

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

**Building the communist
movement in New Zealand**

— PAGE 6

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 65/NO. 30 AUGUST 6, 2001

Argentine general strike condemns austerity drive

**BY RÓGER CALERO
AND NAOMI CRAINE**

Amidst protests inside and outside Argentina's government palace, the lower house of Congress narrowly approved legislation July 20 that includes drastic cuts in wages and pensions for public employees. The vote came one day after hundreds of thousands of workers across the country carried out a one-day general strike—shutting down factories, government offices, schools, and public transportation—to protest the austerity measures, which had been announced July 11 by Argentine president Fernando De la Rúa.

Pablo Micheli, general secretary of the State Workers Association (ATE) in Buenos Aires, said in an interview with the *Militant* that the “austerity measures only deepen the recession in Argentina.” He added, “The Argentine government is responsible for creating the budget deficit when they emptied out the resources of the state by privatizing everything.”

Micheli spoke July 25 as members of the ATE in Buenos Aires held another one-day strike to oppose the scheduled Senate vote on the austerity package, as well as moves by the provincial government to begin paying part of the wages of its employees with government certificates instead of pesos. The walkout was 80-90 percent effective.

In their efforts to promote the use of these certificates, which are printed by the Buenos Aires provincial government, authorities held a series of meetings with utility companies, banks, and businesses to convince them to accept the pieces of paper at a one-to-one parity with the peso. The certificates are widely opposed by workers because they will not be accepted as payment in many



Workers march in Telam, Mar del Plata, during general strike July 19. Unionists, unemployed workers, and farmers across Argentina are protesting austerity measures.

places, and if devalued will result in a drop in their wages. “Imagine if this is happening in the richest province in Argentina, what is going to happen in the poorest one,” said Micheli in reference to the certificate scheme.

The work stoppage “was the people’s response to a plan that falls most on retirees, on families with fixed incomes,” said CGT leader Hugo Moyano. “We will not stand for it.”

Faced with increasing pressure by foreign imperialist banks and investors to implement steeper austerity measures to guarantee pay-

ment toward the country’s \$130 billion foreign debt, the Argentine government hopes to slow down the financial crisis and win the confidence of international finance capital by cutting the annual budget by \$1 billion.

The centerpiece of the austerity legislation, which must still be approved by the Senate, is a 13 percent cut in wages and pensions for all government employees and retirees who receive at least \$500 per month. Sixteen percent of pensioners and 90 percent of public employees will be af-

Continued on Page 4

Coal miners rally against Ohio Valley’s attacks on the UMW

BY MIKE FITZSIMMONS

POWHATAN POINT, Ohio—More than 400 miners and their supporters rallied here July 24 to protest moves by the Ohio Valley Coal Company against the coal miners union. The spirited protest is part of an ongoing campaign by the union to expose Robert Murray, owner of the company, for his attacks on the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA). The main participants at the rally were members of UMWA locals 1248 and 1810.

Tensions between the union and the company are at an all-time high. The battle unfolding today is one of the most important being waged by the union.

Murray is the largest independent individual coal operator in the country. Ohio Valley recently began loading coal at the Century Mine, a new nonunion mine constructed just one-half mile from Powhatan No. 6, in Belmont County, Ohio. Powhatan No. 6 is a UMW-organized mine.

“They’re mining the same block of coal

Continued on Page 7

Cuba calls for plebiscite against ‘free trade’ pact

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

The Cuban government is waging a campaign to oppose the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) and explain how Washington will use the trade pact to reinforce its exploitation in Latin America and the Caribbean. Under the banner of “free trade” U.S. finance capital seeks to use the FTAA as an instrument to further the plunder of the region’s toilers and undermine these nations’ sovereignty. Their aim is to create a trade bloc that would bolster U.S. imperialism’s position vis-a-vis its rivals in Europe and Japan in the face of stiffening competition in the world capitalist system.

Acquiescing to Washington’s dictates through the FTAA would mean “less protection of the national industry and interests, more unemployment, and more social problems” for countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, Cuban president Fidel Castro said in a May 1 speech. He noted that the bourgeois regimes in the region “intend to take this monstrous step without consulting their peoples. This is all the democracy that can be expected from the imperial power and its lackeys.” The Cuban leader called on labor movements throughout the region to campaign for a plebiscite or national referendum in their countries to reject the FTAA. “No government must be allowed to sell out a nation behind its people’s back,” Castro stated.

The FTAA was conceived in 1994 at the first Summit of the Americas in Miami

Continued on Page 5

Youth from U.S., Cuba meet in Havana

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

HAVANA—Some 180 young people from two dozen cities around the United States have begun a nine-day visit to Cuba to learn about the Cuban Revolution and to exchange political experiences and ideas with youth and others here.

Many participants in the Second Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange are college or high school students, and a few are workers. Representing a range of political viewpoints, some have previously been involved in actions to oppose the U.S. government’s course of aggression against Cuba, while others only recently began to learn about the revolution and jumped at the chance to see the country for themselves.

Juan Carlos Marsán, head of international relations of the Union of Young Communists (UJC) of Cuba, welcomed the U.S. delegation at the opening of the July 22-30 trip. “In the United States, there are a lot of distortions of the truth about Cuba by the media and the government,” he said. “We hope that here you will be able to see for yourselves what the real situation is.

Marsán noted that in Cuba today “we are living through an exceptional moment.” He noted that the Cuban Revolution has gained strength over the past few years through responding both to Washington’s hostile policies and the economic challenges facing Cuba, which seeks to defend its revolutionary gains in a world dominated by the international capitalist market.

“Our revolution today is reflecting on its projects,” he said, referring to political steps

being taken by the revolutionary leadership to draw millions of Cubans into fighting for a socialist course.

The Cuban hosts took those taking part in the Youth Exchange to see some examples of these political campaigns, from the new Latin American School of Medicine to the School for Social Work.

In the first few days, the U.S. visitors were also taken to the José Martí monument and museum to learn about Cuba’s anti-imperialist history; several medical and scientific

research centers that have created pharmaceutical products used to treat a range of diseases afflicting particularly the Third World; the national center for computer training; the world-renowned psychiatric hospital; and a Havana neighborhood to talk to working people there.

One of the first events was a meeting with members of a municipal assembly of People’s Power, Cuba’s legislative system, which is organized on the national, provin-

Continued on Page 8

Workers in South Africa take action

BY NAOMI CRAINE

Some 20,000 workers walked out at the Eskom electrical utility in South Africa July 24 demanding higher pay. Members of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) have given notice that they will strike three major coal mining companies July 29, and contract negotiations with the gold mining bosses continue. Meanwhile members of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa are preparing for possible strikes in the auto, steel, and rubber industries.

These labor actions are occurring at a time of declining real wages and unemployment levels that hover at around 35 percent. Inflation last year ran at 7 percent, up from 2.2 percent in 1999. The union federation COSATU estimates that 1 million jobs have been eliminated over the past decade.

The NUM took a strike authorization vote among 155,000 coal and gold miners na-

tionwide after two months of negotiations failed to reach a contract agreement. Workers voted 98 percent in favor of strike action. Following the strike vote several coal companies agreed to the union’s demands. But the Ingwe, Eyesizwe, and Anglocoal companies, which together employ about 18,000 miners, have refused to talk.

“The things we are asking for are basic human needs and we think they are morally justifiable,” said Mofereferi Lekorotsoana, the head of publicity at the NUM office in Johannesburg in a phone interview. The negotiations are deadlocked over three main issues. One is meal intervals. “In simple terms, we are asking for a lunch break of 30 minutes,” said Lekorotsoana. The coal bosses contend this would disrupt production.

Second is the extension of medical disability benefits to miners who are terminally

Continued on Page 8

U.S. actions demand Navy out of Vieques, release of prisoners

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

NEW YORK—Chanting “Vieques Sí, Marina No!” (Vieques Yes, Navy No!) hundreds of people participated in protests in Washington, D.C., and New York in mid-July to demand the withdrawal of the U.S. Navy from the Puerto Rican island of Vieques. Demands for the release of those arrested and jailed for civil disobedience actions on the island formed a focus of the demonstrations.

The events brought together a range of forces, including supporters of the fight to end Puerto Rico's status as a U.S. colony, other activists in the struggle to end the military's use of Vieques as a live-fire training ground, and some prominent Democratic Party politicians and their supporters.

Among the dozens of people jailed for their part in recent protests are some Democratic politicians and union officials. Some have been released after serving sentences of more than a week. Among those still doing time are Alfred Sharpton, an influential New York Democrat and president of the National Action Network; environmental attorney Robert Kennedy Jr.; and Dennis Rivera, president of Local 1199 in New York of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU).

The SEIU, which organizes tens of thousands of workers in health-care institutions, brought 12 busloads of its members to the July 19 demonstration in Washington, which was organized by Operation Push. Buses also came from Philadelphia, Chicago, and parts of New Jersey.

Among those speaking were Jesse and Jacqueline Jackson, New York Democratic Party congressmen Charles Rangel and Jose Rivera, Kahdeem Muhammad of the Nation of Islam, and Manuel Rodriguez of the Puerto Rican Independence Party. Jacqueline Jackson had been sentenced to 10 days in jail after being arrested during a protest at Camp García on Vieques.

The speakers mainly focused on the treatment of participants in the protest actions on the island, noting the high levels of bail

set by the courts and the strip searches to which prisoners are subjected.

Some 120 people took part in a two-hour protest July 22 outside the Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn, where Sharpton is serving a 90-day sentence. They marched around a row of half a dozen tents in which a small core of protesters are camped out. To the accompaniment of several drums the demonstrators chanted slogans like “U.S. Navy Out of Vieques” and “Free Reverend Al.” Sharpton is scheduled to be released on August 15.

Decision on referendum

Several marchers commented on U.S. president George Bush's decision to cancel a planned referendum, and to end the naval presence in 2003. Ricardo Gabriel, a 20-year-old student in New York, described the announcement as a belated “acknowledgment that this is an international issue.” He added that Bush “wanted to avoid the embarrassment of losing the referendum.”

Boston College student Desmond Reich said that he doesn't trust Bush to stick by the announcement. “I'll be waiting to see some action,” he said, observing that the U.S. government is “trying to save face before the world.”

Several supporters of the Al-Awda Palestine Right to Return Coalition joined the protest. Reem Abu-Sbaih, 29, a trainee doctor whose family emigrated from Palestine several decades ago, told the *Militant* that “the fight for self-determination connects the struggle of the Puerto Rican and Palestinian peoples.” She noted that some of the armaments tested on Vieques end up in the hands of the Israeli armed forces, who are backed by Washington in their suppression of the Palestinian people's fight for self-determination.

Carlos Rovira of the Vieques Support Campaign, who chaired the rally, linked protests against police racism and brutality, in which Sharpton and his supporters have often played a prominent part, to the fight in Puerto Rico.



Militant/Patrick O'Neill

July 21 action outside Brooklyn jail called for release of arrested Vieques protesters

Democratic Party member Adam Clayton Powell III, Frank Velgara of the Vieques Support Campaign, Cynthia Davis of the National Action Network, and representatives of Al-Awda and the campaign to free Mumia Abu-Jamal were among the speakers.

Impact on capitalist politics

The increased involvement of leading political figures in such protests is testament to the impact of the widening movement to eject the U.S. military. That movement—spearheaded by fishermen and other working people on the island—has been manifest in protests of tens of thousands of people, as well as in actions on Vieques, including an encampment on military-controlled land on Vieques that was violently broken up by U.S. security forces in May of last year.

Politicians in both major parties have called for an end to the naval exercises. Re-

publican New York State governor George Pataki is one. Democratic Party politicians, from Senator Hillary Clinton to former New York mayor Mario Cuomo have supported Jackson, Sharpton, and other members of their party who have been jailed.

Not all politicians have publicly declared themselves for the protests. “I don't see where Puerto Rico should get any favorite treatment,” said Republican senator James Hansen recently, claiming that Vieques residents “sit down there on welfare.”

Many politicians preparing for the New York mayoral election later this year are mindful of the weight of the Puerto Rican community in the city. Almost 790,000 New York residents identified themselves as Puerto Rican in the last census—around 10 percent of the city's population and one-third of those who classified themselves as Latino or Hispanic.

Drawn by lower wages, German auto firms build plants in east of country

BY GREG MCCARTAN

A report on the expansion of auto production in eastern Germany gives information on attempts by the big automobile companies in the country to profit off high unemployment and lower wages in the region.

BMW announced July 18 that it will build a \$855 million production plant in Leipzig, the second largest city in the area that comprises the workers state of the former German Democratic Republic. The same day the European Union also gave the go-ahead for the German government to give Volkswagen massive subsidies for building a plant in Dresden that would employ 800. The BMW plant may employ up to 10,000 workers.

“That kind of good news has become rare in eastern Germany, a region suffering from sluggish growth and high unemployment, currently about 17 percent of the workforce,” the *Financial Times* reported. Investments by Porsche, BMW, and GM-owned Opel total \$4.2 billion over the last decade. Car manufacturing accounts for 10 percent of industrial production in eastern Germany, employing 100,000.

The auto bosses point to a highly skilled

workforce, a plentiful supply of workers, and lower pay than auto workers in the rest of Germany as the main incentives, denying that government subsidies have any role in their decision to move production to the region.

“We have received 8,000 applications for 260 jobs on offer, and the majority of candidates was really good,” a Porsche spokesperson said of one hiring session.

A BMW official said, “Concerning flexibility of working hours, we have reached new dimensions.” This includes imposing a shift schedule that can fluctuate between 60 and 140 hours a week. Industry officials say they can take advantage of these conditions and still put the “Made in Germany” stamp on their products. Government investment of billions of marks in what the *Times* called “a state-of-the-art [system of] motorways, roads, railway lines, and airports” gives the companies access to a good transportation system.

As the motivations of the auto giants show, maintaining a differential in wages and working conditions between the “unified” east and west remains a priority for the German ruling class and a central question in the class struggle in the country.

THE MILITANT

No human being is illegal

Millions of immigrant workers from Latin America, Asia, Africa, and elsewhere are demanding full legal rights in the United States. At the same time, many have joined native-born workers in the front ranks of the toughening resistance. The 'Militant' reports these class struggle developments. Don't miss a single 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.

The Militant

Vol. 65/No. 30

Closing news date: July 25, 2001

Editor: MARTIN KOPPEL
Business Manager: MAURICE WILLIAMS
Editorial Staff: Róger Calero, Greg McCartan, Maggie Trowe, Brian Williams, and Maurice Williams.
Young Socialists column editor: ROMINA GREEN

Published weekly except for two weeks in August and one week in December.

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 1Mei Fonds/Fonds du 1 mai, 2140 Antwerp.

Iceland: Send 6,500 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 \$90 to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland, New Zealand. **Australia:** Send Australian \$90 to P.O. Box K879, Haymarket, NSW 1240, Australia. **Pacific Islands:** Send New Zealand \$90 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.

12 weeks of the Militant outside the U.S.: Australia and the Pacific, \$A20 • Britain, £7 • Canada, Can\$15 • Caribbean and Latin America, \$15 • Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, £8 • France, FF80 • Iceland, Kr1,800 • New Zealand, NZ\$20 • Sweden, Kr75 (Send payment to addresses listed in business information box)

Bush's trip highlights U.S.-Europe conflicts

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS
AND GREG McCARTAN

George Bush's second trip to Europe since assuming the presidency conveniently occurred just a few days after a successful test over the Pacific of major components of an antiballistic missile system being developed by the Pentagon. The visit, which included a stop in Britain before heading on to a meeting of leaders of the G-8 summit in Genoa, Italy, reflected that tensions between Washington and various imperialist powers in Europe remain the centerpiece of conflict in the world today.

A rising number of military, trade, and political disputes mark these relations, even as the U.S. ruling class seeks to win various nation states on the continent to its side, utilizing the conflicts among a number of European powers to its own advantage.

The antiballistic missile weapons system and relations with Russia are high on the agenda in this conflict. Speaking from Rome on July 18, U.S. secretary of state Colin Powell stated that he wanted to make it crystal clear to the Russian government that Washington will be putting in place an antiballistic missile shield with or without the support of any other nations. "I have a hunch that when they hear us out, they will find that it is in their interest to move in this direction because we are moving in this direction, hopefully in a cooperative basis," he said. "But if not, we are still moving forward."

In a news conference held that same day, and shortly after signing a treaty of "friendship and cooperation" with Chinese president Jiang Zemin, Russian president Vladimir Putin stated that the Russian government is not planning any "joint response" with China if Washington proceeds to develop and deploy its missile shield.

Turning to the issue of the U.S.-led NATO imperialist military alliance and its drive to expand membership into central and eastern Europe, Putin said that the Russian government does not see NATO as a "hostile force." He stated that he also didn't see why NATO was "needed." The best option would be to "dissolve" NATO, he said, but this was "not on the agenda." The Russian president added that the next-best option would be to "include Russia in NATO," or to set up "a new organization" that would manage a "single defense and security space" in Europe.

Putin was referring to statements made by Bush during his previous trip to Europe, during which he met with Putin after making a major foreign policy speech in Warsaw. In the speech he said Washington favored a Europe that included all countries "from the Baltic to the Black Sea" including Ukraine. He said "Europe's great institutions—NATO and the European Union—can and should build partnerships with Russia and all countries that have emerged from the wreckage of the former Soviet Union." Bush urged the major European powers to accept both "the burdens and the benefits" of the massive financial obligations down the road as the imperialists attempt to reimpose capitalism on the workers states of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

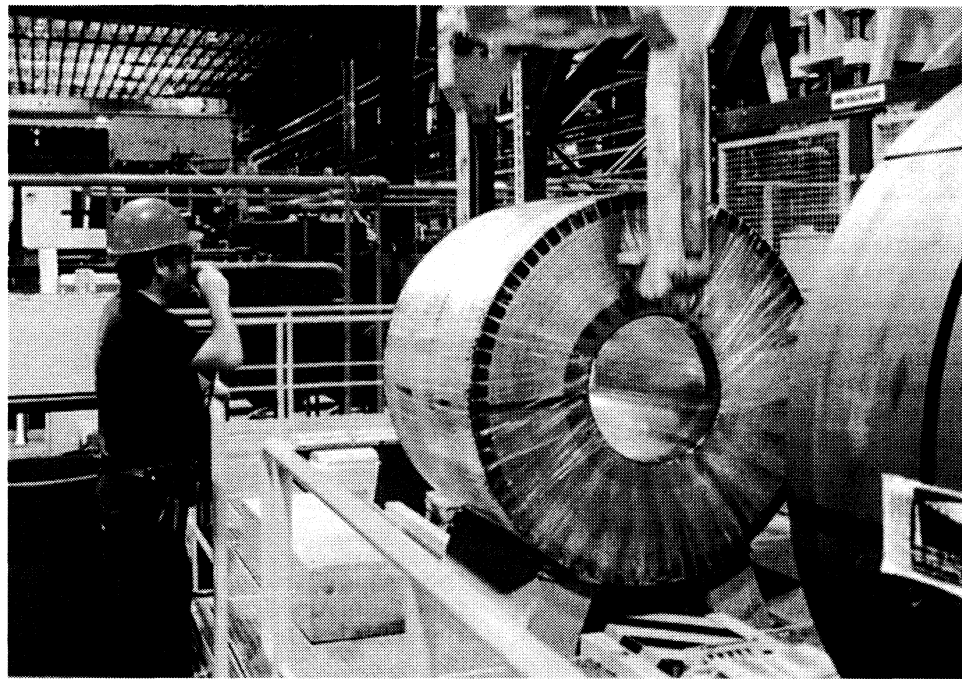
Economic competition

The inter-imperialist economic competition between Washington and the European powers of Germany and France especially have been generating sparks as the downturn in the world capitalist economy takes hold.

The European Union said July 19 that it would launch more than a dozen separate World Trade Organization (WTO) cases in an effort to overturn U.S. duties on European steel companies. This move came after U.S. commerce secretary Donald Evans said that Washington would not drop the tariff penalties it imposed against privatized steel companies in Europe despite a WTO ruling last year finding such duties imposed against Corus (formerly British Steel) illegal according to WTO trading rules.

According to the *Financial Times*, "There are 12 outstanding cases where the U.S. continues to impose such duties on steel products made by EU companies, the EU says. Five affect Italian companies, three French, plus one each for Germany, Spain, Sweden, and the UK."

At the end of June the United States lost a trade case to the European Union in which a World Trade Organization panel ruled that Washington's \$4 billion tax break for exports violates international trade rules. The EU can impose tariffs worth \$4 billion on U.S. products if the ruling holds, and maintain them



New cold mill that opened last year at Bethlehem Steel's Sparrows Point plant in Maryland. Washington imposed tariffs on steel products from 12 companies in Europe. In response, the EU appealed to World Trade Organization to overturn U.S. duties.

until Washington ends the tax break. U.S. trade representative Robert Zoellick told EU officials that exercising their right to carry out sanctions "would be like using a nuclear weapon" on global trade. He then formally asked the U.S. International Trade Commission for a broad investigation into the cause of increased steel imports to the United States. Companies that benefit from the export tax break include General Electric, Boeing, Caterpillar, and Microsoft.

European powers in France, Italy, the United Kingdom, and Spain have been bucking Washington's 1996 Iran-Libya Sanctions Act with increasing investments into oil and gas projects in Iran, with \$5 billion in deals this year. The U.S. government reserves the right to impose penalties against foreign companies who don't adhere to its ban on investments in the two countries, but has so far demurred from taking action. "We are looking at these developments with concern but do not anticipate dramatic action," said one White House official, who added the administration does not now want "to pick fights with Europe or other allies" over the issue.

These examples help illustrate the volatility in U.S.-European relations given the geographic, economic, and political connection of the continent to the resource rich and strategic Middle East. It has been, and will remain, one of the flash points in the inter-imperialist conflict.

An editorial in the July 9 *Investors Business Daily* addressed some of these questions on the eve of Bush's visit to Europe. "This year the U.S. has a long list of gripes—and some major bones to pick—mainly with the European Union," the piece begins without any subtlety, pointing to the "dangerous protectionist and anti-growth trends in Europe that threaten to sink the world economy. The EU's recent rejection of the \$41 billion GE-Honeywell merger and its rabid, near irrational support of the hugely costly Kyoto global warming treaty, are just

the latest examples."

The paper urged the Bush administration to "take a stand against the growing European superstate. Its growing arrogance has the makings of a serious problem for the U.S. and the rest of the world." Complaining that "European industries" such as Airbus are protected from competition, the editorial says Washington "can't stand by... as the EU interferes with our domestic economy."

War in Yugoslavia

The continuing war on the European continent in Yugoslavia adds a factor of instability to the region and has heightened the competition between the imperialist powers. While trying to speak with one voice together with the U.S. government, disagreements have marked the response by European powers to the widening military conflict in Macedonia, drawing Berlin, London, and Washington more deeply into military intervention there.

The regime in Serbia has criticized the EU for stalling in providing the funds pledged last month at a conference organized by the World Bank and European Commission. At this "donors" conference—coming right after Belgrade turned over former Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic for prosecution by the War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague, Netherlands—imperialist governments pledged a total of \$1.2 billion in aid, much of it to be used to subsidize the regime's basic budgetary expenses, such as to pay public sector employees and for heating fuel, electricity, and medical supplies. Washington at the time pledged \$180 million while European governments promised more than \$600 million. The *Financial Times* reported the aid "became caught up in a tussle between European Union foreign and finance ministers" over "how aid should be disbursed."

Within the EU itself, plans to push toward launching a single currency and to expand

from 15 to up to 25 countries are bringing with it more destabilization and volatility.

For example, there are growing tensions between Greece and Turkey over moves by Cyprus to join the EU. The Greek Cypriot government, which comprises two-thirds of this island nation of 750,000 people in the Mediterranean Sea, has since 1997 been granted the status of full candidate for membership.

Cyprus gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1960, which included constitutional guarantees by the Greek Cypriot majority to the Turkish Cypriot minority. In 1974, an attempt by the government of Greece to seize the government was met by military intervention from Turkey, which now controls one-third of the island. In 1983, the Turkish-held area declared itself the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, but it is recognized only by Turkey.

In 1998, Athens threatened to veto EU membership for Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia, and Estonia, all of which are currently under negotiation, unless Cyprus was also included in this list.

Meanwhile the Greek-led Cypriot government made clear July 18 that if it gains EU membership with the nation still politically divided it will block Turkey's moves to join the EU. "If no agreement is reached by the time we join," stated Theophilos Theophilou, Cyprus's permanent representative to the EU, "Turkish Cypriots will be deprived of the benefits of enlargement and Turkey will have a Cyprus in the EU having a say and a vote" and "a veto over accession of Turkey [to the EU]."

Commenting on this "brewing crisis," *Financial Times* reporter William Wallace, pointed out, "The barbed wire, military checkpoints and UN forces that divided Nicosia will become part of the EU's external frontier within three years unless western governments put pressure on all sides."

The Turkish government is holding onto a trump card it has from its membership in NATO. Despite reports of an earlier agreement, Turkey says it will refuse to let a planned European Union 60,000-strong rapid reaction military force use NATO assets. Since the European force would need to use NATO's military bases, aircraft, and other capabilities, the stance by the Turkish government effectively blocks deployment of the force.

In a major provocation against the Czech Republic, the German government has urged it to shut down a nuclear power plant located near the German and Austrian borders that is scheduled to go fully on line. "The news sent shares in the main Czech utility crashing and raised new questions about the Czech Republic's plans to join the European Union," stated a *New York Times* article. After a cabinet meeting July 18, the Czech prime minister, Milos Zeman, rejected the German rulers' call to close the plant, which is located near the village of Temelin. The two 1,000 megawatt units are expected to be a major source of electricity for the country as well as a source of energy export earnings. Officials in neighboring Austria have threatened to block the Czech Republic's entry into the EU if the plants are not closed.

U.S. industrial production down for ninth month

BY RÓGER CALERO

The latest figures released July 18 by U.S. Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan show that the U.S. economy in June entered its ninth month of uninterrupted decline in industrial output. This, plus the prospects for continued pressure on the bosses' profit margins and projections of a rising level of unemployment, has raised doubts among capitalists of the claim made five years ago that the U.S. economy had entered a "new era" of perpetual fast growth, increased profits, and rising living standards.

The 0.7 percent drop in industrial production reported for the month of June and the 0.5 percent decline in May added to the slip begun last October. It constitutes the longest decline in industrial production in almost two decades.

The federal government reported that the decline came primarily from the manufacturing of computer chips, telecommunications equipment, trucks, consumer appliances, and furniture, along with other industrial sectors.

In his report to the House Financial Ser-

vices Committee, Greenspan projected that the unemployment rate, currently at 4.5 percent, would go up to 4.75 to 5 percent by the end of this year. He said the figure could climb as high as 5.25 percent in 2002.

The Labor Department reported July 6 that 114,000 jobs had been slashed by the capitalist bosses in June, with an estimated 113,000 of them in the manufacturing industry. The job losses also affected the wholesale distribution and transportation sectors, and for the first time since 1958 the ever-growing service sector also suffered a slight drop.

Officials at American Express announced July 19 that they will cut 5,000 jobs due to the slowing down of the economy and investment losses. The financial giant reported losses in junk bonds and in investment-grade bonds and securities considered to offer greater protection to investors.

Last June, the U.S. economy registered a 1.2 percent drop in productivity—the cost of labor used to produce goods and services—raising concerns of a stalled productivity growth, a factor closely tied to the

profits the bosses extract from the labor of working people. The bosses' much-hailed "productivity boom" of the 1990s was built on ever-increasing speedup, lengthening of the workday and workweek, and the driving down of wages.

Faced with relatively low unemployment levels and increased working-class resistance, the bosses have run into obstacles in pushing their productivity drive even further. "We had very tight labor markets throughout that period," said John Youngdahl, a senior economist at Goldman Sachs, "and workers had a lot of leverage. They were able to claw back some of the costs they were experiencing," he concluded.

The speed of the economic slowdown in the United States and the degree of its impact on the world economy is raising concerns within ruling-class circles that interdependence of the capitalist economies undermines the ability to absorb and contain financial shocks in Asia and Latin America and reinforces slowing economies in Europe and Japan.

U.S. rulers consider plan to legalize some workers from Mexico

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

The administration of President George Bush has floated a plan to provide workers from Mexico with opportunities to legalize their status. Government officials say that perhaps 1 million to 2 million of the 3 million Mexican immigrant workers presently classified by U.S. authorities as undocumented might ultimately meet eligibility requirements. The proposal is backed by the Mexican government of President Vicente Fox. It has proved controversial, however, among figures on the right of Bush's Republican Party.

The proposal is part of a package of immigration policies under consideration by a joint body of the governments of the United States and Mexico. The group includes U.S. secretary of state Colin Powell and Attorney General John Ashcroft from the United States and Foreign Minister Jorge Castañeda and Interior Minister Santiago Creel from Mexico. Bush and Fox are expected to announce a final agreement at their planned September 4 summit.

Representatives of both administrations present the proposal as an expanded form of a "guest worker" program that would be the first step to gaining legal residence in the United States. Previously the guest worker status referred to residents of Mexico who were given temporary passes to work for specific employers in the United States. The proposal now under consideration concerns immigrants already in the country and there has been no mention of anyone having to return to Mexico to be eligible for the program.

Both governments are at pains to avoid using the word "amnesty" in their public pronouncements about the plan, mindful of the widespread support for a sweeping measure to legalize the status of millions of workers from all over the world now living permanently in the United States. The last widespread amnesty was enacted in 1986.

35 million from Latin America

The proposal partially registers the impact of the massive influx of workers from Latin America, the dependence on their labor power of employers in key sectors of the economy, and their demands to be recognized as human beings with citizenship rights. According to the latest census, U.S. residents of Latin American origins increased by 53 percent in the decade to 1990, and a further 58 percent to the turn of the century. Their total population now officially stands at more than 35 million.

This influx and the increasing role of migrant workers in labor struggles led to the adoption last year of a pro-amnesty policy by the AFL-CIO union federation—a shift from decades of hostility to immigration by the majority of the union officialdom. The hotel workers union and leaderships of other unions have declared their backing for the draft proposal.

The affected workers will have to "earn" their legality, reported the *New York Times*. "The options would quite likely be based on the immigrants' employment records, family ties in this country, and how long they have lived in the United States," wrote Eric Schmitt in the July 15 issue.

Issues under discussion, according to the *Wall Street Journal*, include "whether to grant guest-worker status to illegal agricultural workers in seasonal jobs, such as picking fruit." As well as "the large number of illegal immigrants who have been hired into the U.S. service sector, providing child care and working as janitors, among other things."

In an interview with the weekly Chicago Spanish-language magazine *Exito*, Mexican foreign minister Castañeda claimed that this proposal would provide workers guaranteed rights, unlike the notorious *bracero* programs of 1942 to 1964. Those schemes, which involved 5 million workers, became notorious among migrant workers for the vicious exploitation and dangerous working conditions they were subjected to at the hands of the bosses.

Castañeda stressed that his government does not support a second amnesty for the 8

million undocumented workers in the United States, but the "regularization" of the status of a number of Mexicans. "We are negotiating for Mexico," he said, stressing that his government sought a bilateral agreement that includes "the greatest possible number of rights for the greatest possible number of Mexicans in the shortest possible time."

The Mexican foreign minister urged this "regularization" in order for migrants to obtain drivers licenses, Social Security cards, and resident tuition at colleges. He also received four standing ovations at a convention of the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union (HERE) in Los Angeles for a statement in support of immigrant rights and encouraging the unions to back the legalization proposals.

HERE president John Wilhelm said immigrants "are in every workplace in the United States, and they're not leaving. We have to make it clear to immigrant workers that we're on their side."

Fox campaigns in Midwest

President Fox campaigned in favor of the proposal at a series of meetings in the Midwest during July, one of the first times a chief of state from Mexico was allowed to present views on U.S. domestic policy directly to a number of audiences in the country. Among working people, the Mexican president has received a positive response to his message—as expressed to a group of U.S. journalists in July—that "Mexicans who work in the United States should be considered legal. They shouldn't have to hide in the shadows." In Chicago, home to an estimated 1.4 million people of Mexican origin, he was greeted with shouts of "amnesty—the word that Mexican officials 'have stricken from...their vocabulary,'" according to the *Times*.



INS agents in Arizona round up undocumented workers. Massive influx of immigrants from Latin America into U.S. working class and their determination to fight for their rights has led Bush administration to float a new legalization plan for Mexicans.

"There should be a clear and consistent path to permanent residence for those migrants who want and are otherwise eligible to do so," he told a conference of immigrants rights advocates in Milwaukee.

Such a policy is good business in Mexico, and in the United States, said the Mexican president. At one gathering of Chicago business figures, he argued that immigrants are "not a social problem but...an economic opportunity," reported the *Financial Times*, echoing similar words that Bush said at Ellis Island in New York. "Immigration policies should be based on the same principles that drive trade and business investment," added Fox, who argues for a more humane policing regime on the U.S.-Mexican border in the same terms.

A number of figures from the right wing of capitalist politics have taken exception to any suggestion that undocumented workers may gain legal status. Texas Republican Sen. Philip Gramm, for example, said that such a "bad policy...rewards lawlessness." Gramm supports an expanded program to

bring "guest workers" into the country but vows that any concession to undocumented workers would have to pass over his "cold, dead, political body." Well it may.

New Jersey Congresswoman Marge Roukema echoed Gramm's sentiments. "Rather than considering amnesty for illegal aliens, our government should be working to strengthen our border controls, lower immigration quotas, and crack down on illegal aliens and those who employ them," she said.

In a phone interview July 20, one advocate for immigrants rights urged any proposal include all immigrants, regardless of their country of origin. "The legalization of Mexican workers is just," said Monica Santana of the Center for Latin American Workers in New York, "but it is not just that this is not offered to other communities. This is absurd."

"There has been a change since 1995," she said. "Not only among the Republicans, but also among the unions, when they started to see immigrants not as an enemy but as an ally. That is what is starting to show the politicians which way is north."

Argentine general strike protests austerity

Continued from front page
fected by the cut.

The "zero deficit" austerity package also calls for eliminating an existing subsidy in gas prices and lifting previously enacted tax breaks to the middle class, as well as a reduction in spending by the provincial governments of \$650 million over the rest of the year.

The July 20 work stoppage, organized jointly by the General Labor Confederation (CGT) and the Confederation of Argentine Workers, was the sixth general strike under the De la Rúa administration. The Argentine daily *El Día* described the strike as a plebiscite of the workers against the belt-tightening measures.

Unemployed workers demanding jobs, food, and unemployment relief backed the general strike. They blockaded several highways leading into the capital and others in the provinces of Santa Fe, Chaco, and Jujuy. Thousands of police were mobilized around the country to try to control the protests. In the capital, riot police with a water cannon truck attacked workers protesting in front of the building housing Argentina's stock exchange.

The next day when legislators met to approve the economic plan, hundreds of workers organized by the ATE surrounded the government palace after they were prevented from entering the building.

Hundreds of employees from the legislature and other trade unionists who succeeded in getting inside organized marches in the hallways, chanting and singing songs accompanied by the beat of improvised drums made of empty water bottles. Their protest continued throughout the 10-hour debate.

The austerity plan was approved with an agreement to implement the cuts on wages and pensions of more than \$500 a month as a "transitional measure." In theory the wage cuts are to be rescinded for those with salaries of up to \$1,000 a month based on projected revenue collection. In arguing for the measure, Horacio Pernasetti of the president's party assured legislators that the pay cut is to be in place only through the

end of this year.

The position of the Peronist opposition has been to facilitate the application of the measure while at the same time trying to minimize the political price it will pay for supporting the widely opposed cuts. For decades the labor bureaucracy has subordinated the unions to the Peronist party. The Peronist delegates to the lower house held up the meeting for several hours to prevent the gathering from having a quorum, saying they would approve the measure but only if the pay cuts begin with those receiving a salary or wages of at least \$1,000 a month. They eventually did participate in the vote, however.

The Peronists, who control the Senate, have announced that they will postpone the debate there until next week while they continue to search for alternatives. "We share the zero deficit policy, but not the wage cut," said José Luis Gioja, head of the Peronist bloc in the Senate, "but this shouldn't scare anybody, or cause alarm in the markets, because the government already has by decree all the tools it needs." He was referring to the powers the executive has to implement the measures unless they are reversed by the congress.

The initial proposal by Economy Minister Domingo Cavallo sought to begin the cuts at \$300. In exchange for raising the floor on the pay cuts, the legislators decided to obtain "alternative funds" by eliminating a gas subsidy as well as a tax rebate granted to the middle class last month.

Imperialist investors still nervous

Capitalist investors reacted with cautious optimism to the "zero deficit" budget. Argentina's stock market rose and its "country risk," a measure of bond performance, fell. The bonds are still viewed as a more risky investment than those issued by Brazil, Russia, and Turkey, however. "The prices are moving in the right direction, but Argentina has a long way to go yet," Peter West of BBVA Securities told London's *Financial Times*. "Investors are likely to remain nervous until they see government austerity measures implemented."

Workers have been hit hard in the reces-

sion that has gripped Argentina for the last three years, even before the latest austerity measures. The government's decision to hold the peso at a one-to-one ratio with the U.S. dollar has kept prices high at a time of rising unemployment. Just hours after the strike began July 19 the Ministry of Economy reported that the official national unemployment rate had gone up from 15 percent last October to 16.4 percent. In the urban areas around Buenos Aires the jobless rate is up to 18.7 percent.

The real rate is higher, since many workers have given up hope of finding a job. According to the Argentine newspaper *El Clarín*, before the current recession 200,000 people entered the workforce every year in the greater Buenos Aires area and the capital. One-fourth of that number went out looking for a job in recent months, evidence of "discouragement" among a big sector of the unemployed population.

A National Assembly of Popular Organizations, the Landless, and Unemployed Workers was held July 24 to map out a plan of action against the government's policies. The participants were members of organizations and associations that have been carrying out social protests and roadblocks across the country. The meeting was called the First Congress of Piqueteros, referring to the name given to those participating in the roadblocks.

The participants decided to carry out 24-hour roadblocks in 50 of the most important cities on September 2 and to call on state workers, small farmers, teachers, and airline workers to join the action. The organizations present are also planning to participate in a march on September 11 demanding a minimum of \$380 in monthly unemployment benefits and other subsidies.

Norma Nassif, of the Class and Combative Current, said at the meeting that "if the foreign debt was not paid the state could have enough to provide a \$400 subsidy to each unemployed worker." Claudio Lozano of the Confederation of Argentine Workers received an ovation when he called for replacing the "zero deficit" plan with one for "zero unemployment."

Cuban leaders call for plebiscite against 'free trade' pact

Continued from front page

where former U.S. president William Clinton called for creating what would be a U.S.-dominated free trade zone stretching from Alaska to Argentina. The meeting—demonstratively excluding Cuba—included 34 heads of state who agreed to draft the FTAA and complete negotiations for the agreement by 2005. At that time many top government officials from semicolonial countries voiced complaints to the media about unfair U.S. restrictions on their imports. Several said their economies would be wiped out by larger competitors if they did not have protective measures for some of their nations' products.

At the third Summit of the Americas, held in April in Quebec City, Canada, the heads of state reaffirmed their commitment to the FTAA, which would supposedly eliminate tariffs and domestic subsidies in all countries of the region with the exception of Cuba. With all the hoopla about "unfettered" trade, however, conflicts are far from being eliminated. The draft trade deal is itself a 434-page document. When it was posted July 4 on the FTAA's web site, the Associated Press reported, "Many brackets in the agreement language underscore how much ground negotiators have to cover."

The Brazilian government was one of the regimes at the Quebec summit that reportedly balked at the FTAA, insisting that Washington reduce its farm subsidies and antidumping rules, which keep out Brazilian products such as steel, sugar, and orange juice. "We will insist that free-trade benefits should be equally shared by all participants, that trade opening should be reciprocal and that it should lead to the attenuation rather than the aggravation of the disparities that exist in our region," said Brazilian president Fernando Cardoso. "Otherwise it would be irrelevant or, worse, undesirable."

Protectionist measures

Washington has imposed tariffs of 45 percent on 15 of Brazil's main exports, including sugar, orange juice, and shoes. The Brazilian government is also embroiled in a five-year trade dispute with the Canadian imperialists, who claim that subsidies to the Brazilian aircraft manufacturer Embraer has robbed the Montreal-based Bombardier Inc. of sales of regional jet planes. Earlier this year Ottawa moved to slap Can\$2.3 billion in trade sanctions against Brazil and banned imports of Brazilian beef, charging that it could carry mad cow disease.

While the FTAA is supported by a majority of U.S. capitalists, there is some conflict over the trade agreement between those who compete in Latin America and who want more protectionist measures than currently stipulated by the FTAA. For example,

the sugar industry in the United States enjoys one of the most protectionist havens—a 244 percent tariff on sugar imports. And according to the *New York Times*, the Flo-Sun Corporation and other giant sugar producers want more restrictive trade policies. "Sugar programs that protect growers from foreign competition" are maintained at a cost of \$2 billion a year, the paper reported.

A 10-year-old conflict between U.S. and Canadian timber companies has also flared up, with U.S. timber bosses demanding restrictions on softwood lumber imports from Canada. Washington has also placed a ban on potatoes from Canada's Prince Edward Island, supposedly because of concerns about a potato virus.

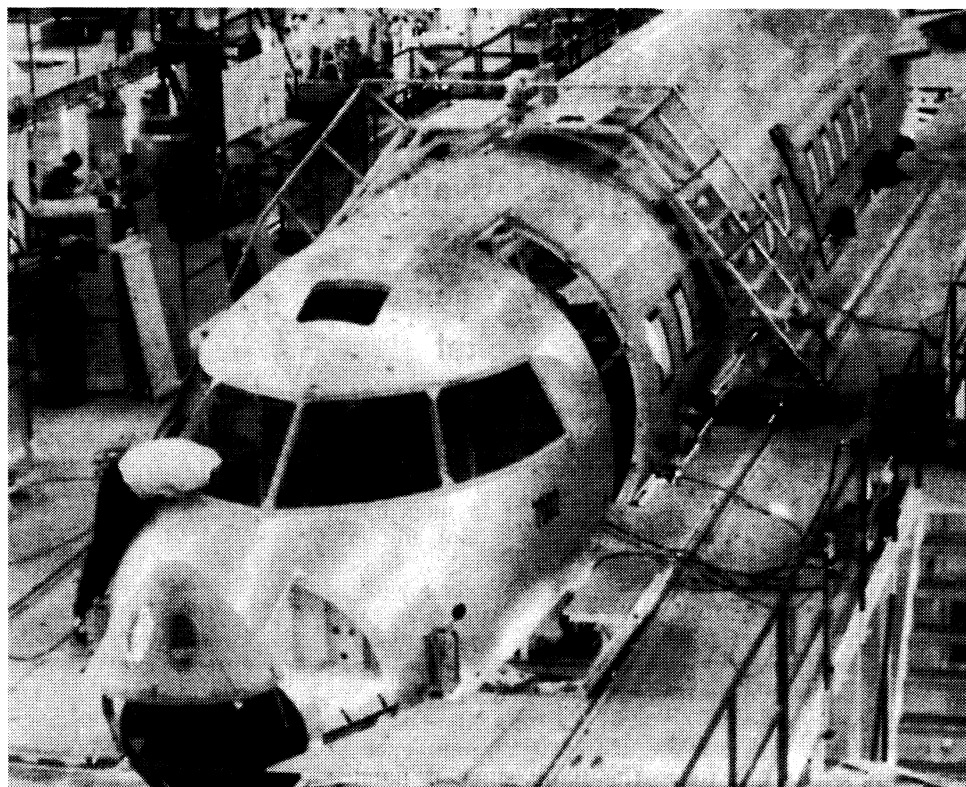
Meanwhile, the U.S. House of Representatives voted in June to prohibit Mexican trucks from using U.S. highways beyond 20 miles of the border. The Senate voted the following month to substantially increase inspection requirements of Mexican trucks before they enter the United States. The bipartisan votes for the measures were justified on claims that Mexican trucks are unsafe and would present road hazards. The truck access was part of the 1993 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which mandated Washington to allow Mexican trucks to ship goods to and from any place in the United States by Jan. 1, 2002.

NAFTA is a precursor of the FTAA. The NAFTA trade pact, penned by the U.S. government along with Canada and Mexico, is a trade bloc primarily aimed at Washington's rivals in Europe and Japan.

Trade agreements like NAFTA are aimed at extending the domination by the handful of wealthy ruling families in the United States and Canada over superexploited workers and oppressed nations such as Mexico. Many voices in the debate over the trade pact point out that despite the Bush and Clinton administrations' statements about the FTAA guaranteeing a "level playing field for all" the nature of the economic and social relations between the imperialist powers and semicolonial countries, as well as the raft of both formal and informal measures used by Washington to restrict imports, make a mockery of pretenses at equality.

"While espousing the virtues of free trade, the United States, Japan, members of the European Union, and other rich countries continue to employ various means—including high tariffs, export subsidies and hygiene restrictions—to shelter their own industries, effectively preventing developing countries from gaining greater share in the markets," wrote *Washington Post* reporter William Drozdiak.

In order to bolster regional trade and international competitiveness, many countries in South America and the Caribbean have



Assembly line at Bombardier aircraft factory in Dorval, Canada. Bombardier owners are involved in trade dispute with Brazilian jet maker Embraer. Despite accolades about "free trade" in the Americas, U.S. and Canadian imperialists use protectionist measures to reinforce exploitation of Latin America and Caribbean.

sought to form economic alliances. The FTAA would be a powerful lever in Washington's hands to undercut or force the scraping of trade pacts like the Mercosur customs union, the Caribbean Community and Common Market or Caricom, and the Andean Pact. Mercosur, also known as the Southern Common Market, was established in 1991 in Asuncion, Paraguay, to develop a common market and remove trade barriers between Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, and Paraguay.

While these economic agreements were drafted to remove trade barriers between member countries, Mercosur has also attempted to create a measure of preference over foreign capital among its member countries. A number of other countries have signed agreements with Mercosur as associate members, including Chile in 1996 and Bolivia in 1997. Negotiations have taken place between Mercosur and countries from the Andean Pact—Colombia, Peru, Ecuador, Venezuela, and Bolivia—that would establish a South American common market for trade and investment.

Normal workings of capitalism

Since the rise of finance capital at the opening of the last century, every action by Washington or some other capitalist power—be it a bank loan to the ruling classes in a semicolonial nation, a trade pact, or a scheme to replace a national currency with the U.S. dollar—has warped the economies of the oppressed nations of Latin America, Africa, and Asia.

This process is the lawful functioning of capitalism in the imperialist epoch. The imperialist powers have used their dominance in manufacturing, transport, access to capital, and, when needed, their military power, to maintain the semicolonial countries as sources of cheap raw materials and

markets for commodities.

Meanwhile, as international finance capital has squeezed more and more wealth from the toilers of Asia, Africa, and Latin America to boost their sagging profit margins, the total Third World debt today has soared to more than \$2 trillion, immensely higher than at the worst level of the debt crisis of the 1980s.

Since 1980 the living conditions for millions of workers and peasants in Latin America and the Caribbean have worsened. The number of people living below the official poverty line has risen from 39 percent to 44 percent over the past two decades. The debt owed by Latin American countries to banks in the imperialist centers went from \$300 billion in 1985 to \$750 billion today, even as these countries paid hundreds of billions in interest payments over the same years. In fact, 56 percent of the region's income from exports is diverted toward paying this debt, which continues to grow. Between 1992 and 1999 countries in Latin America paid \$913 billion in debt-servicing charges, that is interest on loans from imperialist investors.

'Union of a shark and some sardines'

The FTAA "is nothing other than integration between a shark and some sardines," said Osvaldo Martínez, president of the Cuban National Assembly's Economic Affairs Commission. "The reasons for the FTAA are not what the Caribbean or Latin Americans want nor are they the alleged advantages of economic integration for those countries," he noted.

Martínez was a speaker at the International Conference in Solidarity with Cuba and Against Neocolonial Globalization held in Havana May 2. The meeting was hosted by the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC) and included representatives of more than 200 unions from 58 countries. Participants at the conference approved a plan to call on the trade union movement in Latin America and the Caribbean to mobilize against the imperialist trade pact. They set July 22–24 as the date for a meeting in Caracas, Venezuela, to build opposition to the FTAA.

Faced with competition from its rivals in Europe and Japan, U.S. finance capital seeks to "consolidate its dominion over Latin America and the Caribbean.... in the context of the struggle between the large centers of world power," Martínez explained. The U.S. rulers aim to assert their dominance over a region they view as their backyard and extend control over a broad range of markets and raw materials, and draw on a source of cheap labor for enormous profits.

Cuban president Fidel Castro, who also participated in the conference, led the May Day march and rally at Revolution Square the previous day, which he billed as the "first protest" against the FTAA. Both Castro and Martínez pointed to nontariff barriers that range from alleged environmental protection measures to subsidies that push Latin American goods from the market, and reinforce dependency on U.S. capital. Castro pointed out how "the U.S. agricultural sector receives some \$80 billion in subsidies and will continue receiving them in the future, whatever the disguise."

Bush calls for World Bank to shift to grants

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

U.S. president George Bush has proposed a major shift in the way the World Bank disburses "financial aid" to the poorest semicolonial countries, calling on it and other "development banks" to provide funding in the form of grants rather than loans.

Bush's remarks came during his speech July 17 at the World Bank headquarters in Washington where he suggested the imperialist financial institution convert up to half of its assistance to the poorest countries into grants. He made the proposal on the eve of his trip to Genoa, Italy, where the heads of state of the seven largest imperialist powers plus Russia—the Group of Eight—planned a meeting on international trade and other political issues.

John Taylor, U.S. undersecretary for international affairs, said the shift to grants would be linked to funding specific projects and allowing greater foreign scrutiny over how the funds are spent.

The World Bank was founded in 1944 and has a staff of some 10,600 people. It provided more than \$15 billion in loans last year to countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Eastern Europe. Like its counterpart the

International Monetary Fund (IMF), founded in 1946, the World Bank plays an important role in advancing imperialist policy, particularly that of Washington, in the Third World.

Through the bank's International Development Association, it provides loans at discounted rates. Currently Washington, which calls the shots for the imperialist financial institution, contributes about \$800 million annually to the World Bank.

Bush's call for the policy change "has alarmed several European countries that are shareholders of the Washington-based institution," London's *Financial Times* reported. "Coming soon after the abrupt US decision to abandon the Kyoto protocol on global warming, it has renewed fears about US unilateralism in policymaking." Objections to replacing loans with grants have come from governments in the United Kingdom, Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden.

The previous month, U.S. treasury secretary Paul O'Neill also called for an overhaul of the World Bank. O'Neill echoed his predecessor, Lawrence Summers, who recommended drastic changes for the IMF.

Summers proposed that the IMF eliminate funding programs to promote development in poor countries and lend funds only to countries that face short-term currency crises, phasing out long-term loans.

Liana Cisneros, an official of Jubilee Plus, the successor to Jubilee 2000 that supported debt relief, jumped to support Bush's proposal and to attack the European powers. "European leaders... are simply defending corporate interests in their own countries" by opposing the proposal she said. "World Bank loans effectively provide subsidies to big companies wanting to do business in developing countries."

A more sober assessment was made in a July 20 report on the Ascribe Newswire: "While the heads of the world's eight leading industrialized nations meet this week to discuss the faltering world economy, African leaders speaking out at recent United Nations meetings in New York and Geneva have put forward proposals for deeper and broader debt cancellation.... Sub-Saharan Africa continues to pay \$14.2 billion US dollars each year in debt service for loans which have, by some accounts, already been repaid many times over."

Communists hold convention in New Zealand

Meetings discuss openings to build revolutionary party of vanguard workers

BY JANET ROTH

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—A Militant Labour Forum speakers panel from Australia, New Zealand, and the United States here brought to life the resistance of workers and farmers internationally, the early signs of a proletarian vanguard taking shape out of these struggles, and the openings and challenges this offers for the communist movement today.

The lively July 14 public forum, which drew some 30 participants, was held in conjunction with a two-day convention of the Communist League. Following the convention, socialist workers and Young Socialists members in Christchurch, located on the southern island of the country, organized a launching of *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* hosted by the Militant Labour Forum. Twenty-four people came to the Pathfinder bookshop for the meeting, which was addressed by Pathfinder president and Socialist Workers Party leader Mary-Alice Waters, who wrote the introduction to the new book, and YS leader Olympia Newton from the United States, as well as Annalucia Vermunt of the Communist League in New Zealand.

In Christchurch, Newton also spoke to a meeting organized by students at Canterbury University. Waters and Newton also visited the picket lines of striking Bluebird Foods workers in Auckland and Sanford fish workers in Timaru. By the end of the week the Young Socialists in New Zealand had recruited a couple of new members, doubling their size, and had set up a new YS chapter in Christchurch.

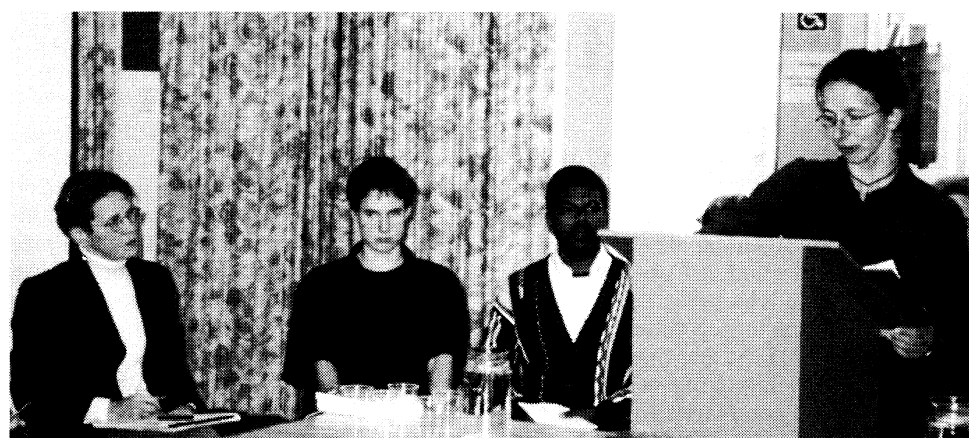
The convention, forums, and other events provided a unique opportunity for the communist movement here—members of the Communist League, the Young Socialists,

and organized supporters of the movement—to step back and assess how they can more effectively build a communist component integrated into the proletarian vanguard that is emerging from the resistance of workers and farmers in the country. Building branches of the league in workers districts, carrying out effective communist work in the unions and on the job in industrial worksites, and meeting the opportunities to recruit to the Young Socialists and the Communist League were at the center of the discussions.

At the forum in Auckland Communist League leader Michael Tucker described the strikes and protests that had broken out the previous week, actions by working people that helped shape the deliberations at the convention.

Tucker pointed to workers who walked out at factories and Bluebird Foods distribution centers in Auckland, Timaru, and Christchurch as part of a fight for a new contract. Fisheries, newspaper, and waterside workers are also involved in ongoing strike action, he said. And hundreds of apple growers marched in Hastings to protest the decision of the major fruit exporting company Enza to levy growers \$4.50 a carton to cover its foreign exchange losses due to the decline in the New Zealand dollar. Prisoners also occupied a prison yard in Auckland to win a demand that pay phones be reinstalled for their use.

Tim Williams from the Young Socialists described the resistance of working people to the employers' offensive evident at a lively picket line set up by the striking Bluebird Foods workers. Williams highlighted the support the pickets are receiving from



Militant/Above: Terry Coggan; Left: Michael Tucker
Above, Annalucia Vermunt of Communist League in New Zealand speaks in Auckland at July 14 forum, held during league's national convention. From left to right: Mary-Alice Waters, Tim Williams, and Baskaran Appu. Left, workers at Bluebird Foods in Auckland picket during strike in mid-July.



other workers, pointing to the din of "toots" from passing motorists, in particular from truck drivers, on the busy industrial road.

Larger number of strikes

Recent statistics indicate that there were an increased number of days lost through industrial stoppages in the first three months of this year, the highest in 18 months. In addition, union membership in New Zealand

increased last year for the first time in 15 years.

Tucker noted New Zealand is in an economic upturn, but with the major capitalist economies internationally slowing down, the expansion is unlikely to be deep or prolonged. "This upturn benefits the capitalists above all," he noted. "It grows out of the attacks the employers have carried out over the last 15 years on our wages, working conditions, and unions. It grows out of the success of the government's drive to dismantle the social wage, which has led to the crises working people face today in health, housing, and education."

Joanne Kuniansky from the Communist League in Australia spoke on the panel and added to the picture of actions being taken by working people in their own interests as they confront the effects of the capitalist offensive. Strikes by unionists to defend workers compensation, protests in support of Aboriginal rights, and rallies to defend immigrants have all occurred recently in Australia. She explained the increasingly open response communist workers who are part of this resistance are receiving, giving as an example a *Militant* subscriber who works on the docks and helped members of the Communist League sell *Militant* subscriptions to co-workers.

Kuniansky and other speakers said that communist workers have not yet found any limits other than their own size, time, and energy to the political response they get among a vanguard of fighting workers and farmers as they put forward a working-class perspective on politics and communist books and literature published by Pathfinder, and become involved together with them in political actions, strikes, and other events.

Delegation to World Youth Festival

The openings for communist youth were addressed by Annalucia Vermunt and Olympia Newton. Both are helping to build delegations to the 15th World Festival of Youth and Students in Algeria in August.

Vermunt, a member of the Meat Workers union in Christchurch, said Young Socialists in New Zealand are working with political organizations in Fiji, New Caledonia, and Papua New Guinea, as well as Australia and New Zealand, to send representatives to the Youth Festival. This is an avenue for anti-imperialist-minded youth in the Pacific region to collaborate together and meet allies around the globe.

The festival in Algeria is only the second that is open to all anti-imperialist forces internationally to participate in on an equal basis. This in particular provides a new opening in Asia, where access by workers and young people to communist ideas has been previously blocked in some countries by repressive regimes, such as that of Suharto in Indonesia. The Maoist variant of Stalinism is also a declining obstacle.

Newton talked about the opportunities for the Young Socialists participating in the festival to introduce and sell books and pamphlets by Pathfinder Press to participants, many of whom have never had the opportunity to read the works of communist and revolutionary leaders. Participants in the

Forum celebrates new Pathfinder book

BY DOUG COOPER

SYDNEY, Australia—Is a socialist revolution possible in the United States or in Australia? That question was at the heart of the presentations and discussion at a July 22 Militant Labor Forum here, attended by some 24 people, celebrating the new Pathfinder book *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution*. Five participants were attending their first forum.

Speakers included Mary-Alice Waters, the author of the book's preface and a member of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party in the United States, and Olympia Newton, a member of the National Executive Committee of the Young Socialists in the United States. Newton is also the production organizer in the Pathfinder printshop where the new book and all of Pathfinder's titles are printed. They were joined on the platform by Ron Poulsen, a leader of the Communist League and a member of the Maritime Union of Australia.

The meeting was co-chaired by Young Socialists member Alasdair MacDonald and Linda Harris, a member of the Communist League and the Australasian Meat Industry Employees' Union.

In his talk, Poulsen pointed to several examples of workers thinking about revolutionary politics. One was the reaction of a steelworker on a picket line against BHP in nearby Wollongong in early June after seeing *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution*. The worker, a longtime trade union activist here who was previously a member of Solidarity in his native Poland, exclaimed, "We need a revolution everywhere!" Poulsen said a workmate at Port Botany with whom he recently discussed the book told

him he felt that a socialist revolution was both necessary and possible in poor, less-developed countries like Cuba but doubted whether it was possible in wealthy countries such as the United States and Australia.

Describing the Australian imperialist ruling class as the "plunderers of the Pacific," Poulsen explained what imperialism is and the concrete ways in which fellow workers, farmers, and toilers in Papua New Guinea (PNG), Fiji, East Timor, and elsewhere are superexploited and oppressed, especially by finance capitalists based in Australia and their government in Canberra.

He went on to describe the resistance by working people that is percolating throughout the region, from PNG to Australia. Here, just-released government figures show a record decline in "lost days" of production due to strikes. "But there are actually many more smaller strikes, mostly short, sharp battles by workers—and the stakes are higher today," he noted.

To take advantage of the expanding opportunities for communist workers, members of the league and Young Socialists have decided to rapidly move to new premises in the working-class district of Campsie, Poulsen reported. "This is likely to be the final Militant Labor Forum here," he said. With the move to Campsie, organizers of the forums "intend to move back to a regular weekly meeting" too, he added.

'Turning point in working-class politics'

Newton described the experiences revolutionists in the United States are having that "convince us of what *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* says: We're at a turning point in working-class politics in the imperialist countries."

A key feature of the "increasing working-class resistance around the world," Newton explained, is that a "working-class vanguard in formation" is being tempered. "Whatever the outcome of their particular struggle, these workers come out of the struggle itself more confident, searching for other militants to link up with, and wanting to continue fighting," she said.

Waters noted in her talk the multinational composition of the audience, which included people originally from Fiji, Indonesia, Tokelau, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Canada, the United States, as well people born in Australia.

The examples of growing resistance, Waters said, show that "we're talking about what has already happened, not simply what is coming" in politics in the United States and Australia, and in oppressed countries like Indonesia and Papua New Guinea.

Working people whom communist workers are meeting in struggle around the world, Waters said, are asking the big questions: What do you replace these brutal capitalist governments with? Is it possible to have a society where human solidarity is something you can rely on? How would you ever get to something like that?

Unless communists are capable of giving clear and scientific answers to these questions, Waters said, and point to and educate about the revolutionary struggles around the world that can lead to a different class foundation of society, "we will never have the chance to begin to practice real politics—which, as Lenin always explained, begins with the actions of millions," Waters said. "That's why the Cuban Revolution is so crucial," she said, because it is a living revolution where working people demonstrate their capacity to build a new society every day. Waters described the strengthening of the Cuban Revolution over the last decade and new challenges workers and farmers in Cuba are taking on today.

The SWP leader pointed to two fundamental issues which, if not addressed by thinking workers in the course of struggles, will block the possibilities to bring together layers of working people around the world who must join as allies in common revolution.

Continued on Page 10

CUBA and the Coming American Revolution by Jack Barnes

Cuba and the Coming American Revolution is about the struggles of working people in the imperialist heartland, the youth who are attracted to them, and the example set by the people of Cuba that revolution is not only necessary—it can be made. Preface by Mary-Alice Waters. In English, Spanish, and French.

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 8.

Coal miners rally to defend their union

Continued from front page

and trying to cut union jobs," said Ron Marquardt, president of UMWA Local 1810 at Powhatan No. 6. Miners at the protest pointed out that the new mine is really not a new mine but a new portal for the old mine.

Many of the participants in the rally were UMWA members working at the Powhatan No. 6 mine and the Maple Creek mine in Bentleyville, Pennsylvania. The UMWA declared the day an official memorial day to allow miners to attend the action, effectively shutting down both mines.

This is the second memorial day called by the union this month at the two locals. UMWA contingents also came from UMWA mines in western Pennsylvania and northern West Virginia. There were also delegations of UMWA officials from Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, and Utah. A special point was made that Murray is in the permit stage and is planning to begin coal production in Utah.

"If we don't put up a fight now, we'll face what they face at No. 6," said Tom, a UMWA member who works at Maple Creek. This young miner was referring to the fact that Murray has successfully opened a nonunion mine right next to a union mine. Like some miners at the rally, Tom was reluctant to give his full name citing recent firings by the company.

As the Powhatan Point rally got underway, UMWA international secretary-treasurer Carlo Tarley announced that another group of miners and their supporters were that same day marching to Ohio Valley's mine in Galatia, Illinois. Murray bought that mine in 1998. Cecil Roberts, the UMWA's international president, was arrested in a civil disobedience protest there as he appealed to miners at the Galatia mine to join the UMWA.

Tarley was the main speaker at the Ohio rally. The UMWA official gave a serious half-hour presentation on the stakes in this battle that now confronts miners in two states. Many miners learned for the first time about some of the issues and details of the fight at Powhatan No. 6. Last December members of UMWA Local 1248 at Maple Creek rejected, by a 335-10 vote, a contract proposed by the company that covered both Maple Creek and a new mine Murray plans to open in Pennsylvania.

This agreement was brought to the membership after discussions between the UMWA International and Murray. The rejected agreement provided for an increase of 30 cents an hour each year of the contract. Because of the wage concessions and wage freeze in place since Murray reopened Maple Creek in 1995, the pay received by workers at that mine lags \$3-4 per hour behind the wage rates stipulated in the contract between the UMWA and the Bituminous Coal Operators Association. "With all the concessions, the union estimates that we've put \$25 million into Murray's pocket," explained Randy, another Maple Creek miner.

The resounding defeat of the contract has helped unify the union workforce at Maple Creek. Miners point to this fact with a good deal of pride. Tarley took note of this during his speech when he told rally participants that the overwhelming vote against the contract strengthened the miners in their fight against Murray's union-busting. Earlier in July, in response to memorial days called by the union, hundreds of UMWA members at the two mines attended membership meetings called to initiate a campaign to publicize what the union is fighting for.

Ohio Valley has subsequently taken legal



Militant/Tony Lane

Miners rally July 24 in Powhatan Point, Ohio, against Ohio Valley's antiunion assault.

action against the UMWA, filing charges with the National Labor Relations Board. "The memorial day was called to punish Ohio Valley and Mr. Robert E. Murray for the UMWA's inability to organize a mine completely unrelated to Ohio Valley," John Fortelli, Ohio Valley's president and general manager, told the *Times Leader*, an eastern Ohio newspaper.

The company has also filed a \$100 million lawsuit against UMWA international secretary-treasurer Tarley for "defamatory" and "false" statements about Murray and the Ohio Valley Coal Company. Tarley said the charges are "totally without merit" and a way to avoid the real issues.

The miners at the rally received the support of a group of fired health-care workers who are fighting for their jobs. Three women, members of the Service Employees International Union, were carrying union flags and wearing union T-shirts. Glenna Roe's T-shirt said on the back: "Re-

turn Our 24 Comrades." Roe's husband is a laid-off coal miner and has been passed over for hiring by officials at the Century Mine. She said that she was among the 24 members of the union negotiating team fired for going to the offices of their employer, Voca/Rescare, a large operator of health-care facilities, and asking to speak with the CEO of the company about providing employees with affordable health insurance.

UMWA officer Tarley told the rally that Ohio Valley owner Murray "told us that 'I need the people, but I can't hire off the panel,'" referring to a seniority roster of out-of-work union miners. Highlighting the antiunion assault by Ohio Valley, an article in the May 6 *Cleveland Plain Dealer* reported Murray "has a labor shortage at the No. 6 mine but said he can't afford to fill the positions with middle-aged workers laid off from other UMWA mines because they come with costly health and pension benefits."

Rally participants responded enthusiastically when Tarley insisted that the UMWA will defend laid-off miners and the union. "Murray says, 'I want to hire your sons and daughters, but dump the old guys.' We will not be a party to age discrimination. We must convince Bob Murray that we need to share the wealth, and educate him that this is your union, your jobs, which we intend to keep," stated Tarley.

Miners say that when Murray talks about the "dumping the old guys" he means "dumping" the union. This point was not lost on the young miners at the rally, of which there was a good layer, many with less than six months underground experience.

The memorial days and today's union rally are part of the "opening salvo" by the UMWA against Robert Murray's antiunion drive. The union is planning further protests.

Coal miner campaigns for mayor of Pittsburgh

BY OMARI MUSA

PITTSBURGH—Socialist Workers campaign supporters hit the streets here July 21 to begin an intensive 10-day drive to collect nearly 2,000 signatures to put coal miner and union activist Frank Forrestal on the ballot for mayor of Pittsburgh. The deadline to turn in the signatures is August 1. On the first day of petitioning, campaign supporters netted 575 signatures and collected another 150 the following day.

"We are centering this petitioning drive, sales of the campaign's newspaper, the *Militant*, and revolutionary books and pamphlets here in East Liberty, where we are establishing political roots," Forrestal told supporters. "This weekend is a good indication that the progress we have made in the past two months is the beginning of being part of this community and its struggles. We plan to deepen our base here in East Liberty, a predominantly Black and working-class area of the city, and use it to reach out to the rest of the city and the coalfields in western Pennsylvania and West Virginia as well," he said.

To drive this point home Forrestal said he and supporters would be attending a rally July 24 in Powhatan Point, Ohio, called by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) against Robert Murray, the owner of the mine where Forrestal works. "Murray has opened a nonunion mine in Ohio and has used the wage freeze on us union miners to amass cash to start this mine in Ohio and maybe another one right next to us at Maple Creek here in western Pennsylvania," Forrestal stated. "We miners don't like what he is doing and intend to let Murray know it. Our union is rallying to put a stop to non-union mines."

Later that evening campaign supporters and others attended the Militant Labor Forum. The theme of this event was the relationship between the rise of the fight for Black rights and deepening resistance of workers to the employers' attacks. The presentation was made by Osborne Hart, a meat packer, who is also the Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Detroit.

Petitioners noted the friendly response they got from workers in Pittsburgh to the fact that a socialist was fighting to get on

the ballot to present a working-class program in the November election. One worker said that he "would keep in touch with the campaign. I live here in the neighborhood and will be by the bookstore." One campaign supporter who couldn't participate in the petitioning over the weekend came in late Sunday, contributed \$20 to the campaign, and took a petition board to get fellow auto workers to sign. "Here's my contribution and I'll be here next Saturday to petition," he said.

The campaign is organizing a forum July 28 at its headquarters to celebrate victory in the petition drive and to hear a report from Forrestal on the UMWA rally.



Packinghouse worker runs for Congress in Boston area election

BY TED LEONARD

BOSTON—Brock Satter, a 30-year-old packinghouse worker, announced he will be the Socialist Workers candidate for the 9th Congressional District. Earlier this year the

representative in the district, Joseph Moakley, died. A special election is being held on October 16 to fill the seat.

The 9th Congressional District includes parts of Boston and areas south of the city such as Brockton where 465 nurses have been on strike at the Brockton Hospital since May 25.

Satter is a participant in the ongoing effort to organize his workplace, Kayem Foods, in Chelsea, into the United Food and Commercial Workers union.

To get on the ballot, Massachusetts state law requires a candidate to collect 2,000 signatures of registered voters. Satter's campaign committee has announced that it is organizing to collect 4,300 signatures August 4-11. During the petitioning blitz campaign supporters plan to hold a rally and a reportback from the Cuba/U.S. Youth Exchange, which is currently taking place in Havana. Satter is part of the New England delegation at that conference.

Ted Leonard, is a packinghouse worker in Chelsea, Massachusetts.

MILITANT AND PERSPECTIVA MUNDIAL TAX REFUND

Turn your upcoming federal income tax refund into something the Democrats and Republicans never planned on: a way to deepen the struggle and education of working people against capitalist exploitation and oppression.

Readers of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* in the United States have a special opportunity to contribute a financial windfall—the up to \$300 income tax refund—to the two socialist publications.

The IRS has begun notifying people of the size of their tax rebate. Your contributions—small and large—will enable us to keep getting these working-class weapons into the hands of those who need them.

Tens of millions of working people will receive nothing because their earnings were so low they did not pay income taxes.

Others will receive far less than the \$300. But many, including *Militant* and *PM* supporters, will get up to the \$300 limit.

Please e-mail your name, address, telephone number, and the amount you would like to donate to: themilitant@compuserve.com or send in the coupon below.

Number of contributors so far: 8

☐ Yes! I WANT TO SEND MY TAX REFUND TO THE *MILITANT* AND *PERSPECTIVA MUNDIAL*.

☐ I PLEDGE \$ _____ FROM MY TAX REFUND.

☐ I CAN'T PLEDGE NOW BUT WILL DO SO WHEN I KNOW WHAT MY REFUND WILL BE.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____

ZIP _____

PHONE _____

Clip and send to the *Militant*, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Make checks payable to the *Militant*.

U.S. youth learn about Cuban Revolution

Continued from front page

cial, and local levels. Taking part in the exchange were most of the 108 delegates to the local assembly in the Playa district, an area in western Havana with 188,000 residents. Municipal assembly president Edel Correa explained how elections take place in Cuba. He also described the municipal assembly's responsibility for the 41 child-care centers; 65 elementary, secondary, and adult education schools; nearly 300 family doctor's offices; seven agricultural markets; three computer centers for youth; and other vital services in that district.

Some of the U.S. visitors expressed surprise to learn that Cuba had elections in the first place, since the U.S. big-business press hides this fact. They were even more interested to find that elected delegates are not full-time functionaries but continue to work their regular jobs, performing most of their legislative duties after work and on weekends, while receiving no salary apart from their normal wages.

A visitor from Tucson, Arizona, and one from Washington remarked that the U.S. media argues that the fact that Fidel Castro remains president is proof that Cuba is undemocratic. They asked why he continues to be reelected. This question sparked an animated exchange on the nature of democracy, a discussion that continued informally afterward.

A municipal delegate who is retired from the Cuban navy took the floor. He pointed out that to answer this electoral question it's necessary to understand that Cuba has made a deep-going revolution, and its leadership has retained political support by its deeds, not words alone. Fidel Castro, he said, "didn't buy this respect in a store—he has won it by what he has done over the years, going back to the assault on the Moncada barracks on July 26, 1953," when Castro led

a group of young revolutionaries to attack an army garrison of the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship. Unlike politicians in the United States, Castro and the central leadership in Cuba continue today to take political initiatives in the interests of the Cuban people—"and take the message of the revolution all over the world," he added.

The 48th anniversary of this action, which launched the revolutionary struggle leading to the overthrow of the capitalist regime and the taking of political power by workers and farmers, would be celebrated a few days later throughout Cuba, including a rally of hundreds of thousands in Havana.

Another delegate, Daniel Morales, from the Santa Fe neighborhood, commented that the People's Power legislature "is made up of workers, farmers, students, and others—not factory owners."

Shem Morton, from Los Angeles, added that "the Cuban Revolution is an example to working people and youth in the United States that people are capable of freeing themselves from imperialism and that human beings can take their destiny in their hands."

The U.S. delegation later visited the Latin American School of Medicine. Director Juan Carrizo Estévez explained that "the

origin of this school is Cuba's response to catastrophe in Central America caused by hurricane Mitch in Central America and Georges in the Caribbean in 1998. Cuba sent volunteer doctors, nurses, and health-care workers to the affected areas, and they are still there."

Then, to help address the longer-term social problem of limited health care in these nations underdeveloped by imperialism, the Cuban leadership decided to establish a medical school to train thousands of youth from these countries as doctors. "The goal is for these young people to return to their countries to help create a sustainable health-care system, and in some cases to go to the most remote and needy areas of their countries" following the example of the Cuban volunteers, Estévez said.

Today the school is training 5,000 youth from 19 Latin American countries, four African nations, and now the United States, with 11 U.S. students enrolled so far. Wilfredo Chaparro Mérida, 19, a student from Oruro, Bolivia, told the *Militant* that most of the students, like himself, are from working-class and rural families, and in many cases are youth of oppressed nationalities.

In the capitalist world, Estévez said, "pa-

tients are treated as customers, doctors act like managers, and medicines are viewed as commodities. Our goal is to train students, through both theory and practice, not only to have a solid scientific grounding, but to emphasize human values." The program is free—including classes, textbooks, housing, food, and all other basic needs of the students.

"How do you find the resources to maintain this school, given the U.S. embargo and the shortages of many goods that Cuba faces?" one U.S. visitor asked.

The school director underscored the fact that this is not a technical question but a political one. "It's through the political will of our leadership and the priorities of the revolution," he replied. "The embargo is a genuine problem, but we are able to combat it through the intelligence and creativity of the Cuban people."

The Youth Exchange also includes participation in the massive July 26 rally in Havana; a trip to Playa Girón (Bay of Pigs), where Cuban working people defeated a U.S.-organized mercenary invasion 40 years ago; a visit with the neighborhood organizations called Committees for the Defense of the Revolution; and a discussion forum with government ministers and others.

S. Africa: miners, utility workers strike

Continued from front page

ill. Currently such workers are only eligible for two weeks severance pay for each year of service, with a cap of 10 years. For a miner who cannot work again, this doesn't leave much to live on. According to some estimates as many as a quarter of the miners in South Africa are infected with the HIV virus, making this issue particularly urgent.

The final issue for the coal miners is wages. The NUM has called for annual raises of 8.5 percent for the next two years, but Ingwe, Eyesizwe, and Anglocoal have not committed to any guaranteed increase, Lekorotsoana said.

At the gold mines, the central issue is wages. The NUM has called for a minimum monthly wage of 2,000 rand (\$240), as well as annual raises of 8.5 percent. Wages for entry-level jobs in the gold mines currently range from R1,200 to R1,640 (1 Rand = US 12 cents). The coal bosses have agreed to the R2,000 minimum.

Since the strike vote all of the gold min-

ing houses "have committed themselves to the R2,000 minimum by the year 2002," the union reported, but have varying proposals of how and when wages will reach this level. The NUM says the new proposals will be discussed by miners over the next couple of days and the union will meet with the gold bosses July 27. "It must be understood that this situation neither implies nor means that the strike threat is lifted off with regards to gold producers," read an NUM press release. Other issues in dispute include annual leave and the method by which production bonuses are calculated.

Electric workers, diamond miners strike

Members of the Mineworkers, Metalworkers, and MWU-Solidarity unions are acting jointly in the strike against the Eskom, which began July 24 after the power company unilaterally implemented its wage offer. The unions are demanding an 11 percent raise for the lowest paid workers and 9 percent for the highest. Eskom offered raises

of 9 and 7 percent respectively.

Union officials said that more than 80 percent of the Eskom workers joined in the strike action, either picketing or staying home. At many power stations participation was 100 percent.

Members of the NUM at the state-owned Alexkor Diamond Mine on the West Coast have been on the picket lines for three weeks. The miners, most of whom are black, are demanding a larger pay raise than the company has offered NUM members. A larger raise was offered to the technicians, foremen, and administrators who are members of the Official Association of South Africa, most of whom are white. "This will widen the salary gap between the privileged and underprivileged even further," said NUM regional chairperson Abie Maarman. "We want management to close the wage gap between the two unions because this is a government institution." About 2,000 strikers and supporters from the surrounding area held a mass rally July 19 to press their demands.

— CALENDAR —

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

Participate in a Socialist Summer School. The school focuses on study of *To the Rural Poor* and *What Is To Be Done?* by V.I. Lenin. Classes on Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. July 11 to August 29. Special educational weekend August 18-19. 5237 N. 5th St. Tel: (215) 324-7020. Sponsored by Young Socialists, Socialist Workers Party.

NEW YORK

Mahattan

Rally on the Day After the Resumption of U.S. Navy Bombing of Vieques.

The U.S. Navy has announced that it will resume training exercises on Wed., Aug. 1. *To find out about planned actions call (212) 348-8004 or 462-0146. Sponsored by Vieques Solidarity Network.*

— MILITANT LABOR FORUMS —

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Patrice Lumumba and the Revolution in the Congo. Speaker: Pattie Thompson, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Aug. 3, 7:30 p.m. 1212 N. Ashland, 2nd Floor. Tel: (773) 342-1780.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

Patrice Lumumba and the Revolution in the Congo. Speaker: Mike Taber, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., July 27, 7:30 p.m. 506 Springfield Ave. 3rd Floor. Donation: \$4. Tel: (973) 643-3341.

NEW YORK

Brooklyn

The Cuban Revolution and the Struggle against Imperialism in Africa Today. Fri., July 27, 7:30 p.m. 372A 53rd Street. Donation: \$4. Tel: (718) 567-8014.

Garment District

Cuba and the Coming American Revolution. Celebrate the Anniversary of the July 26 Rebel Assault on the Moncada Garrison. Fri., July 27, 7:30 p.m. 545A 8th Ave., 14th Floor. Donation: \$4. Tel: (212) 695-7358

Upper Manhattan

Patrice Lumumba and the Revolution in the Congo. Speaker: Brian Williams, *Militant* staff writer. Fri., July 27, 7:30 p.m. 540 W. 165 St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (212) 740-4611.

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: 1356 Hueytown Road, Hueytown. Zip: 35023. Tel: (205) 497-6088. E-mail: 73712.3561@compuserve.com

CALIFORNIA: Fresno: 438 E. Shaw Ave. #107. Zip: 93710 E-mail: swpfresno@netscape.net **Los Angeles:** 4229 S. Central Ave. Zip: 90011. Tel: (323) 233-9372. E-mail: 74642.326@compuserve.com **San Francisco:** 3926 Mission St. Zip: 94112. Tel: (415) 584-2135. E-mail: sfswp@hotmail.com

COLORADO: Craig: P.O. Box 1539. Zip: 81626. E-mail: NWColoradoSWP@yahoo.com

FLORIDA: Miami: 1035 NE 125 St., Suite 100, North Miami. Zip: 33161. Tel: (305) 899-8161. E-mail: Pathmiami@yahoo.com **Tampa:** P.O. Box 16002. Zip: 33687. E-mail: TOC1004@aol.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: ChicagoPathfinder@compuserve.com

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

MASSACHUSETTS: Boston: P.O. Box 702. Zip: 02124. Tel: (617) 470-2620 E-mail: 103426.3430@compuserve.com

MICHIGAN: Detroit: 4208 W. Vernor St. Mailing address: P.O. Box 441580 Zip: 48244. Tel: (313) 554-0504.

E-mail: 104127.3505@compuserve.com

MINNESOTA: St. Paul: 113 Bernard St., West St. Paul. Zip: 55118. Tel: (651) 644-6325. E-mail: TC6446325@cs.com

NEW JERSEY: Newark: 506 Springfield Ave. 3rd floor. Zip: 07103. Mailing address: Riverfront Plaza, P.O. Box 200117. Zip: 07102-0302. Tel: (973) 643-3341. E-mail: swpnewark@usa.net

NEW YORK: Brooklyn: 372A 53rd St. (at 4th Ave.) Mailing address: PMB 106. 4814 4th Ave. Zip: 11220. Tel: (718) 567-8014. E-mail: swpbrooklyn@earthlink.net **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. Mailing address: 3792 Broadway #250. Zip: 10032. Tel: (212) 740-4611. E-mail: swpuptown@usa.net; **Pathfinder Mural Bookstore:** 167 Charles St. Zip: 10014. Tel: (212) 366-1973.

OHIO: Cleveland: 11018 Lorain Ave. Zip: 44111. Tel: (216) 688-1190. E-mail: 103253.1111@compuserve.com

PENNSYLVANIA: Philadelphia: 5237 N. 5th St. Zip: 19120. Tel: (215) 324-7020. E-mail: PhiladelphiaSWP@yahoo.com **Pittsburgh:** 5907 Penn Ave. Suite 225. Zip: 15206. Tel: (412) 365-1090. E-mail: 103122.720@compuserve.com

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

WASHINGTON, D.C.: 3437 14th St. NW Zip: 20010. Tel: (202) 387-1590. E-mail: dc-swp@starpower.net

WASHINGTON: Seattle: 5418 Rainier Avenue South. Zip: 98118-2439. Tel: (206) 323-1755. E-mail: swpseattle@qwest.net

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: Librpath@sympatico.ca

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: Skolavordustig 6B. Mailing address: P. Box 0233, IS 121 Reykjavik. Tel: 552 5502. E-mail: milpth@mmedia.is

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland: Suite 3, 7 Mason Ave., Otahuhu. Postal address: P.O. Box 3025. Tel: (9) 276-8885. 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: Domargränd 16 (T-bana Västertorp) Postal code: S-129 04. Tel: (08) 31 69 33. E-mail: 100416.2362@compuserve.com

Talk about obscenity—Dow Chemical fired 50 workers and disciplined 200 more for assertedly e-mailing porn and violent images on



Harry Ring

company computers. Dow produced the chemical, napalm, used by the U.S. government to torch Vietnamese villages.

Napalm packed for shipping?—“The Army is creating

quick strike combat brigades in four more states as part of the Pentagon’s strategy of making the service nimble enough to ship thousands of troops anywhere in the world in a matter of days.”—News item.

Between a rock...—“MICHIGAN—Scientists are warning adults that eating too much Great Lakes fish could lead to brain damage. A nine-year study of 180 Michigan residents who ate Lake Michigan whitefish, trout, salmon, perch, and other species linked memory and learning problems to exposure to PCBs.”—*USA Today*, July 13.

...and a hard place—“WEST VIRGINIA—Children and preg-

nant women or nursing women were warned to restrict their consumption of fish caught in state streams. Health officials cited mercury contamination, which attacks the central nervous system and can lead to birth defects. Emissions from coal-burning boilers and power plants are considered leading causes of methyl mercury deposits in rivers and streams.”—Same as above.

Hey, no problem—“DENVER—Local air quality officials are touting voluntary efforts by refineries to blend gasoline that cuts down on summertime ozone. What they’re not saying is that for nearly a decade they’ve backed oil company requests for waivers of

tougher gasoline standards that would cut back on ozone-producing emissions even more.”—*Rocky Mountain News*.

The final solution?—“Seattle police officers in two cars fired more than 20 rounds at each other...after they mistook each others’ vehicles for a stolen police car.”—News item.

Capitalism and health—Recently, the *Wall Street Journal* devoted two pages to mental health. It cites a finding that in a typical office of 20 people “chances are that four will suffer from a mental illness this year. Depression, one of the most common, particularly hits workers in their most productive years.” The paper mourns that this is costing busi-

ness \$70 billion in medical coverage, lost productivity, etc.

P.S.—It’s not just the employees who get hit by pressure-cooker capitalism in general and their work site in particular. One *Journal* piece inquires, “What happens when it’s the boss who’s suffering?” Answer: Pretty much the same as employees. If they don’t get a grip, they get iced.

Not to end on a grim note, but...—Over the past 50 years facts have seeped out about U.S. and UK atomic research. Infant cadavers were shipped from various parts of the world to measure the amount of strontium 90 absorbed by those exposed to nuclear testing. The name of the research? Project Sunshine.

Man gets prison term for ‘criminal thoughts’

BY NAOMI CRAINE

On July 6 an Ohio court sentenced a man to nearly eight years in prison for writing a fictional story in his private journal about sexually molesting children. Brian Dalton was charged with two counts of violating state child pornography laws. He pled guilty to one charge in order to avoid a longer sentence. It is the latest case of the courts using the pretext of sexual abuse of women and children to justify inroads against democratic rights.

Dalton was on probation from a 1998 child pornography case when a probation officer searched his home and found the journal. Dalton was not accused of carrying out any of the actions described in his writings, or even of showing the journal to anyone else. In addition to receiving a seven-year sentence on the new pornography charge, he received nine months for violating probation.

Ohio’s 1989 child pornography law prohibits possession of any “obscene material”—written or visual—involving children. According to civil liberties lawyers, this is the first case anywhere in the United States where someone was successfully prosecuted for writing child pornography that did not include images.

Robert O’Neil, director of the Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression at the University of Virginia, said the case is “astounding” because it goes against Supreme Court rulings that child pornography is limited to images, on grounds that such images are proof that real children were abused.

Gary Daniels of the National Coalition Against Censorship pointed out that the logic of this case “means that any person who writes something in a fictional manner about breaking the law could be breaking the law.”

New York Times columnist Bob Herbert noted July 19 that the Ohio law prohibits the creation or distribution not only of “patently obscene material” but “any material that depicts a minor engaged in sexual ac-

tivity.” Under this broad dictate, a wide range of books could be banned and their authors and publishers subject to criminal prosecution, he argued.

Laws against “sex offenders” have proven to be one of the most effective pretexts for the U.S. rulers in curtailing democratic rights, playing on workers’ justified abhorrence of the abuse of women and children. Last January, for instance, the Supreme Court upheld a Washington State law that allows those convicted of sexual offenses to be kept in prison even after serving their sentences. Sixteen states now have such “civil commitment” laws for sex offenders.

As of early 2001, nearly 900 people had been involuntarily committed to psychiatric hospitals under these laws after serving out criminal sentences. Only 44 of these prisoners have been judged “cured” by authorities and released. The forced “treatment” is degrading and punitive, sometimes lasting longer than the original prison sentence.

As an “alternative” to post-prison detainment, some state authorities force persons on parole for sexual crimes to wear electronic tracking devices or submit to regular lie-detector tests.

In addition, a 1996 federal law, passed by Congress and signed by then president William Clinton, requires state authorities to notify communities when a person previously convicted of a sex offense moves into the area. U.S. appeals courts have upheld the constitutionality of similar state laws in New York and New Jersey. Under these statutes many people who have served their sentences are subjected to continued hounding from capitalist politicians, cops, and rightists.

The New Jersey Supreme Court has now decided to allow one exception to this law. The court ruled July 17 that a child found guilty of sexual crimes before the age of 14 can petition to have the notification requirement removed when they turn 18—if they can convince the court they do not pose a risk of committing another offense.

N.Y. food workers strike over firing

BY PAUL PEDERSON

BROOKLYN, New York—Thirty-two workers at Kosher Tuv Taam Corporation walked off the job July 3 to protest the firing of Oscar Palacios. The company fired Palacios the day before for union activity, the second pro-union worker fired in the last month. Afterwards, workers confronted the bosses, demanding Palacios be rehired. When the company refused and called the police to have them removed from the plant, the 32 workers walked out.

The plant employs about 70 workers, divided almost equally between those from Mexico and from Poland. Around 35 workers, all Polish, have continued working through the course of the strike. Two of the Polish workers decided not to cross the picket line. The company has hired about 10 workers since the strike began.

“We often work as many as 80 hours in the course of a five-day week,” said Hugo, a delivery driver. “On some days we start as early as 5:00 in the morning and do not finish until midnight. We receive no overtime

pay.” He said that a group of workers at the plant had been meeting weekly for the last six months to discuss organizing a union. The company starts most workers at around \$4 an hour—less than the legal minimum—topping out at around \$6 an hour. In addition to the long hours and low pay, Carlos, a machine operator for five years, said that they have concerns over safety conditions at the plant. None of the workers receive medical benefits.

The sole demand of the strike is that all of the fired workers, including Oscar Palacios, be rehired. So far the company has refused to negotiate.

The Tuv Taam strikers organized a rally July 11 outside the plant. According to the Spanish-language daily newspaper *Hoy*, about 80 strikers and their supporters participated in the rally.

Hoy reports that the strikers are working with the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund to file a complaint against Tuv Taam with the National Labor Relations Board.

Hong Kong pilots protest working conditions



Pilots at Cathay Pacific Airways in Hong Kong have been working to rule since July 3, forcing the airline to cancel many flights. Cathay Pacific retaliated by firing 49 of its 1,600 pilots July 9. Above, pilots march into a union meeting July 18, where they voted to continue their job action. They are demanding that management provide data on how many hours the pilots work.

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

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

August 6, 1976

NEW ORLEANS—Louisiana’s Democratic governor, Edwin Edwards, signed into law July 9 a union-busting “right-to-work” bill less than twenty-four hours after it passed the state senate.

On July 7, 12,000 angry trade unionists massed at the capitol building in Baton Rouge demanding defeat of the bill. By an overwhelming two-thirds the senators ignored the wishes of organized labor and voted for the so-called “right-to-work” measure.

As union members from all over the state arrived in Baton Rouge July 7, they learned that Governor Edwards was about to deliver a surprise address to both houses of the legislature. The capitol buzzed with rumors that Edwards would ask the senate to defeat the bill.

A hush fell over the crowd as Edwards’s speech was piped over the AFL-CIO’s public address system. Instead of opposing the “right-to-work” law, the governor urged its passage, with some “compromise” amendments excluding from its provisions those few workplaces that are already union shops.

The capitol grounds resounded with booing and hissing. The angry union members saw Edwards’s speech as no compromise at all, but a knife in the back of Louisiana’s workers.

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

August 6, 1951

The fantastic effects of the witch-hunt and mental straitjacketing today borne by the American people are made clear in two polls conducted by newspapers, one in Madison, Wis., and the other in New York City. In both cases, petitions containing nothing but excerpts from the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence were circulated. In both cases, the overwhelming majority of those approached refused to sign the petitions.

The Madison petition, circulated by reporters for the Madison *Capital Times*, was signed by only one person out of 112 interviewed. This was mentioned by Harry Truman in his Detroit speech in an effort to prove that his Republican opponents are causing a reign of terror in this country. He insinuated that the refusal of the people to say that they believe in the Declaration of Independence in Madison, Wisconsin, is due to that fact that Wisconsin is the home state of Senator Joseph McCarthy, the Republican witch-hunter.

The theory was tested out by the *New York Post*, which undertook a similar petition in New York City. Out of 161 New Yorkers interviewed, only 19 would sign the basic documents of U.S. law, history, and tradition. Some of those who signed did so because they had read of the Madison incident, and knew that the petitions were being circulated as a test.

FTAA and imperialist plunder

Cuba's campaign against the so-called Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) and its call for working people across the Americas to be able to learn about and vote on these accords is in the interests of workers and farmers around the world. The campaign helps expose the unequal relations between the world's most advanced imperialist power and the countries of the semicolonial world. It puts the pact in the right light: imperialist trade deals are instruments of plunder, and Washington plans to use the FTAA to extend its domination and exploitation of Latin America.

The FTAA has nothing to do with free trade. In the face of the intensifying competition of world capitalism, where the tiny handful of multibillionaire families of finance capital compete for market share, raw materials, and cheap labor to enhance their sagging profit rates, Washington initiated the FTAA as a club against its imperialist rivals in Europe and Japan. The moves around the trade pact go hand in hand with Bush's recent trips to Europe, where he advanced the U.S. rulers' drive to assert their political and military domination of the world.

Despite extolling the virtues of free trade as the "road to prosperity" for "poor countries," Washington has no intention of abolishing protectionist weapons it wields to reinforce the unequal trade relations it maintains with semicolonial countries, whether they involve subsidies, environmental laws, antidumping rules, or other measures aimed at restricting imports.

Like other trade pacts and economic and political agreements initiated by Washington, the FTAA is geared to undermine the sovereignty of Latin American and Caribbean countries, perpetuate and deepen their dependency on U.S. capital, and wipe out or severely restrict the development of independent commodity production in the semicolonial world.

This is the lawful functioning of the parasitic system of imperialism, in which the wealthy class uses its governments and economic system to reap enormous wealth at the expense of the toiling majority. This system means that today at least 3 billion people live on less than \$2 a day and 1.3 billion do not even have clean water to drink. Some 40,000 people die of preventable diseases every day.

Meanwhile, the wealthy bondholders and their representatives in Washington and elsewhere demand that regimes in Third World countries never miss a payment on the foreign debt, which already exceeds \$2 trillion. In the last decade more than \$900 billion in interest payments has been sucked out of Latin America into the coffers of the imperialist banks. This creates the conditions for more explosions and new financial collapses, such as those unfolding in Argentina and other Latin American countries. The demand by working people for the cancellation of the Third World debt—which is unjust and has been repaid many times over—echoes that made by revolutionary Cuba since 1985.

Workers and farmers in the United States have a stake in demanding that Washington and Ottawa remove all tariffs and other protectionist instruments that block imports from Latin American, Caribbean, and other semicolonial countries. At the same time the efforts of these nations to develop their industries and agriculture and protect them from the predatory maws of the imperialist monster need to be supported by all working people. It is the world imperialist system that is responsible for the growing social crisis and lack of industrial development in Third World countries. International working-class solidarity will be strengthened by joining Cuba's call for:

Plebiscites in the Americas against the FTAA!
Cancel the Third World debt!

Back coal miners' struggle

The fight by miners in Pennsylvania and Ohio to defend their union deserves the support of all working people. The miners have stopped work for two memorial days in three weeks, using the time to hold union meetings and rallies opposing mine boss Robert Murray's attacks on the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) at the Ohio Valley Coal Company.

This battle, one of the most important being waged by the miners union today, is not an isolated fight. Over the last few years miners in both the eastern and western United States have carried out several strikes against the coal bosses' greed. They have also held demonstrations, mass meetings, and memorial days to oppose company and government attacks on their health benefits and black lung compensation. This is a feature of the class struggle in the United States today, a part of a strengthening vanguard within the working class.

The mine owners' drive for profits pushes them to squeeze more from workers' hides. Their push for longer hours and ever more production leads to deadly results—the number of coal miners killed on the job in the United States has risen each of the last three years. Workers in nonunion mines and contract miners, who can have less training and are usually not in the union, are particularly vulnerable to the pressure to take shortcuts on safety. The right to refuse to take a chance on their own lives and those of their co-workers is one of the fundamental rea-

sons miners have fought so hard—literally waging wars over the last century—to unionize.

The same questions are posed around the world as the mining companies face stiffening competition. This week coal miners in South Africa, for instance, are preparing to strike over wages, disability benefits, and the right to a lunch break.

These union struggles are connected to broader social questions. Cuts in health benefits for union miners have undermined funding for medical care in entire coalfield regions. In their profit lust the bosses not only disregard life and limb of the worker; they destroy the air, water, and land where miners' families, farmers, and whole communities live. Last October a mine sludge pond owned by a subsidiary of A.T. Massey burst near Inez, Kentucky, causing an environmental disaster. In the west, Native American miners are battling with coal giant Peabody for access to water for their crops.

Ohio Valley Coal boss Murray contends that he "can't afford" to hire laid-off union miners and pay their health and pension benefits. If that's the case, if the capitalist mine owners can't operate without destroying the lives of workers and working-class communities, then they don't deserve to run society.

All workers should look for ways to join with the coal miners and support their struggle. It's a fight that strengthens our class against the class Murray represents.

Forum celebrates Pathfinder book

Continued from Page 6

tionary struggle if there is to be a socialist future. First, communist parties must lead the working class toward bridging the gap between the city and the countryside in order to overcome the divisions between the urban and rural producers.

Second, communist parties need to promote a fighting program that genuinely opens the door to the worldwide struggle for socialism. That means starting with the interests of the world working class on every question without a whiff of the national chauvinism that so marks the loosely defined "anti-globalization" forces in the imperialist countries.

A lively discussion period followed the presentations, with questions, such as did Cuba and the Soviet Union represent fundamentally different kinds of communism? Is there a political program that leads in the direction discussed and where does the Cuban Revolution fit into that program? Is there resistance in Eastern Europe to the expansion of NATO? Given the growth in police and the prison system in the United States, how will the wealthy ruling class react to the coming American revolution?

Waters said the U.S. ruling class "is the most brutal that has ever existed and the revolutionary struggle in the United States will not be a peaceful affair. Working people

will have to organize to defend themselves" from that ruling-class violence.

A participant who is originally from Indonesia asked what was being done in the United States to win solidarity for Third World peoples facing the devastating effects of the economic crisis, pointing, for example, to Exxon and Mobil's exploitation of the natural resources of Aceh, an area that is currently part of Indonesia but where an independence struggle is under way.

Waters commented on the importance of making the struggles of Indonesian working people known in the United States where information about them isn't widespread. But this isn't solely a matter of solidarity, she noted, because workers in the imperialist countries can only make a socialist revolution if they act on the basis that fellow workers in other countries are their allies in a common struggle against a common enemy.

Linda Harris ended the program with a fund appeal to cover travel costs to the World Festival of Youth and Students in Algiers, August 8-16. She will be part of a delegation from Australia joining others from around the Pacific.

Doug Cooper is a member of the Maritime Union of Australia.

New Zealand

Continued from Page 6

World Youth Festival "will be hungry for revolutionary analysis and a guide to action provided in the Pathfinder books," she said.

Work of supporters

The range and political breadth of books published by Pathfinder would not be possible without the work of supporters of the communist movement around the world who are organized into the Pathfinder Reprint Project. Volunteers are converting Pathfinder's 350-plus titles into electronic format so they can be printed anywhere in the world more quickly, more economically, and with more readable type. Lars Ericson, who recently signed on to the project, spoke at the forum on the latest successes of the volunteers who have been able to step up the pace of production at the same time they take on responsibilities for formatting new books and expanding the number of titles listed with on-line book distributors.

A display of the project, showing each stage of the work the volunteers carry out in order to produce a book in electronic form that is ready for printing, attracted quite a bit of interest at the forum. Reprint volunteers were kept busy during the social afterwards answering questions and encouraging others to join in the project.

Another display was of the Maritime Fund, a project established to document the activity of communist seafarers in North America in the 1940s and '50s. Baskaran Appu, a leader of the Communist League from Christchurch, explained the fund to forum participants. A number of those present had the opportunity to meet and discuss politics with Tom Leonard, one of these seafarers, during a visit he made to Australia and New Zealand last year. Six people signed up as new contributors to the fund.

'A response we've not seen in decades'

Mary-Alice Waters, the featured speaker at the forum, related concrete examples of openings SWP members are finding among miners, garment workers, meat packers, and others in the United States. Waters explained the party was seeing among industrial workers "the kind of response we've not seen in decades—when we carry out competent political work within the working class and the unions."

Waters noted that it is possible for a communist party to act in such a way as to miss these openings, although it would not remain communist for long if it did. The most important thing is to position ourselves in the working-class communities and among layers of workers and farmers where the resistance keeps cropping up and won't go away. There is nothing unique about the resistance and openings in United States, she said. The class struggle in each country has its own forms and rhythms, but the basic features of working-class and farmer resistance is the same, as are the openings for communists—in New Zealand, Australia, the United Kingdom, and elsewhere in the imperialist countries.

Waters said it is important for vanguard militants not to confuse this resistance with the fact that the unions as basic defense organizations of the working class continue to get weaker. A stiffening of the resistance of workers does not immediately translate into a strengthening of the trade union structures, she said.

The SWP leader said the center of inter-imperialist conflict today is between the various European powers and America. This was captured by U.S. president George Bush's recent trip to Europe, during which he pressed the imperialist powers there to bear the costs of the attempt to "digest" the countries of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union and arrogantly announced the U.S. rulers' intention to proceed with the militarization of space no matter what the objections of its European allies and rivals.

The heightened inter-imperialist conflicts in the world, growing differentiation between rich and poor countries, and rising class conflicts within the imperialist powers themselves are not an outgrowth of an abstract process of "globalization," said Waters, but arise from the continuing intensification of the contradictions inherent in capitalism between the social organization of production and private ownership of the means of production.

In his talk Tucker described the steps the Communist League is taking in order to become a component of the vanguard of the working-class resistance and to meet opportunities arising from the increased interest in communist ideas. These center on establishing branches of the league that through their activities are building a base in a workers district—getting to know workers and young people in the area and begin to attract them around the party. This means organizing weekly Militant Labour Forums, regular book tables and door-to-door sales, developing an expanded subscription base to the communist press, and keeping regular hours at the local Pathfinder bookstore that workers can depend on. With such a base of work, the branches of the Communist League can reach out to other developments in politics and in the unions.

Combined with this, Tucker said, is the work to build national industrial union fractions of communist workers carrying out regular and ongoing political work on the job and in their unions. The League is currently building fraction units among clothing and meat workers. Doing both of these, as part of how a communist workers party organizes today, is the road along which revolutionary-minded workers, farmers, and youth will be attracted and recruited to the communist movement, he said.

A party-building fund appeal launched at the meeting raised \$NZ3,720 in pledges and donations.

Labor, not cosmetics, creates beauty

Reprinted below is an excerpt from *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women*, one of Pathfinder's "Books of the Month" featured in August (see special offer below). This piece is from the article "The woman question and the Marxist method" by Evelyn Reed. Copyright © 1986 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission.

BY EVELYN REED

Beauty has no identity with fashions. But it has an identity with *labor*. Apart from the

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

realm of nature, all that is beautiful has been produced in labor and by the laborers. Outside the realm of nature, beauty does not exist apart from labor and never will. For the beauty of all the products of labor, and of all the arts produced in and through labor, are incorporated within these products and these arts.

Humanity itself, together with the beauty of humanity, was produced in and through the labor process. As Engels pointed out, when the humans *produced*, they produced themselves as *humans*. They cast off their apelike appearance and became more and more beautiful. When the capitalist social disfigurement of exploited labor is removed, the true beauty of labor and of the laborers will stand forth in their true dimensions.

It is only in class society that the myth has grown up that *labor* is identical with *exploited labor*. This myth serves the needs of the ruling class which maintains itself as a parasitic excrescence on the backs of the workers. Through the identity they make between labor and exploited labor, they perpetuate a split between *producers* and *consumers*, glorifying the latter at the expense of the former. The less you produce and the more you consume, the higher you rise in the world of the snobs and the idle rich. Not labor but the conspicuous waste of the products of labor is the mark of capitalist social distinction.

But this did not always exist, despite their propaganda to the contrary. In primitive society, where exploited labor was unknown, there was no split between producers and consumers. Every member of society produced, according to his age and ability, and every member of society shared in consuming their productions and in the enjoyment of them in common. Social value and distinction were registered in the realm of production, and that is why the women of primitive society were so valuable and regarded so highly. They labored and taught the arts of labor and carried on the traditions of labor and advanced labor to ever higher levels of production.

To cover up their empty, vapid, parasitic existence, the idle rich of capitalist society propagate the notion that the idle life is the "good life" and the "beautiful life." As evi-

dence, they hold up their flabby, lily-white hands with long red fingernails as tokens of "beauty," and the "good life."

What a mockery this is of the gift of labor—the primary creative force of humanity. The truth is, the idle life is the most corrosive and corrupting of all influences upon the mental, moral, physical, and psychological fiber of human beings. Without labor, whether of hand or brain—and these are interdependent—humans rot away. Without labor, the human is less than the potato in the ground and does not deserve the gift of humanity.

One of our tasks is to overthrow this bourgeois lie that labor is identical with exploited labor. Another is to restore labor to its rightful place as the most honorable, the most necessary, the most useful and beautiful of all human attributes.



Fashion ads glorify consumption and idleness as capitalist standard of "beauty."

New Pathfinder reprints fuel sales

BY BARBARA BOWMAN

The increased pace of production of Pathfinder reprints remained steady through June and the first weeks of July. Eight titles, some out of stock for a number of months, have been added to Pathfinder's inventory during this time. They include:

- *In Defense of Marxism: The Social and Political Contradictions of the Soviet Union on the Eve of World War II* by Leon Trotsky;
- *Lenin's Final Fight: Speeches and Writings, 1922–23* by V.I. Lenin;
- *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women* by Joseph Hansen, Evelyn Reed, and Mary-Alice Waters;
- *Che Guevara Speaks* by Ernesto Che Guevara;
- *Che Guevara: Economía y política en la transición al socialismo* by Carlos Tablada;
- *Nelson Mandela Speaks* by Nelson Mandela;
- *What Working People Should Know about the Dangers of Nuclear Power* by Fred Halstead; and
- *Fascism: What It Is and How to Fight It* by Leon Trotsky.

Through August 31 Pathfinder will make these titles available at a special 60 percent

discount to Pathfinder bookstores. Five of the titles have been chosen as August's "Books of the Month" features and will be available at a 25 percent discount to members of the Pathfinder Readers Club (see accompanying ad).

Books of the Month specials, discounts on newly reprinted titles, a one-day 75-percent-off sale offered to Pathfinder bookstores, and the beginning of fall semester classroom orders helped contribute to brisk sales in June. Twenty-three Pathfinder bookstores reported selling a total of 978 books and pamphlets in June, totaling \$8,470.

The best sellers for the month were: *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* by Jack Barnes (in English and Spanish), *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning* by Jack Barnes (in English and Spanish), and *Puerto Rico: Independence Is a Necessity*, an interview with Puerto Rican independence leader Rafael Cancel Miranda. *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* is available at the special price of \$10 until Labor Day, September 3.

Sales for July have gotten off to a strong start. Salespeople in New York City report selling several hundred copies of the new pamphlet, *Revolution in the Congo*, to crowds at theaters where the film *Lumumba* is showing, as well as hundreds of dollars in sales of a broad range of other Pathfinder titles. Similar sales are planned in cities where the film is scheduled to show throughout the summer.

The Communist Manifesto remains Pathfinder's strongest seller for classroom use. University bookstores filling classroom orders in preparation for fall classes have also ordered *Malcolm X on Afro-American History*, *Malcolm X Speaks* by Malcolm X, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* by Frederick Engels, and *The Great Labor Uprising of 1877* by Philip Foner.

Some of the most requested classroom titles are currently out of stock. *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War, 1956–58* by Che Guevara and *Women and the Nicaraguan Revolution* by Tomás Borge are among those Pathfinder will reprint in order to have them ready before the beginning of classes.

LETTERS

Compassionate capitalism

Nebraska Beef is an Omaha meat packer located at 35th and L streets which employs a large number of very poor and poorly paid workers. Most are Latino, mostly Mexican. About two years ago the company shut off all drinking water in the plant and began selling bottled water in the company cafeteria. The employees, fearing for their jobs and not understanding their rights, said nothing.

A few weeks ago organizers for the United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW) which is attempting to organize the plant learned of the situation. As a result, Donna McDonald, the president of UFCW Local 271, filed a complaint with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. An inspection was done, and the water was ordered restored. Words fail me in the face of such greed and inhumanity. (And I believe you have reported on this company before.) If you can find the company's website, if they have one, and the CEO's e-mail address would you please pass them on to me? I'd like to spread them around.

John Blasingame
Local 1140 Labors International Union

Disagrees on CPUSA assessment

As a member of the CPUSA and delegate from the Western Pennsylvania District to our recent convention, I have some serious issues with the article by Greg McCartan, "Communist Party USA is dropping pretense of Leninism" in the July 16 issue.

"Bill of Rights socialism"—a system that is more democratic than that which was laid out by Lenin—is sure to have a better chance at winning over Americans. This issue was discussed in many circles before and at the convention, though no vote was taken whether to adopt it as a policy. True, to a theoretical Marxist-Leninist, this system may not seem to be ideal. However, our number of active members, while increasing rapidly, does not seem to be exploding, and though we do not publicly disclose those numbers, I'm sure your readers know that something must be changed for us to become a viable "vanguard of the proletariat."

I am definitely more hard-line in some of

my interpretations of Marxism-Leninism than many of my comrades, but to say that we need to directly impose every theory written in *What Is To Be Done?* or any other work by the geniuses of our movement reflect pure dogmatism. Lenin's own works were essentially an adaptation of Marxism that better fit his country, and these works were quite opposite those of Marx in many instances. His assertion that socialism could rise out of a peasant-based society on the fringe of capitalism hit at the very heart of Marxism, which said it would be a revolution led by the urban workers in a country at the center of capitalism.

Also, while we see the continued pauperization of the worker as Marx predicted, we have also seen a huge middle class emerge as various jobs and roles in our economy come about that Marx could never have imagined. Marx's assertions on the role of machines in *Capital* were dubious enough in its original form. Surely, computers have a major impact on our economy, and his mechanization theories cannot be applied to them.

McCartan proclaims that "several recent articles by CP leaders continue the party's...political support to bourgeois forces in the women's rights struggle." The Party cannot make significant advances in its struggles under the current capitalist system without forming coalitions with groups with whom we have severe underlying ideological differences. Furthermore, McCartan follows with the dangerous assertion that "class collaboration" and the proletarian struggle are mutually exclusive. Does he want a party only of proletarians, working only for the benefit of proletarians, or a Party that of all the people, working for the benefit of all of humanity?

Stephen Pack
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

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.

AUGUST Pathfinder Readers Club specials

25% discount

In Defense of Marxism: The Social and Political Contradictions of the Soviet Union on the Eve of World War II
Leon Trotsky

Writing in 1939–40, Leon Trotsky replies to those in the revolutionary workers movement who were beating a retreat from defense of the Soviet Union in face of looming imperialist assault. He describes how the rising pressures of bourgeois patriotism in the middle classes during Washington's buildup to enter the spreading imperialist war in Europe were finding an echo even inside the communist movement. And he explains why only a party that fights to bring growing numbers of workers into its ranks and leadership can steer a steady revolutionary course. **Special offer \$19.00** (regular price \$24.95)



Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women
Joseph Hansen, Evelyn Reed, and Mary-Alice Waters

How big business plays on women's second-class status and social insecurities to market cosmetics and rake in profits. The introduction by Waters explains how the entry of millions of women into the workforce during and after World War II irreversibly changed U.S. society and laid the basis for a renewed rise of struggles for women's emancipation. **Special offer \$11.00** (regular price \$14.95)

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 8

Che Guevara Speaks
Selected Speeches and Writings

"A faithful reflection of Che as he was, or, better, as he developed" — from the preface by Joseph Hansen. Includes works not available elsewhere in English. **Special offer \$11.00** (regular price \$14.95)

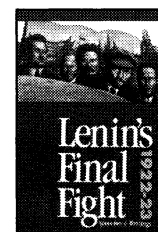


Che Guevara: económica y política en las transición al socialismo
Carlos Tablada

Quoting extensively from Guevara's writings and speeches on building socialism, this book presents the interrelationship of the market, economic planning, material incentives, and voluntary work; and why profit and other capitalist categories cannot be yardsticks for measuring progress in the transition to socialism. Also available in Spanish and French. **Special offer \$13.50** (regular price \$18.95)

Lenin's Final Fight
Speeches and Writings, 1922–23
V.I. Lenin

In the early 1920s Lenin waged a political battle in the Communist Party leadership in the USSR to maintain the course that had enabled workers and peasants to overthrow the tsarist empire, carry out the first socialist revolution, and begin building a world communist movement. The issues posed in this fight—from the leadership's class composition, to the worker-peasant alliance and battle against national oppression—remain central to world politics today. Also in Spanish. **Special offer \$13.50** (regular price \$19.95)



'Road to a united Ireland is unstoppable'

BY PETE CLIFFORD

LONDON—"We are on a juggernaut on the road to a united Ireland which is unstoppable and which is inspired by the courage and sacrifice of the hunger strikers," Sinn Fein leader Martin McGuinness told a crowd of more than 3,000 people in the village of Cappagh in Tyrone, Northern Ireland. The July 14 rally marked the 20th anniversary of the death of Irish hunger striker Martin Hurson.

For several weeks nationalist mobilizations have taken place most weekends in British-occupied Northern Ireland, with their focus on commemorations of the 1981 hunger strike in which 10 Irish republican prisoners died fighting for political status. Mass actions in support of the hunger strikers were a turning point to the deepening mobilizations and self-confidence of those fighting to end British rule and for a united Ireland.

In Belfast momentum is building for a nationwide commemorative march of the hunger strike on August 12. That date is also the deadline for the conclusion of talks on the next stage in the "Good Friday Agreement." This 1998 agreement registered a weakening of British rule and of the unionists, as those who favor the continued "union" of Northern Ireland and Britain are called. Five days of talks between signatories of the agreement—the major nationalist and unionist political parties in Northern Ireland as well as the British and Irish governments—ended without resolution July 14.

'Resistance to change'

"There is resistance to change in the north of Ireland, not only within unionism but from within the British system," Gerry Adams, president of Sinn Fein, told a public meeting in London July 10. Sinn Fein is the party leading the fight against British rule in Ireland. Adams was speaking during a break from the talks. Speaking alongside Adams was Michelle Gildernew, Member of Parliament (MP) for Fermanagh and South Tyrone. Gildernew was elected June 7 in a poll where Sinn Fein raised its vote from 15 percent to 20.7 percent and doubled its number of MPs to four.

London's insistence on "making all other issues secondary to the issue of IRA arms" is the source of the crisis facing the talks, Adams said. London's focus on this was spurred by the resignation in early July of Ulster Unionist Party leader David Trimble from his post as First Minister of the Northern Ireland Assembly, a body set up under the Good Friday Agreement. Trimble has said he will only retake his post if the Irish Republican Army (IRA) unilaterally disarms. If Trimble does



Nationwide rally in Belfast August 12 will commemorate anniversary of 1981 hunger strike by political prisoners. Above, protesters against visit of British warship to Cork, Ireland, carry pictures of 1981 hunger strikers. While London demands that Irish nationalists surrender arms, British military occupation of Northern Ireland continues. At right, British military outpost in South Armagh.

not back down by August 12, London could dissolve the assembly.

Adams responded to this threat by saying the issue of IRA arms will not be "resolved on British government or unionist terms, or on the basis of threat, veto, or ultimatum." He pointed to how the north of Ireland is "still dominated by the paraphernalia of a British war machine." According to Sinn Fein, London has 27,500 armed troops in the north of Ireland, a region with a population of just 1.5 million. "Who has a responsibility to deal with British arms?" he demanded. "Are they not also part of the Good Friday Agreement? Or do they represent the acceptable face of terrorism, the acceptable guns in our society?"



Adams noted that behind London's smoke screen on the IRA arms there has been "delay and dilution" on creating the "level playing field the Good Friday Agreement was designed to provide." He pointed to the resistance to change of the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), the pro-British police. "The old repressive laws and no jury courts remain in place," he said, along with little progress on equality for Catholics.

Adams pointed out that "progress has been made on the issue of IRA arms, while loyalist and British state forces continue to use their weapons." He added, "This year alone loyalists have carried out over 100 bomb attacks on Catholic homes, businesses, and

churches, and shot dead two Catholics in recent days. Loyalists also erected a blockade to prevent Catholic primary school children from going to school in North Belfast."

Two days after his talk the RUC police fired 40 plastic bullets at nationalists trying to resist an Orange Order feeder march going through the Catholic Ardoyne area of Belfast. The Orange Order march was one of many such annual "triumphalist" parades held July 12 throughout the north by pro-British unionists who seek to hold onto the system of entrenched discrimination and violence against Catholics imposed under British rule.

Speaking after the July 12 parades, Sinn Fein national chairperson Mitchel McLaughlin declared that the shootings "revealed the double standards" of London. McLaughlin recalled that two weeks earlier the RUC had refused to prevent loyalists from blockading the Catholic primary school, yet had no hesitation in clearing away nationalists to allow these parades through.

Although the daily terror against Catholics has accelerated, the size of the unionist mobilizations has once again declined. This year's Orange Order parade to Drumcree church in Portadown, which passes the Garvaghy Road—a majority Catholic community—was attended by just 1,000 people, according to *The Times* of London, half the number from the previous year.

In the face of nationalist protests, the British rulers have since 1998 prevented the march from going down the Garvaghy Road itself. This year these rightist forces have also failed to mobilize road blockades in support of their marches.

Pete Clifford is a member of the Transport and General Workers' Union.

Glass workers strike in Pennsylvania

BY TOM MAILER

DURYEA, Pennsylvania—Workers at the Schott Glass Technologies Inc. plant here set up picket lines just past midnight on July 1 after rejecting the company's contract offer by a 90 percent vote. "We just want to be treated with some human dignity," said Mike Kepich as he walked the picket line.

Workers report that production at the plant has been completely shut down by the walkout, which involves about 300 mem-

bers of the Textile and Garment division of Local 726T of the United Food and Commercial Workers union.

At the picket line, one striker, a 28-year veteran who didn't want his name used, explained the lack of respect the company has for the workforce. "Bruce Jennings, the company president, told our negotiators that us older workers weren't productive. They offered us an early out, but the pension is only \$16 per month for each year of ser-

vice. Who'd take that?"

The company wants a four year contract with pensions frozen in the first and third years. The union is asking for a three-year contract with increased pensions.

The company has also used scare tactics to get the workers to give in. Kepich reported that the bosses openly pointed to the plants in the area that have either had big layoffs or closed recently, such as Corning Glass, Techneglas, Topps Baseball Cards, Thompson Electronics, and the Gould battery factory. "They told us to 'look at how many of our members were over 50 years old. What will they do if we close?'" said Kepich.

Another important issue is the health-care plan. The company is demanding an end to the traditional Blue Cross/Blue Shield coverage, which the majority are enrolled in, and a major increase of the weekly "co-payments" workers have to pay for individual coverage. Family coverage would be even higher. The company is also demanding worker co-payments for the vision and eye-glass coverage. Joe Jaworski noted that "even if they gave us the wage increase we want, it would all be eaten up by the higher deductions. We'd be taking home less money."

Schott Glass Technologies is part of the Schott Group, based in Germany. It employs 19,000 people worldwide with annual sales of about \$1.9 billion. It manufactures products such as glass for optical lenses for glasses and microscopes, fiber optics, and computer monitors.

Support for the strike was evident as many of the drivers passing by in their cars honked their horns. Members of Teamsters and UFCW locals have been by to pledge their support as well.

Join the U.S. delegation to the 15th World Festival of Youth and Students

August 8-16, Algiers, Algeria

☐ I am interested in attending the Festival

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO APPLY: contact the U.S. National Preparatory Committee, 15th World Festival of Youth and Students, 237 W. 23rd St., New York, NY 10011, e-mail: www.usnpc.org; or contact the Young Socialists at P.O. Box 33, New York, NY 10018. Tel: (212) 695-1809.

The festival will bring together thousands of youth from around the globe. Given its location, it is expected to draw attendance particularly from Africa and the Middle East, in addition to Europe, Latin America, North America, and Asia.

The program will offer nine days of discussion and debate on wide-ranging political topics, from the struggles for self-determination in Palestine, Western Sahara, and Puerto Rico, to the U.S. military buildup in Latin America, to the fight for women's rights, to U.S. imperialism's drive to expand NATO eastward.