U.S. president Franklin Roosevelt, British prime minister Winston Churchill, and Soviet leader Joseph Stalin in Tehran, the Allied powers first agreed that influence in post-war Yugoslavia would be shared equally between the imperialist allies and Moscow.

By late 1942 the Partisans numbered 150,000. By the end of 1943 they had grown to 300,000, and by the end of the war they were effectively a full-fledged army numbering 800,000.

The Partisans took on the character of a mass social movement. Without aid from any outside source, the movement won working people from every nationality. This included substantial recruitment of prisoners of war and deserters from the German, Italian, Bulgarian, and Hungarian armies, a recruitment policy that became the subject of sharp criticism from Moscow.

The Partisans took steps to mobilize

women in the struggle, organizing two national conferences for this purpose. The predominance of young fighters was reflected in the peasants' description of the armed Partisan detachments as "the youth."

The big majority of fighters were peasants, including in the Proletarian Brigades, which formed the backbone of the Partisan army. Many workers from the cities joined the brigades and other Partisan units as well. The Proletarian Brigades were the first fighting units that were not restricted to operations in a particular region.

Unite toilers from every nationality

In uniting the toilers from every nationality behind the antifascist struggle, the Partisans advanced a program that struck at the heart of national privilege and went a long way to overcoming national enmities. It called for equality and mutual respect for all nationalities and opposed chauvinism and the domination of one nation over others.

The Partisans combined this with the objective of implementing social and economic advances in the interests of working people. They also looked beyond old "Yugoslavia" and presented the perspective of a broader Balkan federation.

The success of this approach in uniting working people in the Partisan movement confirmed in life that defense of national rights and opposition to national privilege are not the path toward nationalism, but the only road to unite the working class in the internationalist fight for socialism.

This stance allowed the Partisans to win over masses of peasants and workers from the murderous Croatian fascists and Serbian nationalist forces. In the town of Foca in Bosnia, for example, Ustashi forces in May 1941 killed all residents of Serbian origin who had not fled. Six months later a Partisan unit, made up of toilers of Serbian and Croatian nationality, seized the city. They tried and executed Ustashi members who were guilty of these crimes but did not take action against anyone on the basis of their nationality. Then the capitalist-led Chetniks defeated the Partisans and captured the town. They, in turn, killed everyone of Croatian origin they could round up.

When the "Big Three"—London, Washington, and the Stalin regime in the Soviet Union—demanded the restoration of the monarchy at the end of the war, Tito agreed in early 1945 to a joint government responsible to a regency—a representative of the crown—whose members would be approved by the national committee of the AVNOJ. The AVNOJ would have full legislative powers until a constituent assembly convened to make final decisions. A joint government of Tito and Ivan Subasic, prime minister of the royal government-in-exile in London, was established in March 1945.

At the same time, the revolutionary mobilization by the Partisans encroached on capitalist property relations more and more. A Partisan decree of November 24, 1944, ordered the confiscation of the property of occupiers, including extensive German capital, and their Yugoslav collaborators. This amounted to 80 percent of industry, most

Continued on Page 12

for further reading

In *New International* no. 11

- Two programmatic documents of the Socialist Workers Party:

U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War by Jack Barnes and

The Communist Strategy of Party Building Today by Mary-Alice Waters

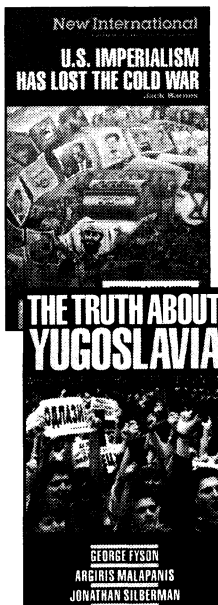
- **Socialism: A Viable Option** by José Ramón Balaguer
- **Young Socialists Manifesto**

In English, French, and Spanish \$14.00

The Truth about Yugoslavia

George Fyson, Argiris Malapanis, and Jonathan Silberman

Examines the roots of the conflict in Yugoslavia, where Washington and its imperialist rivals in Europe are intervening militarily with occupation troops, with the ultimate aim of reimposing capitalist relations. \$9.95



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.

Coal barons' greed unleashes pollution disaster in Kentucky

Continued from front page

hours, preventing a much larger catastrophe.

Martin County Coal Corp., is a subsidiary of the infamous union-busting outfit, A. T. Massey, which defeated a strike by the United Mine Workers of America in the mid-1980s. The pond that broke was filled with a molasses-like slurry that was formed by washing coal at the nearby preparation plant. In addition to coal dust, the slurry contains clay; heavy metals such as arsenic, mercury, lead, copper, and chromium; and other chemicals used in the preparation process.

In 1994 leaks were discovered in the impoundment. The safeguards Massey put in place, reinforced seals on old workings, proved disastrously inadequate. The pond was inspected as recently as September 22 of this year by Mine Health and Safety Administration (MSHA) inspectors who found no cause for concern. MSHA is reviewing its inspection procedures.

Residents of the area say that if the gooey mixture had gone into one stream instead of two, the spill might have been akin to the 1972 Buffalo Creek disaster in West Virginia that killed 125 people and destroyed as many as 500 homes when a coal-holding pond broke over the top of a hollow, sending down a tidal wave over nearby residents. In the Buffalo Creek disaster only half the volume of black water was unleashed as in this most recent incident.

Following two smaller breaks in coal slurry ponds in Virginia in 1997, resulting in the death of a woman inside her home, MSHA undertook to check and categorize the hazards posed by existing ponds. The Martin County Coal pond was regarded as posing a moderate threat. Seven others in Kentucky were classified as posing a high risk.

Many left homeless

While no one was killed in the recent Kentucky catastrophe, many people have been left homeless and there has been considerable property damage. Area health officials estimate that the spill has affected 4,500 people in 1,500 residences along the river, said Maleva Chamberlain, a spokeswoman for the state Division of Water. Gil Lawson of the state Cabinet for Health Services said 27,623 people were without water in two water systems in Louisa and Martin County.

Large numbers of fish and other aquatic life have been killed. Other wildlife dependent on the rivers and streams has also been adversely affected. Residents have told reporters for the major dailies in Kentucky that they have seen many fewer deer in the

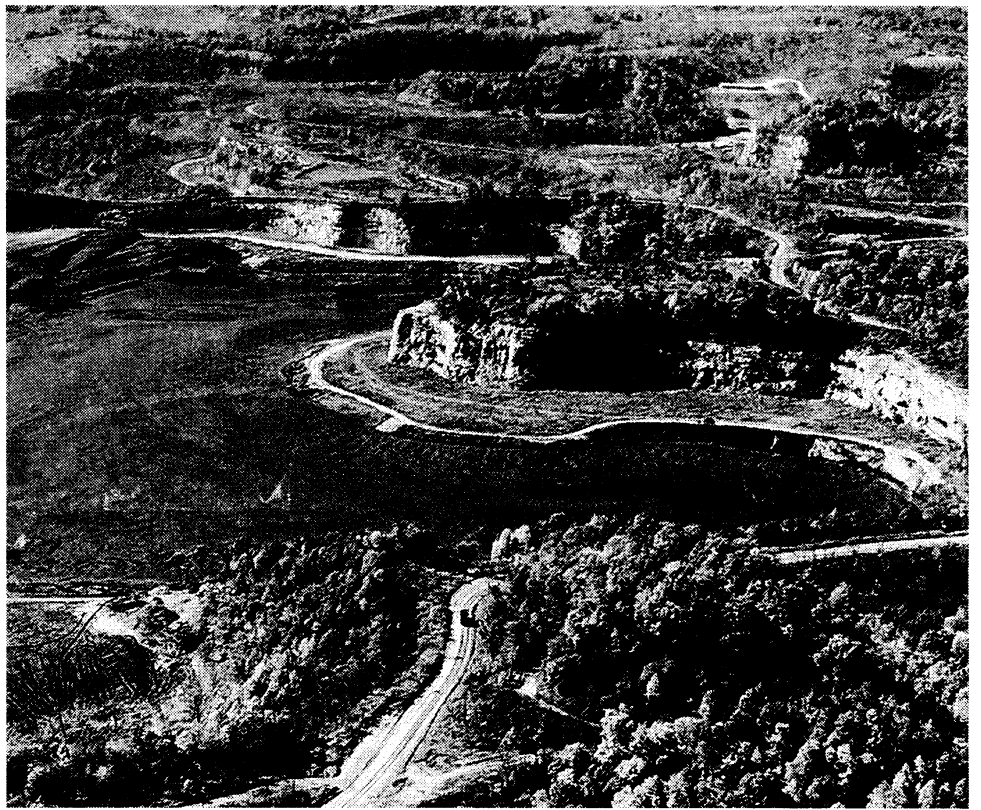
area, for example.

Some early estimates are that cleanup efforts will cost nearly \$60 million. Initially, state and federal officials announced the sludge plume had broken into the Ohio River on October 17. But rising river waters resulting from heavy rains upstream slowed the migration of the sludge downstream for several days. As the Ohio's waters receded it moved into the Ohio again.

Ashland, Kentucky, which draws its water supply from the Ohio River through a pipe two and a half miles from the confluence of the Ohio and Big Sandy rivers, is the first sizable town that could be affected. As of this writing, city officials are hoping river currents will take the pollution to the Ohio side of the river, bypassing their inlet pipe. Observers reported October 21 by the time the sludge plume had migrated three miles downstream in the Ohio River it was no longer visibly dispersing the pollution into the river.

Fred Stroud, an on-site coordinator for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, estimated the cleanup could take four or five months.

Dan Kash, who is active with the Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition, told the Lexington, Kentucky, *Herald-Leader* the cleanup will require far more equipment than what the company has so far deployed. Kash, who is also a former inspector with



Mine slurry pond in Kentucky that broke, sending 250 million gallons of water tainted with coal dust and toxic chemicals into water streams in the area. The spill has affected thousands of people in the region, leaving many homeless.

the Kentucky Department for Environmental Protection, explained, "That's laughable, there's no way they ever can put a dent in it with what they're using."

More such disasters are waiting to happen. There are 653 containment ponds like this one that exist in the United States. Some 220 are built over underground mining operations, posing a threat to miners working underground, to nearby communities, to the environment, or all three.

Nearly 60 of these are in Kentucky. Such

impoundments are an environmental time-bomb waiting to explode. The billionaires who own the coal companies should be held liable and foot the bill for cleaning up the mess and for doing whatever it takes to end the danger posed by these ponds to coal miners, mining towns, as well as farmers and workers downstream.

J. Rose is a meat packer in the St. Louis area and a former coal miner in southern Illinois.

Mushroom workers protest attacks on union

BY JOHN STUDER

PHILADELPHIA—One hundred mushroom workers and their supporters rallied outside City Hall here October 16. They protested efforts by the growers to attack their union, the Union of Agricultural and Mushroom Workers.

Inside the building the Pennsylvania Supreme Court was hearing arguments on a legal move by Vlastic Farms, a unionized grower purchased by Money's Mushrooms of Canada, to try to strip all mushroom workers in this state of the right to organize under the Pennsylvania Labor Relations Act.

In another effort to break the union, Money's announced shortly before the court hearing that it was closing the unionized mushroom picking part its Pennsylvania plant, while keeping open the nonunion packaging department. They admit they will be getting their mushrooms from Kaolin Mushroom Farms, another plant where the employers are attacking the union, and from another company, Giorgi, but claim

their move is for financial reasons, not to bust the union.

Demonstrators at the bilingual rally were welcomed by Luis Tlaseca, president of the union's Kaolin local, and Antonio Gutierrez, president of the Vlastic local. Unionists who expressed their solidarity at the rally were Tom Cronin, president of District Council 47 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, which represents city workers; John Myerson of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1776; John Braxton from Jobs with Justice, and a representative of the Screen Actors Guild, which has been on strike against the producers of television commercials.

"Some of the justices seemed to like the idea that workers making anything you can eat shouldn't be able to organize," Art Reed, the lawyer representing the mushroom workers, told the crowd. He added, "Mushrooms are a half-billion dollar industry in Pennsylvania, employing thousands of workers."

Tlaseca noted that most of the mushroom workers are immigrants, mostly from

Mexico and Central America. "But we deserve the right to unionize and fight for a decent life like everybody else," he said.

Demonstrators marched around City Hall. The rally concluded with testimony from mushroom workers describing the conditions in area plants.

Workers meet MST leader of Brazil

After the rally, Tlaseca convened a meeting in Spanish of mushroom workers to hear from Gilmar Mauro, a leader of the Movement of Landless Rural Workers (MST) of Brazil, who was on a two-week visit in the United States and had been invited to the rally by leaders of the mushroom workers.

Mauro described the conditions facing landless peasants in Brazil and the efforts of the MST to mobilize to win land, legal rights, and political freedoms. He explained that they had recently conducted a national plebiscite, called the "Cry of the Excluded," where more than 6 million people cast ballots at voting sites set up by the MST in favor of canceling Brazil's foreign and national debt.

Mauro expressed his solidarity with the mushroom workers, and presented them with resolutions and other documents adopted at the last national convention of the MST. After exchanging information on how to remain in contact, the mushroom workers said they would follow the MST's campaigns and support their brothers and sisters in Brazil.

New Mexico miners fight bosses' harassment

BY JACK PARKER

TSE BONITO, New Mexico—"The company has forced us to take two of our grievances to arbitration," Lawrence Oliver, president of United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) Local 1332 at the McKinley coal mine here, said in an interview.

Oliver was describing the current stage of the union's fight against the Pittsburg and Midway (P&M) bosses' attempts to harass and intimidate workers following the UMWA's successful strike against the company this summer.

UMWA locals 1332 at McKinley and 1307 in Kemmerer, Wyoming, waged three-month strikes against P&M, a subsidiary of oil giant Chevron. The union beat back the bosses demands to impose 12-hour workdays and gut company-funded health-care programs.

This was an especially important victory at McKinley, a mine on the Navajo reservation with an overwhelming Native American workforce. Here the company tried to get workers to use Indian Health Services, a federal program available to the Navajos, instead of the company's fully funded plan.

"We had a discharge recently," Oliver

said, describing the most serious recent attempt by the employer to intimidate union members. "The company implemented a 'zero tolerance' physical contact policy, and one of our members—a drag line operator—was fired because he grabbed another guy when he was kidding."

"Two days after that, a foreman poked a miner in the chest with his finger after he told him to get off a dozer that another foreman had told him to run," Oliver said. "Only this time, management says it was okay because the foreman says he was kidding. The guy who was poked in the chest doesn't think so."

"Another thing they are doing is trying to change the absentee policy," Oliver added. "For years, those on day shift who had a doctor's or dentist appointment or some other personal matter they had to attend to could leave work an hour or two early to take care of it. Now the company is saying you have to take off a whole day."

"P&M is refusing to pay both [UMWA 1332 recording secretary] Bob Brown's and my signing bonuses," Oliver explained. "This is a clear violation of what we voted for, which says, 'Each employee who is actively working during the first pay period following ratification of the agreement

shall receive a return-to-work payment of \$1,000.'"

When Oliver and Brown returned following the walkout, they went on union business, something that both the UMWA and the company had agreed to. "We had to wrap up a few things after the strike, like getting out the last strike paychecks and dealing with local issues," Oliver explained. "We met with management and worked out vacation scheduling, staggering the crews for the dragline, and the bids that were up."

"The company claims that since we weren't technically at work they don't owe us our money," Oliver said. "Our argument is that anybody employed is 'actively working.'"

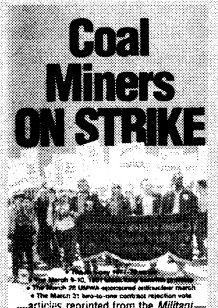
Both Oliver and Brown were confident the union would beat back all of these attacks. "We came out of the strike much stronger," Brown explained. "We are more united than ever and we are not going to let the company get away with any of this."

The UMWA members continue to work hard to make the mine a safe work environment. "MSHA inspectors recently came to McKinley," Oliver said, referring to the Mine Safety and Health Administration. "The company was given 30 citations including 13 that were considered significant."

for further reading...

Coal Miners on Strike

Articles on:
the 111-day
1977-78 strike,
the 1981 strike
and the contract
rejection vote, the
United Mine
Workers of
America and the
fight against
nuclear power, the
fight for health
benefits and com-
pensation to black lung victims, and
more \$5



Available from bookstores,
including those listed on page 12

Palestinians stand up to Israeli repression

Continued from front page

Bank and Gaza. In the week that has followed the cease-fire, the number of Palestinians killed has risen to more than 120, while thousands more have been wounded by Israeli troops. In contrast, eight Israelis have died so far.

Israeli troops fired three tank shells into a Palestinian refugee camp in the West Bank October 24, claiming they had come under fire. The same day they destroyed an olive grove in the Gaza Strip, alleging that the trees had provided cover to Palestinian fighters.

The Israeli forces maintain 24-hour curfews in many Palestinian areas. In the West Bank city of Hebron soldiers enforce a rigorous curfew, confining Palestinians to their houses for all but a few hours in the week. Zionist settlers, on the other hand, are free to go about their business.

Barak calls negotiations for new gov't

Seeking to strengthen his position at home, Barak has engaged in talks with Ariel Sharon, leader of the rightist Likud Party, with the aim of forming a coalition government. Barak called for a "timeout" in negotiations with the Palestinian representatives at the urging of Sharon, who publicly opposes the 1993 Oslo accord on limited Palestinian autonomy, and who has criticized Barak for offering too many concessions in negotiations earlier this year.

Some prominent political Israeli figures have expressed concern about aspects of Barak's rightward shift, while uttering not a word against the ongoing military repression. Foreign Minister Shlomo Ben-Ami opposed Barak's "time-out." Other cabinet ministers have expressed unease with his overtures to Sharon, including Regional Cooperation Minister Shimon Peres. Former prime minister Peres is worried that such moves will only heighten the political volatility in the region.

Barak has publicly ordered government officials to draw up a plan for "unilateral separation" from the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Palestine National Authority information minister, Abed Rabbo, termed Barak's announcement "an apartheid plan."

"In its narrowest form separation would be a kind of extended border closure, in which the Palestinian areas would be sealed off, checkpoints reinforced and the movement of goods and labor severely restricted," wrote Deborah Sontag in the October 22 *New York Times*.

Israel's armed forces clamped such a "closure" on areas under the control of the Palestinian Authority at the beginning of October. The measures have cut the number of Palestinians who cross daily into Israel for work from 120,000—an estimated two-thirds of whom lack official documents—to 25,000.

Tel Aviv treats the West Bank and Gaza Strip as reserves of cheap labor power. Israel's capitalist rulers, despite some moves to reduce their dependence on Palestinian labor by replacing it at similar wages with newer layers of Jewish immigrants, and by shifting some of their operations to other countries in the Middle East, continue to draw in labor power through the normal

functioning of the capitalist economy.

On October 21 and 22, government representatives gathered at a summit meeting of the Arab League criticized "the Israeli practices of aggression and its siege of the Palestinian people," pledged \$1 billion in aid to the Palestinian National Authority, and suspended diplomatic contacts between member states and Tel Aviv. The meeting stopped short of breaking off ties with the Israeli government, which the governments of Egypt and Jordan had established in 1977 and 1994, respectively, easing the diplomatic isolation of the Zionist regime.

Mass demonstrations have been organized in countries throughout the region in support of the Palestinian struggle and against Israeli brutality. While different governments in the Middle East have generally allowed these mobilizations, the capitalist and landlord layers they represent fear the impact of the struggle of the Palestinians on workers and peasants within their own borders.

On October 24, Jordanian police used water cannon, clubs, and tear gas to break up a march of 10,000 that approached the country's border with Israel. Palestinians, who make up more than half the population, were in the front lines of the action.

On the day the Arab League convened its summit, the United Nations General Assembly condemned Tel Aviv's "excessive use of force." The representatives of 92 governments supported the resolution, while five voted against it. One of the five, U.S. ambassador Richard Holbrooke, sanctimoniously called the motion a "resolution that would undermine peace efforts."

At the other end of the Persian Gulf, Washington has sent 3,000 military and ci-



Militant/Robin Mace

October 13 demonstration in New York protesting Israeli assault on Palestinian people

vilian personnel to the Middle East as part of "Task Force Determined Response" to investigate the explosion that hit the *USS Cole* October 12 in Aden, Yemen. U.S. officials and the big-business media have attributed the blast to "Islamic militants," speculating that it was directed by Saudi exile Osama Bin Laden, whom they also accuse of organizing the 1998 bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania.

Washington is moving to prosecute several individuals it has arrested in connec-

tion with the 1998 incidents. On October 20 Ali Mohamed, a former intelligence officer in the Egyptian armed forces who spent three years assigned to a Special Forces unit of the U.S. army, pleaded guilty to involvement in the Kenya bombing. After arranging a plea bargain with the prosecutor, he asserted in a federal court in Manhattan that Bin Laden directed the bombings. U.S. officials hope to use Mohamed's testimony against five others they have dragged into U.S. courts.

How Yugoslav toilers overturned capitalism

Continued from Page 10

banks, and almost all large commercial enterprises. The subsequent nationalization law of December 1946 largely registered an already existing fact.

The new government also enacted a massive land reform in August 1945. It confiscated the property of the great landowners without compensation and put 95 percent of cultivated land into the hands of working peasants.

The government instituted steps toward economic planning, including a state monopoly of foreign trade. It took measures that during the initial years of the revolution substantially narrowed the gap between

different parts of the country.

This increasingly anticapitalist course made clear that Subasic and the four other representatives of the capitalists and landed nobility had no real sway in the government. It was acting as a workers' and peasants' government on the momentum of the revolutionary struggle. Power was in the hands of the Communist Party, the leading force in the AVNOJ.

The capitalist figures resigned over the course of 1945, including Subasic. In the fall of 1945, the monarchy was abolished—implementing the AVNOJ decision of two years earlier—and the capitalist parties boy-

cotted the November 11 elections to the constituent assembly because they knew they would be heavily defeated. The new Federal People's Republic was installed on November 29 and the new constitution adopted on January 31, 1946.

In the course of implementing these anti-capitalist measures, and propelled by the mobilizations of workers and peasants that went along with them, a workers' state was established in Yugoslavia—a state based on the workers' successful conquest of state property in the basic means of production, a thoroughgoing land reform, economic planning, and a state monopoly of foreign trade.

— IF YOU LIKE THIS PAPER, LOOK US UP —

Where to find Pathfinder books and distributors of the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, *New International*, *Nouvelle Internationale*, *Nueva Internacional* and *Ny International*.

UNITED STATES

ALABAMA: Birmingham: 2232 Magnolia Ave. Zip: 35205. Tel: (205) 323-3079. E-mail: 73712.3561@compuserve.com

CALIFORNIA: Los Angeles: 2546 W. Pico Blvd. Zip: 90006. Tel: (213) 380-9460. E-mail: 74642.326@compuserve.com
San Francisco: 3926 Mission St. Zip: 94112. Tel: (415) 584-2135. E-mail: 75604.556@compuserve.com

FLORIDA: Miami: 4582 N.E. 2nd Ave. Zip: 33137. Tel: (305) 573-3355. E-mail: Pathmiami@yahoo.com

GEORGIA: Atlanta: 465 Boulevard, Suite 214. Zip: 30312. Tel: (404) 622-8917. E-mail: atlpathfinder@cs.com

ILLINOIS: Chicago: 1212 N. Ashland Suite 201. Zip: 60622. Tel: (773) 342-1780. E-mail: 104077.511@compuserve.com

IOWA: Des Moines: 3720 6th Ave. Zip: 50313. Tel: (515) 288-2970. E-mail: 104107.1412@compuserve.com

MASSACHUSETTS: Boston: 683 Washington St. Mailing address: P.O. Box 702. Zip: 02124. Tel: (617) 282-2254. E-mail: 103426.3430@compuserve.com

MICHIGAN: Detroit: P.O. Box 441580 Zip: 48244. Tel: (313) 875-0100. E-mail: 104127.3505@compuserve.com

MINNESOTA: St. Paul: 1569 Sherburne Ave. W., St. Paul. Zip: 55104. Tel: (651) 644-6325. E-mail: TC6446325@cs.com

MISSOURI: St. Louis: Box 19166, 2910 Meramec Street. Zip: 63118. Tel: (314) 924-2500. E-mail: stlsocialistworkers@yahoo.com

NEW JERSEY: Newark: 221 Bergen St., Room #3. Zip: 07103. Mailing address: Riverfront Plaza, P.O. Box 200117. Zip: 07102-0302. Tel: (973) 643-3341. E-mail: swpnnewark@usa.net

NEW YORK: Brooklyn: 1068 Fulton St., 3rd floor. Mailing address: PMB 197, 655 Fulton St. Zip: 11217. Tel: (718) 398-7850. E-mail: swpbrooklyn@yahoo.com
Garment District: 545 8th Ave. Mailing address: P.O. Box 30. Zip: 10018. Tel: (212) 695-7358. E-mail: nygd@usa.net; **Upper Manhattan:** 540 W. 165 St. Zip: 10032. Tel: (212) 740-4611. E-mail: swpuptown@usa.net; **Pathfinder Mural Bookstore:** 67 Charles St. Zip: 10014. Tel: (212) 366-1973.

OHIO: Cleveland: 7535 Broadway. Zip: 44105. * Tel: (216) 641-9405. E-mail: 103253.1111@compuserve.com

PENNSYLVANIA: Philadelphia: 711 E. Passyunk Ave. (Two blocks south of South St. at 5th St.). Zip: 19147. Tel: (215) 627-1237. E-mail: PhiladelphiaSWP@yahoo.com
Pittsburgh: 1003 E. Carson St. Zip: 15203. Tel: (412) 381-9785. E-mail: 103122.720@compuserve.com

TEXAS: Houston: 619 West 8th St. Zip: 77007. Tel: (713) 869-6550. E-mail: 102527.2271@compuserve.com

WASHINGTON, D.C.: 3541 14th St. N.W. Zip: 20010. Tel: (202) 722-6221. E-mail: 75407.3345@compuserve.com

WASHINGTON: Seattle: 126 SW 148th Street PMB #C100-189. Burien. Zip: 98166-0996. Tel: (206) 323-1755. E-mail: 74461.2544@compuserve.com

AUSTRALIA

Sydney: 1st Flr, 176 Redfern St., Redfern NSW 2016. Mailing address: P.O. Box K879,

Haymarket Post Office, NSW 1240. Tel: 02-9690-1533.

E-mail: 106450.2216@compuserve.com

BRITAIN

London: 47 The Cut. Postal code: SE1 8LL. Tel: 020-7928-7993.

E-mail: 101515.2702@compuserve.com

CANADA

Montreal: 4613 St. Laurent. Postal code: H2T 1R2. Tel: (514) 284-7369. E-mail: 104614.2606@compuserve.com

Toronto: 2761 Dundas St., Postal code: M6P 1Y4. Tel: (416) 767-3705. E-mail: milpathtoronto@cs.com

Vancouver: #202D-4806 Main St. Postal code: V5V 3R8. Tel: (604) 872-8343. E-mail: clvancouver@cs.com

FRANCE

Paris: Centre MBE 175, 23 rue Lecourbe. Postal code: 75015. Tel: (01) 47-26-58-21. E-mail: 73504.442@compuserve.com

ICELAND

Reykjavik: Klapparstíg 26. Mailing address: P. Box 0233, IS 121 Reykjavik. Tel: 552 5502. E-mail: milpth@mmedia.is

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland: La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Road. Postal address: P.O. Box 3025. Tel: (9) 379-3075.

E-mail: milpath.auckland@actrix.gen.nz

Christchurch: Gloucester Arcade, 129 Gloucester St. Postal address: P.O. Box 13-969. Tel: (3) 365-6055.

E-mail: pathfinder.militant@paradise.net.nz

SWEDEN

Stockholm: Vikingagatan 10 (T-bana St Eriksplan). Postal code: S-113 42. Tel: (08) 31 69 33. E-mail: 100416.2362@compuserve.com

— MILITANT LABOR FORUMS —

NEW YORK

Upper Manhattan

Defend Bilingual Education. Speaker: Bill Estrada, Socialist Workers Party and member of the United Food and Commercial Workers union. Fri., Nov. 10, 7:30 p.m. 540 W. 165 St. (Corner of 165 St. and St. Nicholas). Donation: \$4. Translation into Spanish. Tel: (212) 740-4611.

TEXAS

Houston

Hear the Socialist Alternative in the 2000 Elections. Speakers: David Ferguson for Congress 18th C.D., Dean Cook for Congress 22nd C.D., Lea Sherman for U.S. Senate. Sun., Nov. 5, 6:00 p.m. Reception: 5:00 p.m. 619 West 8th St. Tel: (713) 869-6550.

BRITAIN

London

Hatfield Rail Crash again Shows Bosses Put Profits before Safety. Fri., Nov. 3, 7:00 p.m. 47, The Cut. Donation: £2. Tel: 020-7928-7993.

U.S. closed doors on Jews during Nazi terror

Printed below are excerpts from *Socialists and the Fight Against Anti-Semitism—An Answer to the B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League* by Peter Seidman. Copyright © 1973 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

BY PETER SEIDMAN

Following World War I German capitalism faced unparalleled economic crisis. Lacking investment funds and squeezed out of foreign markets, the economy reeled from bouts of intensive inflation to prolonged recession and massive unemployment.

This produced a tremendous radicalization of the powerful and well-organized working class. Ultimately, in order to maintain its profits, a section of the ruling class chose a collision course with the workers aimed at breaking the backs of their unions and political parties.

The mass movement of small shopkeepers, professionals, and other middle class and lumpen elements crazed by the effects of the economic crisis and welded together by Hitler behind his fascist National Socialist Party became a weapon of big capital against the workers movement.

Anti-Semitism, along with anti-Communism, was part of the ideological glue used to hold the Nazi movement together and to direct its fury against the Jews and the workers. In this way, and given the failure of the Communist and Socialist parties of Ger-

venberg 12, 1938, the German government imposed a collective fine of approximately \$400,000,000 (one billion marks) upon German Jews as "money atonement" for the death of Vom Rath, Grynspan's victim.

During this time, anti-Semitic regimes were also bearing down on the 725,000 Jews in Hungary, the 900,000 Jews in Rumania, and the 3.3 million Jews in Poland. With the conquest by German imperialism of Austria (with 200,000 Jews) and Czechoslovakia (with 350,000 Jews), the anti-Jewish terror threatened to engulf all of Europe.

In the wake of this mounting Nazi repression, refuge in other countries became a matter of life and death for hundreds of thousands of Jews and other fighters against fascism as well. By May 1939, for example, there were enough applications for U.S. entry visas on file in the U.S. consular offices in Germany, Austria, and Czechoslovakia to fill the existing U.S. immigration quotas for the next five years!

Washington bars entry for refugees

The Roosevelt administration, the upholder of the "liberal democratic values" so beloved by the B'nai B'rith, followed a consistent policy of barring entry to this country for these refugees, thereby condemning many of them to death. This policy of the U.S. government showed that any serious effort to save the victims of European anti-Semitism would require a fight *against* Roosevelt's administration, and not reliance *on* it.

The Socialist Appeal, a predecessor of *The Militant*, in an editorial that appeared on July 9, 1938, explained the reason why: "Capitalism in its death agony can no more solve the refugee problem than any of the other social problems clamoring for solution. The existence of these refugee hordes is in itself a symptom of its social decay and political reaction...."

"Revolutionary socialists must everywhere fight for unrestricted immigration into their countries, and especially for the right of asylum for all victims of reaction."

Following Hitler's march into Austria in March 1938, President Roosevelt announced plans for an international conference to aid refugees from Germany and Austria to be held at Evian, France. Roosevelt launched this conference with a statement about how the U.S. has always been a haven for the oppressed and a land of the free.

But in motivating the conference, he explained that no country that attended would be expected to raise its immigration quotas to solve the refugee crisis, that the U. S. would not raise its quota, and that all funds for projects of the conference would be raised from private agencies....

Zionist opposition to lifting quotas

In 1942, Rabbi Stephen Wise, the leading Zionist spokesman in the U. S., complained to his friend Felix Frankfurter, "I don't know whether I'm getting to be the J of Jude, but I find that a good part of my work is to explain to my fellow Jews why our government cannot do all the things asked or expected of it?"

As was pointed out above, the Roosevelt administration, far from aiding the masses of European refugees from Nazi terror, had in fact stood quietly by while hundreds of thousands of Jews and others were being murdered. Estimates as to the total number of refugees that were permitted to enter the U. S. between 1933 and 1945 vary from about 150,000 to a high of about 250,000. A very small number indeed compared to the millions of victims of fascism.

Why at this time did Rabbi Wise consider it his job "to explain to my fellow Jews why our government cannot do all the things asked or expected of it?"

Zionist and many leading non-Zionist Jewish organizations had different but complementary reasons for uncritically supporting the New Deal despite Roosevelt's murderous inaction during the refugee crisis. The Zionists had as a primary aim securing the backing of U. S. imperialism for a Jewish state in Palestine. Zionists in the U. S. followed the same strategy as their cothinkers in Europe, seeking to show how the founding of Israel would benefit imperialism's plans in the Middle East.

They felt that any struggle against New Deal immigration policies might interfere with Zionist attempts to woo U. S. support for their plans. Further, Zionists believed that rescue operations in general tended to divert resources from their efforts to estab-



Picket line organized by Socialist Workers Party at German consulate, New York, in 1938. SWP demanded that Washington "open the door" to refugees from Nazi terror.

lish an exclusive Jewish state in Palestine....

SWP campaigns to 'Open the Door'

The SWP viewed the campaign to demand that the U.S. admit the European refugees from Nazi terror as part of an overall struggle against the growth of a fascist movement here in the U.S.

The SWP argued that in order for such a struggle to be successful, it would have to be carried out in a massive way, uniting in action not only those who were already convinced radicals but much broader forces as well.

As a step toward launching such a campaign, all the arguments put forward by the fascists and right-wingers, as well as by many liberal Jewish and Zionist leaders, to discourage the masses from actions demanding changes in the immigration law had to be answered and refuted.

The *Socialist Appeal*, which reflected the views of the SWP, explained why the demand for opening the door to refugees should be supported by working people. It linked this demand to their struggles against unemployment, for the building of trade unions, and other issues of concern to the workers.

BOOK OF THE WEEK

many to provide effective leadership in the struggle against it, fascism served to turn the middle class victims of the capitalist crisis against the workers and the Jews, who were also victims, instead of against the real criminals—the capitalist ruling class.

When Hitler became chancellor of the German government in 1933, he transformed the anti-Semitic actions of the Nazi goon squads into official state policy against the 350,000 Jews of Germany.

By September 1935, the Nuremberg Laws were passed, which deprived all German Jews of their citizenship. German Jews were excluded from the 1936 Olympic games in Munich.

Nazi violence against Jews escalates

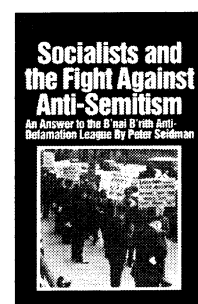
The Nazis unleashed a campaign of physical terror against Jews, making public announcements that their police chiefs could not be "responsible for the safety of enemies of the Reich." By 1933, the *New York Times* had carried descriptions of the prison camp at Dachau. That year, there was one estimate that said there were 80,000 prisoners in sixty-five camps throughout Germany.

Following the assassination of a Nazi ambassador in Paris by Herschel Grynszpan, the son of a Polish Jew expelled from Germany by the Nazis, the Nazis unleashed a pogrom against the German Jews on November 10, 1938—the infamous "Kristallnacht," the "Night of Broken Glass." This orgy of revenge for the death of the German diplomat included the burning of some 195 synagogues, the destruction of more than 800 Jewish-owned shops, and the looting of some 7,500 others.

Twenty thousand Jews were arrested and sent to concentration camps. And on No-

from Pathfinder Socialists and the Fight against Anti-Semitism

An Answer to the B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League
Peter Seidman



The real record of the fight to open U.S. borders to refugees from Hitler's terror. \$3.00

Available from bookstores, including those listed page 12.

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

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

November 7, 1975

BELLEVILLE, ILL.—In an extraordinary display of judicial vindictiveness and union busting, a local judge here jailed one-third of the teachers in the Cahokia, Illinois, school district for violating his antistrike injunction.

The wholesale arrests were ordered October 24 by Associate Circuit Judge Richard Goldenhersh, who signed warrants for 123 teachers who continued to picket Cahokia's thirteen schools despite his back-to-work order.

The Cahokia school district is a largely white rural area on the outskirts of East St. Louis.

On October 25, teachers marched en masse to surrender themselves at the county jail in Belleville, where they were arraigned and released on \$1,000 bond each.

That night 500 union members and supporters rallied outside the jail to protest the arrests. Support came from the East St. Louis Central Trades and Labor Council, meatcutters, steelworkers, ironworkers, and postal workers.

Already under arrest and held *without bail*—as though they were dangerous criminals—are the four top leaders of Cahokia Federation of Teachers Local 1272.

At the same time Judge Goldenhersh hit the union with a fine of \$4,000 plus \$1,000 per day for each day the strike continues.

Cahokia's 375 teachers and 5 nurses also represented by Local 1272, have been on strike since October 2. They are seeking wage increases of 6 and 9 percent in a two-year contract, along with improvements in pension and medical plans.

The harsh strikebreaking measures seem to have had little effect on the teachers' determination to hold out.

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

November 6, 1950

The attempted assassination of President Truman by Puerto Rican nationalists on Nov. 1 focused worldwide attention on the biggest uprising in the unhappy island of Puerto Rico since the United States grabbed it from Spain some fifty years ago.

Such acts of individual terrorism, of course, are futile and harmful methods of struggle against oppression. We Marxists have always opposed the substitution of violence against individuals by a few isolated conspirators for the organized action of the people.

Nevertheless, terrorists acts of this type are politically symptomatic. They are bred by desperate conditions which inspire desperate acts of resistance and protest. The case of the Puerto Rican nationalists is no exception.

The nationalist revolt in Puerto Rico is another uprising among the oppressed colonial people like those that have been sweeping Asia especially in the past five years. This time the revolt is in the U.S. State Department's own backyard.

The dailies are minimizing what has happened. But thousands of National Guard troops have been mobilized, planes, tanks, and artillery have been employed against the "strongholds" of the insurgents, and admittedly not less than 10 centers on the island are involved. From these indications alone it is the largest outbreak in Puerto Rico in all the years of U.S. rule.

Customarily the press carries little about Puerto Rico except items and advertisements depicting it as a "tourist's paradise." Actually Puerto Rico is a typical colony, differing little from the old European colonial hell holes of Asia and Africa.

Vote Socialist Workers!

"The Socialist Workers campaign is made up of workers, farmers, and youth who are in the midst of struggles and reach out to every other place where working people are taking a stand," said SWP presidential candidate James Harris at the launching of the party's national election campaign June 25 in New York. "We are the most realistic campaign. We tell the truth about what is going on in the world. We explain that the root cause of the problems all workers face is capitalism. The socialist campaign will provide class answers to what is confronting working people," he said, "and will explain that we need socialist solutions, and that to achieve this workers and farmers need to make a revolution and take political power."

Harris and running mate Margaret Trowe, along with Socialist Workers candidates listed on page 7, have stayed true to this initial campaign pledge. They have taken this message to workers, farmers, and young people across the United States, as well as to Australia, Canada, Iceland, New Zealand, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

This fighting, working-class campaign has reached tens of thousands through speaking engagements, petitioning drives to achieve ballot status, and media coverage. It has meant that the parties of union busting, racism, economic depression, and war—the Democrats and Republicans—have not gone unanswered in the elections.

Why vote Socialist Workers? Because working people need our own political voice, independent of the capitalist rulers. The big-business servants of the rich have no perspective to offer working people for a way out of economic conditions that, while prosperous for a few wealthy families, are getting worse for millions. Their system, and all their representatives—Democrat, Republican, and "independent"—simply offer more wars, unemployment, police brutality, strikebreaking, attacks on affirmative action, and other assaults.

The socialist campaign has explained why working people don't need a third, pro-capitalist party such as that advanced by Ralph Nader. It has pointed to the danger posed by fascist-minded Patrick Buchanan of the Reform Party. We need our own program and political course, based on working-class solidarity and joining in struggles that advance the interests of workers and farmers world-

wide.

Socialist candidates participate in and support battles like those waged by transit workers in Los Angeles, packinghouse workers in the Midwest, coal miners and other working people in mining communities, Teamsters standing up to Safeway, and many others. They join in actions to defend immigrant rights, to oppose police violence and killings, and in defense of the Palestinian people's fight for self-determination. They explain the conquests of working people in the Yugoslav workers state and oppose U.S.-led imperialist intervention there. They demand an end to the U.S.-imposed division of Korea and the withdrawal of all Washington's forces from the peninsula. They point to the example of Cuba's socialist revolution and why the fighting people of that country are defending the interests of working people worldwide.

Above all, working people need to count on our own strength through an independent political movement that can fight for the necessary measures to defend our livelihood as the economic and social crisis deepens. Through these struggles workers and revolutionary-minded young people can begin to understand the capitalist system as a whole, and draw the revolutionary conclusion that there is no way to make any piece of this dog-eat-dog system work for the toilers—the vast majority of humanity—and, more importantly, that working people are capable of reorganizing and running society in the interests of humanity.

A vote for the socialist candidates is a vote that recognizes the need to replace the current big-business regime—from City Hall to the White House—with a government of workers and farmers and to build a new socialist society based on human solidarity.

The *Militant* urges readers who decide to go to the ballot booth to vote Socialist Workers. And to continue this same political campaign effort year round by joining in the front ranks of the struggle, telling the truth about the system of exploitation and oppression, getting the needed books, pamphlets, and socialist periodicals into the hands of tens of thousands stepping forward for whom hell is one more day of capitalism. If you want to make a revolution, join the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialists!

Philadelphia teachers reject contract

BY JOHN STUDER

PHILADELPHIA—Protesting a contract unilaterally imposed upon them by Philadelphia mayor John Street on September 28, some 2,000 teachers, other school workers, and supporters rallied outside a school board meeting October 23 at Central High School here.

While thousands of members of the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers (PFT) held candles in the air and chanted, Ted Kirsch, president of the 21,000-member union, spoke to the school board inside. He said the union had set an October 27 deadline for the concessions imposed on union members to be rescinded and a new contract negotiated. Otherwise, the union would strike.

The contract imposed on the PFT lengthens the workday by an hour with no increase in pay, installs a two-tier administration-run "pay for performance" plan as opposed to a negotiated pay scale, and allows the district to transfer teachers between schools regardless of preference and seniority. It increases health costs and leaves teachers' pay well below the average in surrounding counties. The district's 8,000 nonteaching school workers would receive even less pay than the teachers.

Mayor Street imposed his contract terms under a two-year-old state law aimed at Philadelphia teachers. The law, Act 46, allows the mayor to act unilaterally and allows

the governor to take over the school district and impose his own contract terms if he decides the schools are failing "to provide an adequate educational program." Under such a takeover, teachers could be stripped of their teaching licenses if they strike and the union would lose the protection of a contract.

Republican governor Thomas Ridge has said that he would move to take over the schools if the teachers don't accept the cutback contract imposed on them.

At the rally, union officials announced informational picketing would begin outside schools the next day, leading up to the October 27 walkout. Sentiment for a strike is high, as is solidarity with the teachers against the city's union-busting moves among workers here. "We have to strike, to keep the rights and benefits we have," Toby Hogan, a first grade teacher said, "but also for the children."

Public opinion polls show that more than two-thirds of people in Philadelphia support the union against the city in the contract dispute. These sentiments were reflected last week, when the Philadelphia City Council voted unanimously to demand that the mayor lift his imposed contract and reopen negotiations with the union.

Chanting "strike, strike," teachers marched away from the rally, determined to win a contract.

Workers in Yugoslavia press demands

Continued from Page 9

proved by the legislature of Serbia also calls on Serbia's president to disband the parliament.

The new prime minister of Serbia, Milomar Minic of the Socialist Party, said he would recommend setting up a board of governors for Radio and Television Serbia and insisted on securing "law and order" in the republic as the top priority of his office.

At the same time, the so-called Group of 17—a body of "economic experts" set up by the Kostunica regime—announced that Yugoslavia will take rapid steps toward reentering the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. A four-member IMF delegation visiting Belgrade October 24 announced that this will depend on the new

Yugoslav government drawing up and implementing "economic reforms" acceptable to the IMF. These are code words for integrating Yugoslavia further into the capitalist market system.

Decisive steps along that road will not be easily taken by imperialism given the recent actions and current attitudes and increased self-confidence of workers around the country.

Argiris Malapanis is a meat packer in Miami. Catharina Tirsén is a member of the Metalworkers union in Stockholm, Sweden. George Skoric, a student in Belgrade, and Bobbis Misailidis, an airport worker in Athens, Greece, contributed to this article.

Government in Canada calls new elections

Continued from back page

capitalist exploitation, instability, and polarization.

"Liberal Chrétien, Conservative Joseph Clark, Alliance leader Stockwell Day, and most other capitalist politicians can wish as strongly as they can that the question of Quebec will go away quietly," added Dugré. "But Quebec remains at the center of politics in Canada, including in these elections." No wing of Canada's ruling class is able today to either smash the stubborn resistance by the Quebecois to their national oppression or to lead them in a successful struggle for independence.

It is this unresolved national question, explains the communist candidate, combined with the relative weakness of Canada as a smaller imperialist power compared to its rivals, especially its U.S. neighbor, that lies behind the growing regional fragmentation of bourgeois politics in this country.

As the elections approach today, the Canadian Alliance is essentially based in western Canada, the Liberals in Ontario and the English-speaking areas of Quebec, the Bloc Quebecois in French-speaking Quebec, and the Conservatives in the Maritimes provinces. Although it has a certain presence across the country, the New Democratic Party (NDP) is absent from Quebec.

A working-class alternative

The communist candidates have been using their campaign to reach out to fellow working-class fighters and tell the truth about and connect their various struggles—from the Montreal truckers to the 1,200 striking nickel miners in northern Ontario and the 600 UFCW members battling Superior Poultry and Fletcher's Fine Food in Vancouver, farmers fighting for a decent living, and Native Mi'kmaq defending their right to fish in the Maritimes. They are giving a working-class explanation of events such as the Palestinian struggle for self-determination and the unfolding developments in the Yugoslav workers state.

"A key aspect of our campaign," said Derrick O'Keefe, "is to explain to these fighters that the source of all the problems faced by working people today is the capitalist system of exploitation and oppression.

"This system can't be patched up," added the Young Socialist. "It has to be overthrown and replaced by a mass movement of working people. This is what the workers and farmers of Cuba with their communist leadership did four decades ago. This deep revolutionary change made it possible for them to begin building a society based on human needs and solidarity, not the dog-eat-dog profit drive of the capitalists.

"This is what workers and farmers in Canada need: to forge an alliance of the exploited producers and establish their own government, a workers and farmers government, that will join the international struggle for socialism."

The Communist League has decided that in the ridings where there won't be a communist candidate to urge workers, farmers and youth to vote for the NDP candidate against those of the bosses' parties.

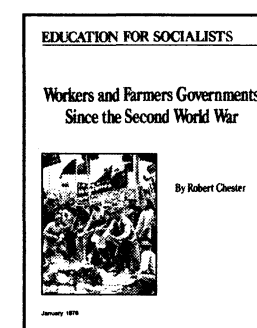
Although the NDP is a social-democratic party with a pro-capitalist program, its links to the trade-union movement will allow working people to express a basic class position by voting for it. This is true in Quebec too, where the NDP has a very weak presence and the trade union movement is supporting the Bloc Quebecois, a bourgeois nationalist party.

The Communist League takes this stance in the elections as a way to raise the need for the unions in Canada to embark on the road of independent working-class political action, including the launching of their own party in Quebec. This is a key component of the fight to transform the trade unions into instruments of revolutionary struggle acting in the interests of the exploited and oppressed majority.

From Pathfinder

Workers and Farmers Governments since the Second World War

Robert Chester



Articles on the governments that came to power in the revolutions in Yugoslavia, China, Cuba, and Algeria.

\$6.00

Available from bookstores listed on page 12

Vermont marchers oppose campaign against gay rights

BY TIM LENNOX

MONTPELIER, Vermont—"Zero, one, two, three—we're for equality!" chanted 200 young people as they marched here October 15 to defend legislation that protects gay and lesbian couples from denial of benefits received by married couples. They joined another 200 people and rallied on the statehouse lawn.

In a victory for democratic rights earlier this year, the state legislature in Vermont approved a bill recognizing "civil unions" by gay and lesbian couples that provides virtually all the benefits received by those who marry.

Couples can apply for a license from a town clerk and receive a certificate of union that guarantees the same rights as legal spouses for matters of child custody, workers' compensation, family leave benefits, among others.

In response to this law, right-wing forces launched a campaign with yard signs and bumper stickers proclaiming, "Take Back Vermont" and "Remember in November." The campaign focuses on voting out of office legislators who supported the bill and electing candidates who would repeal the law.

The youth marched to the rally behind a banner that stated, "We're Vermont's future, so we support civil unions." Yard signs declaring, "Vermont, keep it civil" were available for supporters to take home.

Jeanette Bacevius, a leader of Vermont for All Vermonters, which organized the rally, reported to the demonstrators, "We have weekly picket lines at the Montpelier post office and we marched in the Randolph parade."

"Hundreds of students believe in civil unions," said Molly Goldberg, a student from Montpelier who addressed the rally. She said she is often asked, "Why do you care? You and your peers can't vote." The answer is "equality," she said. "We don't have to vote or get married tomorrow to reap the benefits of equality."

Keja MacEwan, a leader of Vermont for All Vermonters, explained in an interview, "We need to be visible."

MacEwan also told how the youth march came about. "Two students came to one of our meetings and said they wanted to do something to show students support civil unions. When they heard we were planning a rally the idea of doing a march came up," she said.

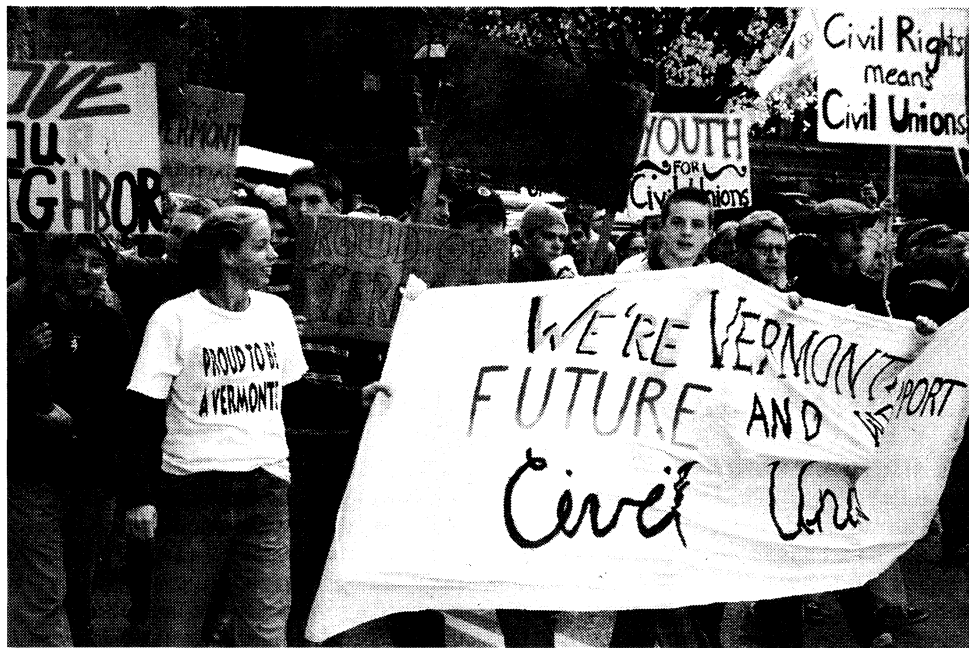
The September 12 Democratic and Republican primaries in Vermont were a focal point in the debate on the "civil unions" law. In that election five Republican state legislators who supported the law were defeated, as was one Democrat who opposed it. Four Republicans and one Democrat who were targeted for defeat because they backed the law were reelected.

Ultrarightist Patrick Buchanan, the Reform Party presidential candidate, greeted the Vermont primary election returns. "By the public thrashing and political rout of

five Republican legislators, who had voted to put homosexual liaisons on the same moral plane as traditional marriage," he said, "Vermont redeems her integrity and restores her honor. Vermonters have shown that a free people can successfully resist and roll back the rising tide of decadence that threatens to engulf our once-godly nation."

Supporters of the Socialist Workers presidential ticket—James Harris for president and Margaret Trowe for vice president—campaigning at the rally. They explained that the insecurity bred by the capitalist social crisis today, particularly among the middle class, is what Buchanan's demagoguery and the "Take Back Vermont" campaign feed on.

The socialists circulated a statement that



Militant/Tim Lennox

Demonstrators march October 15 in Montpelier, Vermont, to defend "civil unions" against right-wing, anti-gay rights forces aiming to repeal new law.

argued, "Today in Vermont they scapegoat and encourage resentment against gays and lesbians, blaming them for the social crisis. Tomorrow it will be immigrant workers or farmers. But the real enemy is the

capitalists and their system, who drive down our wages and working conditions and who set prices for milk and other farm commodities below their cost of production, hitting small farmers the hardest."

Florida flooding hits workers, farmers hardest

BY BILL KALMAN

MIAMI—The sudden flooding that hit southern Florida in early October was another example of a natural disaster becoming a social catastrophe for working people.

Twenty inches of rain covered the area October 3, flooding 93,000 houses and impacting about 214,000 people. Working-class communities in low-lying areas were most affected. Weeks after the waters have receded, many here are still struggling with ruined homes and inoperable cars.

In Hialeah, where many workers originally from Cuba and Central America live,

AS I SEE IT

80 per cent of the city was flooded, affecting 160,000 people. Two-thirds of the Sweetwater area, home to many Black and immigrant workers, was flooded, affecting 10,000. And in predominantly Black Opa-Locka, the flooding trapped 1,500 residents of several large apartment complexes. Residents of these run-down apartment buildings endured pools of waste-tainted water in their living rooms. All three areas experienced major flooding just a year ago due to Hurricane Irene.

At the Gardens Apartments in Opa-Locka, tenants are fighting the city and their landlord for decent housing. For the second time in a year, 300 families have been ordered out by the city because the unit is not habitable due to flooding. Dozens of Gardens residents protested at Opa-Locka city hall demanding action. Elvira Fowler explained, "The Health Department came out, and even they didn't want to walk around because of the water contamination. We need some comfort; we need a shower. We had this last year too, and we were given a lot of promises. Now we want out!"

Charles Tini, representing apartment owner Creative Choice Homes, dismissed

the tenants' complaints declaring, "I can't control the flood or rain." City officials have set up an emergency shelter at a shopping mall and promised that Gardens tenants will be given priority for housing grants.

Many older and impoverished residents in Miami-Dade County became prisoners in their own houses, trapped by waist-high water. County officials never issued a mandatory evacuation order, and no emergency action was taken until too late.

"This isn't a case where we needed to issue a mandatory evacuation," said county spokesperson Rhonda Barnett. "It's a costly process. We think long and hard about doing that.... We are only evacuating people in cases where it is life-threatening. Is it life-threatening to be sitting in two or three inches of water? We are in an emergency situation and emergencies are not comfortable."

Official reports put more than 1,000 homes destroyed by flood waters, and another 1,350 heavily damaged. Close to 3,500 homes incurred minor flood damage. Estimated damage to public roads and buildings was put at \$65 million, and damage to Florida farms at \$219 million.

Many workers cannot afford flood insurance, which is sold by the federal government for about \$350 a year. In Sweetwater only 166 out of 4,300 homes had flood insurance. Standard homeowners insurance will cover water damage from a leaky roof, but not from rising water. Moreover, South Florida's flood zone maps, drawn by the federal government, are out of date and do not show all the areas prone to flooding. These maps are supposed to identify areas needing federal flood insurance.

Florida governor John Ellis Bush was the object of angry questions and comments when he visited West Miami's city hall the day after the flood. Sandra Ortega told Bush, "I'm an angry homeowner.... They told us after Irene they fixed the flooding. What happened?" Another flood victim, Maritza Machin, declared, "This is worse than last time. What is going to happen?"

Farmers devastated

The one thing that is clear is that no arm of government is responding in a speedy way. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is collecting information from those flooded out, but will only partially cover financial losses. FEMA will issue a credit for two months' rent, but only if residents can prove their home is unlivable, that they actually resided there, and that they are legal U.S. residents. No funds exist to compensate for loss of income because of factory shutdowns. FEMA may also cover personal losses not met by insurance, but only up to \$14,000 for cars, furniture, and clothes.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture determined that the rains and flooding in South Florida destroyed \$31 million in vegetable crops and \$23 million in tropical fruit crops. Many Florida farmers are still recovering from Hurricane Irene, as well as low crop prices. Ornamental nurseries bore the brunt of the damage, losing \$165 mil-

lion. Thousands of Florida farm workers are expected to be out of work next month.

Governor Bush released \$100,000 to provide meager aid to families of migrant workers. This was the entire amount of the state's Farmworkers Emergency Trust Fund.

The latest flood to devastate south Florida occurred as Congress was fine-tuning its so-called Everglades Restoration Act. The most populated cities of Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach Counties lie on the eastern edge of the Everglades. For the last half century, the ruling rich in Florida have drained whole sections of the Everglades, about one-half of the original wetland expanse in south Florida, for increased agricultural use and expanded urban development. To that end, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has created and controls 1,800 miles of canals, 215 water control structures, and 23 major pumping stations, all to channel water out of the Everglades and into the ocean. Roughly a quarter of the historic Everglades is now sugarcane fields, virtually given by the federal government to Big Sugar.

This anarchistic westward expansion was driven by big agribusiness and the construction industry, which along with tourism are driving forces of the Florida economy. By disrupting the natural water flow of the Everglades and diminishing effective space for water storage, floodwaters now have nowhere to go. Water ends up collecting in the populated areas least able to afford modern sewers and pumping stations. Heavy rains and flash floods, once simply part of natural rhythm of the Everglades, are now threats to the lives and livelihoods of South Florida workers and farmers.

That is the reality of the ruling class "environmental" policies.

What needs to be done

But a fighting labor movement could defend workers and small farmers from these consequences of capitalism. Working people, through our unions and other organizations, should demand the federal government launch a public works program at union scale to put people to work cleaning up the ravaged areas, and rebuilding the urban infrastructure—drainage, roadways, schools, and bridges.

Decent, affordable housing can and should be built. And no worker should be laid off, no farm worker go without income, and no small farmer lose their land due to flooding or other natural disasters. Money can immediately be made available for flood relief without making people jump through hoops for a few crumbs.

Moreover, a government of our class—a workers and farmers government—would end once and for all the destruction of the environment for profit. Such a government would instead champion a program to end foreclosures, guarantee use of the land by working farmers, and provide cheap federally funded credit to small producers. It would make decisions on land use and development on the basis of the interests of the majority, instead of based on short-term profits for a handful of superrich families.

LETTERS

Expanded my awareness

I have read the *Militant* since I was in the seventh grade. Now I am a college student who has expanded my awareness due to the news and commentary you print. Keep up the great work of printing the truth, because only the truth can free the minds of the oppressed.

A.S.
Hampton, Virginia

Mideast article correction

In the article by Patrick O'Neill on the Israeli crackdown on the resistance in Palestine, which appeared in the October 23 issue of the *Militant*, O'Neill explains that Hezbollah fighters from Lebanon crossed into the Israeli border and captured three Israeli soldiers. According to Hezbollah they crossed into Israeli-occupied Lebanese territory.

The specific region where this operation

occurred is known as the Shebaa Farms. This is near a small Lebanese town known as Shebaa. The Shebaa Farms belonged to farmers from that town. The area was occupied by Israel in 1967. Israel claims that it is part of the Golan Heights and therefore is part of territory captured from Syria. However, Lebanon claims the territory and Syria recognizes it as Lebanese.

The point is that the full withdrawal from Lebanon that Israel claims is not yet full. And the Hezbollah fighters were striking at troops in Lebanon.

Georges Mehrabian
Athens, Greece

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.

Canada government calls new elections

Communist League presents working-class alternative to bosses' parties

BY MICHEL PRAIRIE

MONTREAL—The Communist League has announced three candidates for Canada's parliament in Ottawa in the November 27 federal elections, which were called October 22 by outgoing Liberal prime minister Jean Chrétien.

The communist candidates are Joanne Pritchard, 43, a sewing machine operator and member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE) in Montreal; Michel Dugré, 52, a meat packer in Toronto and longtime fighter for Quebec independence; and Derrick O'Keefe, 23, a meat packer and member of the United Food and Commercial Workers union (UFCW), and a member of the Young Socialists in Vancouver.

Pritchard launched her campaign by visiting the picket lines of 1,200 striking truck drivers in the port of Montreal (see article on this page). And O'Keefe participated in a rally of 100 students at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver in defense of a woman's right to choose abortion.

Why elections were called

This is the second time in a row the Chrétien government, elected in 1993 and reelected in 1997, called a general election well before the end of its normal four-year term. His move aims to take advantage of the upturn in the business cycle—with 4.5 percent economic growth in Canada in 1999 and an expected 4.7 percent this year—as well as the relative unpreparedness of the Canadian Alliance, the most serious electoral rival of the Liberals today.

The Alliance is a rightist party formed earlier this year by a fusion of the former

Reform Party and forces from provincial wings of the Conservative Party.

Pulling the rug from under one of the Alliance's main planks—a 17 percent flat tax—the Chrétien government announced a series of major tax cuts some days before calling the election.

Taking advantage of what the Toronto *Globe and Mail* called “a rampaging economy [that] kept growing faster than anyone has expected,” Ottawa also reached an accord earlier this fall with the provincial governments that will re-inject several billions of dollars into the public health and education services, which the government's own sharp cuts have badly damaged over the last decade.

In calling the election now, the Liberal government seeks to use—especially against the Bloc Québécois, a pro-independence formation that holds a majority of seats in Quebec—the Canadian nationalist hype that surrounded the recent death of former Liberal prime minister Pierre Trudeau.

“The time is over,” said Chrétien at the launching of his campaign, “for talking about constitution and separation. The Québécois want to talk about economy and jobs.”

'Decade of prosperity on our backs'

“For working people,” Communist League candidate Michel Dugré explained, “the situation is completely different from that of the employers. This so-called decade of prosperity vaunted by the ruling rich was made on the backs of working people—workers, family farmers, and small producers such as truckers and fishermen.”



Striking truck drivers in Montreal picket one of 41 companies refusing to recognize their union (see story below). Candidates of Communist League tell the truth about and participate in the unfolding labor and farmer resistance.

During the 1990s, Canada's bosses and their government have sharply increased the intensity of labor and speedup in the mines, mills, and factories across the country; lengthened work hours; imposed huge cuts in social services; beefed up their police against those resisting the brutality and in-

humanity of their system; attacked union and democratic rights; and maintained an imperialist military force in 19 countries, from Yugoslavia to East Timor.

“The Liberals use the right-wing, anti-working-class, pro-death penalty, pro-cop and anti-gay rights program of the Alliance as a foil,” said Dugré. “The truth is that all the main contending parties in this election, including the Liberals, have sharply moved to the right over the last decade of increased

Continued on page 14

Cuba denounces U.S. move to seize its funds

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The government of Cuba has denounced moves by the U.S. Congress to seize and use Cuban funds frozen in the United States. President William Clinton is expected to sign legislation, approved by the U.S. Senate earlier in October, that would award some \$58 million to the families of three rightists whose planes were shot down in 1996 for deliberately violating Cuban air space.

Shortly after the shootdown, Clinton signed into law the Helms-Burton Act, which has tightened the four-decade-long U.S. embargo against Cuba.

The same year, the U.S. government passed the so-called Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996, which allows U.S. citizens to go to U.S. courts to seize frozen assets of nations targeted by Washington.

Under the recently approved “Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act,” based on the 1996 law, the U.S. Treasury would seize frozen assets of several governments smeared as “terrorist” by Washington, including Iran, Libya, and Cuba, and award the funds to plaintiffs in

lawsuits against these governments.

On October 23, in response to the U.S. moves to seize Cuban funds, the government in Havana adopted a decree imposing a 10 percent tax on all phone calls between the two countries. It also announced that it was considering cutting off all telephone communications with the United States if the U.S. government proceeded to seize the assets.

The legislation “constitutes a gross act of aggression against the economy of our nation,” the Cuban decree stated, “by using Cuban funds—arbitrarily frozen in the United States—to deliver large sums to terrorist groups under the pretext” of compensating the pilots' relatives. “This robbery of Cuban funds is an unjustified, illegal, and immoral act.”

In a front-page editorial the daily *Granma* stated, “The government of Cuba reserves the right to adopt the measures it judges pertinent, including cutting off all direct and indirect telephone communications between Cuba and the United States.”

The new 10 percent tax law “will remain in effect until the total of Cuban assets ille-

gitimately frozen in the United States is returned with the corresponding interest,” *Granma* reported in an article. It added that money collected from this tax “will be directed to the purchase of medical equipment, medicines and raw materials for their production, over and above the country's current annual hard currency outlay for the population's medical care.”

As part of its economic war on the Cuban revolution, Washington has frozen more than \$120 million in payments due to Cuba's telephone company for bilateral telecom services provided between 1966 and 1994.

In an earlier attempt to seize money from frozen Cuban assets, a U.S. judge awarded \$188 million in 1997 in damages to the families of the three Cuban-American counter-revolutionaries—members of the rightist Brothers to the Rescue—who had been killed in the previous year's shootdown over Cuban territory. In response, Cuba's national phone company, ETECSA, in February 1999 cut most direct telephone communications with the United States for more than a year. This service was restored in April of this year.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Senate voted October 18, by a 86-8 margin, to approve legislation that purportedly allows the sale of food and medicine to Cuba but in reality tightens Washington's economic squeeze on Cuba. The bill, which was recently approved by the U.S. House of Representatives and which Clinton has pledged to sign, would prohibit Cuba from using U.S. government or commercial credit to purchase these items while continuing to ban the sale of Cuban goods to the United States. It also codifies into law existing executive orders that restrict travel to Cuba by U.S. residents.

Close to a million Cubans marched October 18 to protest the new trade measure and the move to seize Cuban assets. “This is a patriotic march against the genocidal blockade, and the latest attempts to destroy our revolution,” said one Havana housewife, Olga, quoted by the British news agency Reuters.

Quebec truckers strike for union

BY SYLVIE CHARBIN

MONTREAL—More than 900 container truck drivers went on strike here October 21 in an effort to force the 41 trucking companies for whom they work to recognize their union and negotiate a first collective agreement.

The strikers are members of the National Road Transportation Union, affiliated to the Quebec-based Confederation of National Trade Unions (CSN). The union was formed two years ago, after an 18-month-long effort to sign up drivers. The workers haul containers, mostly between ports and rail stations.

About 40 percent of the striking drivers are owner-operators, the vast majority of whom are currently paid a per-box move rate, which includes a full container pickup and empty container return. These rates haven't come close to keeping up with rising costs of operating trucks, especially plates, insurance, and repairs, as well as skyrocketing diesel fuel costs.

The union's main demand is to pay all drivers an hourly wage, including overtime, and also to pay owner-operators extra truck expenses according to trailer type, including a cost-of-living increase pegged to fuel costs. The union is also asking for seniority rights, vacation and holiday pay, and a pension plan.

After some strikers were threatened by their bosses on the first day of the walkout, the union discussed how to reorganize picket lines so that no one picks the company he or she works for.

South Africa platinum miners end walkout

BY T.J. FIGUEROA

PRETORIA, South Africa—Thousands of miners voted to end their 29-day strike against Anglo American Platinum October 16.

Members of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) at the world's largest platinum company in South Africa's Northern and North West provinces secured a 9 percent wage increase, which is 1 percent or 2 percent above consumer inflation rates.

Their demand for an additional 1 percent increase in company contributions to the pension fund was not met. This demand was referred to a forum made up of NUM officials and bosses for further discussion.

The strike crimped mining production and the company was forced to rely on its stockpile to maintain production at refineries.

According to NUM spokesperson George Molebatsi, about 250 miners joined the union during the course of the strike. “To unite the workers is the most important thing,” he said. “But you don't want a strike to go on too long because there may be unintended consequences.”

Molebatsi said the talks between the union and the company would also focus on demands for affirmative action in the workplace, which miners highlighted during the walkout.

“The strike had everything to do with racism and equalization of the huge gaps between whites and blacks. The union is in a stronger position to confront these issues at the [bargaining] table as a result of the strike,” Molebatsi said.