

THE MILITANT

SPECIAL FEATURE: PART FOUR
Communism and labor's
transformation of nature

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Palestinians: Israel out of occupied territories!

Calls for 'a war and a wall' aid Tel Aviv's assaults

BY GREG McCARTAN

Despite announcements of a planned round of talks between Israeli officials and representatives of the Palestinian Authority, the drive to war by Tel Aviv shows no signs of abating. Calls for "a short war and a high wall"—a decisive military assault by the Israeli government against Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip followed by the construction of a wall to seal off the two areas—in opinion columns this past week backed the accelerated war drive by Israel.

Referring to the talks between Israeli foreign minister Shimon Peres and top Palestinian official Yasir Arafat, a spokesperson for Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said the government doesn't "have exaggerated expectations" and is not "overly optimistic about a hopeful ending to this meeting." Turning reality on its head, he said negotiations will fail because Arafat's "strategy is not to come to a peaceful settlement with Israel."

With such a framework, the "peace talks" for Tel Aviv are part of the preparation for war, giving it the appearance of having done everything possible to scale down tensions with an uncompromising opponent—an approach that parallels Washington's buildup to the allied assault on Iraq in 1990-91.

German foreign minister Joschka Fischer is brokering the latest round of negotiations. The talks, if they are to happen, will not take place for at least a week.

Washington, which has declared support for Berlin's initiative, displayed its anti-Palestinian stance during an August 20 session of the United Nations Security Council. The acting U.S. ambassador, James Cunningham,



Israeli soldier stops Palestinian family at roadblock in the West Bank, one of more than 120 such checkpoints in the occupied territories. On August 22 Israel launched two rocket attacks in the Gaza Strip, killing at least five Palestinians and wounding seven.

described calls by Middle Eastern governments for intervention to stop the deteriorating situation as "unworkable ideas that will not change the reality on the ground."

On the military front, the character of the planned assaults on Palestinian areas in the West Bank was revealed following a much-publicized massing of an Israeli invasion force near Bethlehem August 15.

Sharon used the excuse of some small

arms fire by Palestinians to prepare a lightning takeover of nearby Beit Jalla using tanks and paratroopers. The operation, code-named "An eye to Zion," was canceled, reportedly due to pressure from Washington. But the *Sunday Times* revealed that the invasion was delayed while in full swing because of a dispute between military commanders over whether or not to send the

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NATO widens intervention in Macedonia

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

The U.S.-dominated NATO military alliance moved this week to dramatically increase the scope of its operations in Macedonia with the deployment of an additional 3,500 troops in the country. The first contingent of a 400-strong advance guard of mostly British troops, as well as soldiers from France and the Czech Republic, arrived in the country August 17 to pave the way for the imperialist occupation force.

British officers will command the operation, which is portrayed as a 30-day mission to collect weapons from Albanian rebel forces. It will include troops from Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, and Turkey.

There are already 3,000 troops from NATO countries in Macedonia, and the 30-day limit is expected to be quickly set aside. In a feature opinion column, Wesley Clark, commander of NATO forces during the imperialist assault on Yugoslavia in 1999, said that if NATO "is serious about making democracy work in this fractious corner of Europe, then Western forces need to enter as soon as possible, engage as broadly as possible and stay as long as necessary to restore peace."

The NATO intervention follows eight months of clashes in which the Macedonian regime has attempted to crush an insurgency

by Albanian rebels—part of a broader fight in the region by Albanians against the discrimination and oppressive conditions they face.

Albanians make up around one-third of Macedonia's 2 million citizens. They face an unemployment rate of 60 percent, compared with the national average of about 30 percent. Demands raised by the rebels have widespread backing among Albanians. They include the demands for equal status in the constitution, for Albanian to be made an official language, and for representation in government and police structures.

The rebels of the National Liberation Army (NLA) launched their military campaign last February and gradually seized large chunks of land to the north and west of Skopje. In intense battles with the guerrillas, the Macedonian government has used tanks and heavy artillery in Tetovo, the country's second largest city, which has the greatest concentration of Albanians. Government forces have also strafed and shelled smaller villages. Despite these assaults, the Albanian population has not been cowed into submission.

Washington has provided military and economic aid to the regime of Macedonian president Boris Trajkovski. When fighting began in February, U.S. troops were moved to the border zone between Macedonia and

Kosovo to cut off supplies to the NLA from Albanians in Kosovo. Aerial photographs of NLA strongholds taken by pilotless reconnaissance planes of the U.S. military have been delivered to the Macedonian army.

Concessions granted

With the Macedonian military unable to smash the Albanians' struggle for national rights, NATO officials sought to curtail the growing instability and brokered a "peace accord" that opened the door to the NATO intervention. On August 13 leaders of Albanian political parties and Macedonian government officials signed a deal to end the fighting.

Under the agreement, the rebels are supposed to turn in their weapons over a 30-day period, and the Macedonian government has said they will grant amnesty to the guerrillas. The nation's constitution is to be amended to make Albanian an official language in areas where they constitute more than 20 percent of the population. The government also agreed to recruit 1,000 Albanians to the national police force and to provide financial aid to an Albanian-language university.

Macedonia government officials were reluctant to sign the deal. However, "we don't have too many choices," said Gjorgi

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Rightist convicted in attack on immigrants

BY LAURA GARZA

RIVERHEAD, New York—A jury here issued a verdict of guilty on all counts in the trial of Christopher Slavin, one of two men charged with luring two Mexican-born day laborers to an isolated site and trying to kill them.

Other workers in the Long Island town of Farmingville, where the victims of the attack had been picked up by Slavin and an accomplice posing as contractors, celebrated the August 16 verdict.

Slavin, 29, was convicted on two counts of attempted murder, two counts of aggravated harassment, and one count each of first-degree and second-degree assault. He faces up to 50 years in prison, and is due to be sentenced September 13.

On the last day of the trial in Suffolk County court, two dozen immigrant workers and supporters of immigrant rights came from Farmingville, Hempstead, Farmingdale, and other nearby towns to show solidarity and demand justice for Ismael Pérez, 20, and Madgaleno Estrada Escamilla, 28, the workers who were assaulted.

Jacobo Herrera Zenteno, who works as a day laborer in Farmingdale and is originally from Puebla, Mexico, said, "I came because the beating was unjust, and our presence can help bring about justice. I am Mexican and what happened to them could happen to me."

Farmingville has been at the center of a sharply polarized conflict around immigration. It is one of many towns in the New York area where workers, particularly those without papers, gather at street corners in the mornings awaiting offers of work.

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Youth bring solidarity to Sahrawi struggle

BY JACK WILLEY
AND CARLOS CORNEJO

SMARA, Refugee Camps of Western Sahara—"I want to give you a message to take back to everyone you talk to when you return home. The struggle for independence of Western Sahara is in a very decisive period because the United Nations Security Council is putting forward an unacceptable proposal that would deny the Sahrawi people our right to self-determination and accept the occupation of our land by the Moroccan Kingdom.

"We reject anything that denies our self-determination, justice, human rights, and the right to live free from foreign control. And we will continue the struggle for full independence."

Those were the words of Mohamed Fadel, secretary general of the presidency of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR). He was speaking to 14 youth from

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Youth at world festival discuss fight against imperialism—page 6

Growing numbers of New York families are living in poverty

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

The big-business press here is beginning to more openly report on the declining income and growing poverty of tens of thousands of working-class families in New York. According to the *New York Post*, the number of homeless families seeking a place in the city's shelter system is up 31 percent over last year.

An article in the *New York Times* stated, "The economic boom that changed the face of New York City in the 1990s appears to have had no impact on the median income of families in the city's poorest borough, according to the results of an experimental Census Bureau survey of Bronx households" released August 16.

The survey conducted on households of working people in the city verified what workers already know: that income levels for tens of thousands of families declined over the past decade. Many are one paycheck from being homeless or facing some other economic disaster.

"In New York, the number of families in poverty is soaring alongside the number of homeless," said the *Financial Times* in an article about Floating Hospital. The hospital was started 130 years ago as a charity for the city's poor and is still in high demand, treating some 15,000 people each year in 80 clinics throughout the city. Referring to homelessness, the article said that New York "is approaching the historical high set in March 1987 and could surpass it soon," noting that at the end of July some 28,650 people were sleeping in city shelters on any given night—a 21 percent increase compared with last year.

According to a study released by the Washington-based Economic Policy Institute in late July, nearly one-third of working-class families with children under 12—many with incomes above the official poverty line—have experienced "critical hardship, such as missing meals, being evicted from their housing, having their utilities disconnected, doubling up on housing, or not having access to needed medical care."

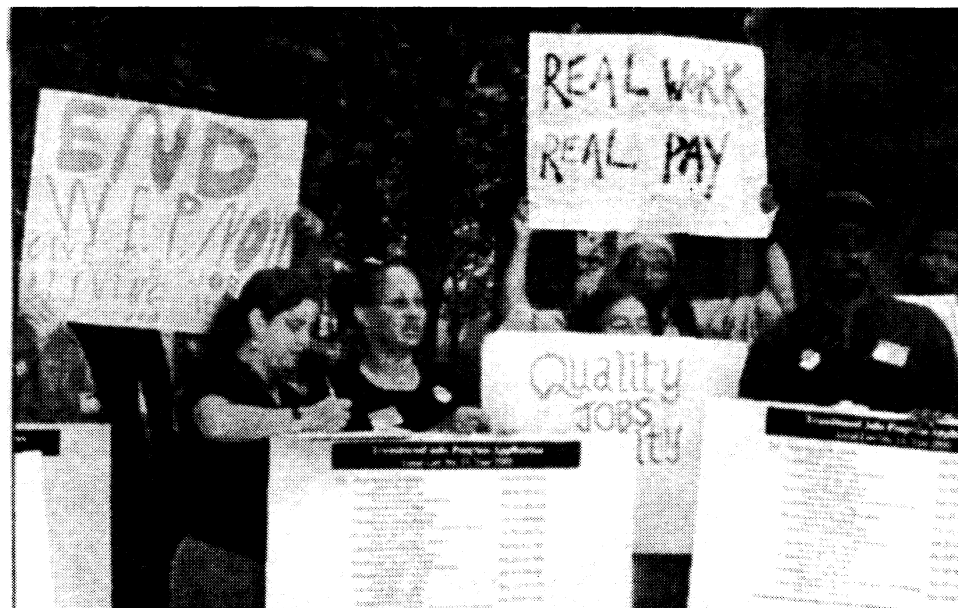
The report states that 4 million working-class families barely have enough income to meet basic monthly expenses such as meals, rent, utilities, transportation, and other household needs, and that twice as many U.S. citizens are struggling to make ends meet than are defined as living below the official poverty line.

Welfare deadline: disaster for millions

Meanwhile, the time clock for the federal government's five-year lifetime limit on receiving welfare is fast approaching for tens of thousands of families across the country. So far, under the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act signed by William Clinton, nearly 50 percent of welfare recipients have been driven off rolls between 1993 and 1998. This act eliminated the federally funded entitlement Aid to Families with Dependent Children.

Of the 38,800 families in the city of New York whose time limit kicks in at the end of December, about 32 percent of them have at least one parent employed in a low-wage job. Another 22 percent are classified by government officials as "noncooperative," and the rest are forced into workfare programs, "job training," or judged by welfare authorities as temporarily ill, disabled, or elderly.

Those who reach the five-year limit would have to apply for the Safety Net Assistance program, which is not expected to be in



Workers who rely on welfare protest August 15 in front of New York State Supreme Court demanding jobs with decent pay and an end to "workfare" schemes.

place until at least the spring of 2002. Some people may be exempted from the time limit based on an undefined "hardship" category, which is restricted to no more than 20 percent of the declining welfare rolls.

"Welfare tells you, 'We're going to give you transitional benefits,' but then what they are doing is just cutting you off," said Regla Belette, a working mother of three children. She explained to the *New York Times* that her apartment burned down last year, and her family was once cut off from food stamps and a rent subsidy when she took some time to care for her sick father in Florida.

Belette and her husband, who makes about \$6.00 an hour with no benefits in a Brooklyn warehouse, were recently cut off from receiving cash grants because city officials claimed they earned too much to qualify. "Honestly, I don't know what people are going to do if they are not supposed to

get help from the government," she added.

The administration of New York mayor Rudolph Giuliani has been pressing a campaign to push people off welfare even before they reach the time limit. Cutoff letters sent to thousands of people include those participating in workfare programs.

One group of people in New York who are receiving welfare benefits organized a protest rally in front of the state Supreme Court August 15 to demand the mayor implement a law that would create job positions for those with low incomes. They presented their demand in the name of seven welfare recipients who said they would have benefited from the program, which would have created 2,500 jobs by January of this year. The law, approved by the city council last year, would establish a total of 7,500 job positions by 2004 that include training and benefits for people on public assistance to help them enter the workforce.

Toronto bakery strikers beat back concessions

BY JOHN STEELE

TORONTO—Members of Local 426 of the Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers union returned to work August 14 after beating back efforts by the Christie Brown & Co. bosses to force concessions on them and weaken their union. At an August 12 ratification meeting, the big majority of some 400 workers who attended voted to accept the "best and final" offer of the com-

pany. Seventy-five workers voted against accepting the settlement. The strike, which began June 24, was the first in 27 years.

Striker Joanne DeLuca, who has worked as a packer for eight years, voted for the contract. "I hope that we are as strong inside as we have been outside," on the picket line, she said. "We have to deal with the line speed." For many of the workers company speedup of the production line and resulting injuries, and the degrading attitude of management, were major issues in the strike.

In the end the company granted a four-year contract with modest wage increases totaling \$1.80. Many workers considered the yearly increases in the pension plan a significant victory. "The younger members would have preferred a large wage increase," said Steve Pitsadiotis, a steam room operator with eight years seniority. "But it's really good for the older workers. They deserve it. The main thing is we all stuck together, including the mechanics who didn't cross the line."

"I didn't vote for it," said Joe Zubac, a shipper and receiver who has worked in the plant for 16 years. He said the union could

have won more, but the strike was worth it. "We hit rock bottom as a union, and now we won some respect back. They couldn't destroy the plant-wide seniority system."

The attempt by the company to change plant-wide seniority to only cover individual job classifications was seen by the unionists as a threat to job security, especially for more senior workers. This attempt to win a major concession was stopped in its tracks by the strike.

Many workers were pleased that a new "relocation" clause has been added to the contract. It commits the company to hiring the present workforce at any new facility within a 60-mile radius of the present plant in the event the plant closes in its current location.

John Steele is a meat packer and a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers union in Toronto.

THE MILITANT

Self-determination for Palestinians

The rulers in Israel, with backing from Washington, are on a war drive against the struggle of the Palestinian people demanding return of their land and self-determination. The 'Militant' points to the need to fight for a democratic, secular state in Palestine to replace the Zionist regime. Don't miss a single issue!



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Protesters stop plan to link King Day with Confederate holiday

BY DEAN HAZLEWOOD

ALBERMARLE, North Carolina—A victory was won for the rights of Blacks and working people here August 13 when the Stanly County Board of Commissioners voted unanimously that the county government observe Martin Luther King Day as a paid holiday. It reversed an earlier decision to implement a combined Martin Luther King/Robert E. Lee holiday on the day in January reserved nationally and statewide to honor King as a leader of the civil rights struggle.

The commissioners had claimed that adding Lee, the top general in the Confederate army that defended the slavocracy in the Civil War, would solve a "divisive issue" and honor "Southern heritage."

A majority of the 140 people who filled the county courthouse to overflow supported a Martin Luther King holiday alone. A handful of right-wingers wore Confederate flag regalia. After the vote there was enthusiastic applause and scenes of jubilation on the courthouse steps.

"We're very happy. This is what we asked for," said Alice Davis of Concerned Citizens, a local group that had helped to organize

opposition to the proposed combined holiday.

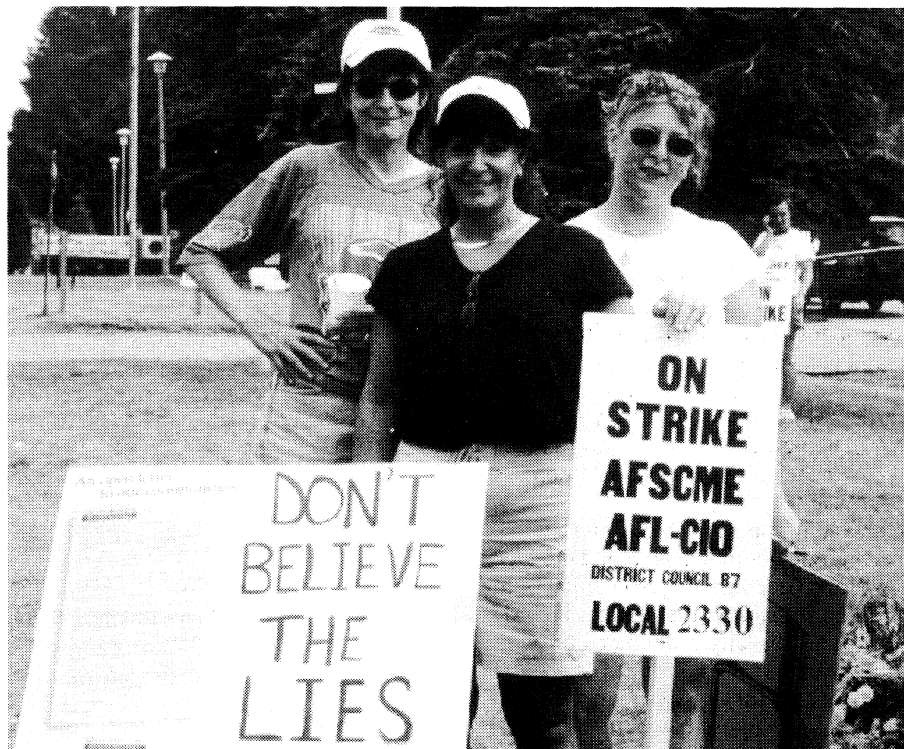
Tim Scott, another member of the group, said they began pushing for the county to observe King Day because "we knew Stanly and Davidson are the only counties [in North Carolina] that don't recognize Martin Luther King Day."

He said that when the proposal to observe the holiday was presented to the Board of Commissioners in June, "they just said they would consider it. It was like they turned a deaf ear." Indeed, the minutes of the meeting show that when the question was raised the chair merely responded that employees have the option of using a personal day on King Day and no further action was taken.

In late July, however, the commissioners voted unanimously to link Lee's name to King Day, as is done in Alabama, Arkansas, and Mississippi.

In response, the Stanly County NAACP presented a petition with 1,600 signatures opposing adding Lee's name to the holiday. About 200 people turned out for the August 6 meeting of the Board of Commissioners. The *Charlotte Observer* reports that in the "crowd of both black and white county resi-

Pennsylvania hospital workers strike



Militant/Tom Mailer

Members of American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 2330 went on strike August 18 at Hazleton General Hospital in western Pennsylvania. They seek better wages, health coverage, and no mandatory overtime.

dents, people admonished commissioners for about 45 minutes."

At their August 13 meeting the commissioners decided to have no public comment

that night. They then decided that the county, which employs 478 people, should adopt the state schedule of holidays. This includes observing both King Day and Veterans Day as paid holidays.

The county will recognize the statewide "Confederate Memorial Day" on May 10, but county offices will remain open. County employees will also retain one personal holiday. Overall, they will have one more holiday than before.

Celebrating outside the meeting room, Dexter Townsend noted that the victory was won by the fight. When they adopted the combined holiday the commission "may have thought we would take it laying down." The firm response of supporters of the fight against racism, and the publicity it generated, "was creating a bad image for Stanly County."

In recent years a number of other struggles around official recognition of Confederate figures and symbols have taken place. In January 2000 some 50,000 people took part in a Martin Luther King day rally in Columbia, South Carolina, to demand the state government remove the Confederate flag from the state capitol building. The flag came down six months later, but it remains on the statehouse grounds.

On February 28 workers and farmers in Alabama won a victory when, after months of debate and protests, a bust of Confederate general Nathan Forrest, a founder of the Ku Klux Klan, was moved off Selma city property.

Dean Hazlewood is a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees. Naomi Craine contributed to this article.

Nissan workers in Tennessee to vote on union

BY ELLEN BERMAN

DETROIT—Workers at the Nissan Motor Co. in Smyrna, Tennessee, filed petitions with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) August 14 calling for a vote to join the United Auto Workers union (UAW). This will be the third time since 1989 that the UAW has tried to organize this plant. Once the petitions are checked the election should be held within several weeks.

This time workers are confident that the union will win. We have "listened to the company's antiunion message for years," said Tracy Shadix. "I bought it for a long time, but I'm not buying it any more. I've seen too many workers injured and too many injured workers mistreated. We need a union."

According to Larry Steele, the UAW organizing coordinator for Southern states, more than 50 percent of the factory's 4,100 production and maintenance workers signed union cards. Only 30 percent are needed to mandate an election.

This election will be watched closely by the UAW and the auto companies alike. Except for the joint ventures of GM-Toyota in Fremont, California, and Ford-Mazda in

Flat Rock, Michigan, all of the Japanese and German-owned assembly plants in the United States are nonunion.

Since 1985 Japanese automakers have increased their share of the U.S. market from 19 percent to 26 percent. The nonunion plants have helped their competitive edge against GM, Ford, and Chrysler, all of which are organized by the UAW. To discourage workers from joining unions, many of these plants pay the same wages as the Big Three, but not the same health and other benefits. Workers in the nonunion plants also have less rights on the job because they are not able to negotiate work rules.

The workers need a union because the company's policies are always changing, explained Lee Stacey, who has worked at Nissan for 11 years. He has been out of work for seven months with a tendon injury in his arm. After undergoing surgery, Stacey is able to work with restrictions, but the company won't let him come back.

"It's a big plant. They say they don't have any work for me," he said. "I believe that if we can get a collective bargaining agreement with them, there will be jobs available for us."

Aubrey Beard, a 37-year-old machine operator, described the worsening conditions in the plant since France-based Renault took a 36 percent stake in Nissan two years ago and launched a cost-cutting campaign that included shutting down several plants in Japan.

The company has hired more temporary workers at the Smyrna plant, implemented cuts in health insurance, and informed the workers that an assembly line speedup is on the way.

Job security as a main concern

Workers who delivered the signed union cards to the NLRB office in Nashville pointed to job security as one of their main concerns.

Mike Williams, a worker on the UAW organizing committee, pointed out that the union has a lot more support now than in previous drives. "Nissan workers are worried about pensions, about how they are treated when they are injured on the job, about unfair treatment compared to Nissan workers in Japan and elsewhere, and a lot of things we weren't concerned about years ago," he said.

Ellen Berman is a member of United Auto Workers Local 157 and works at Textron Automotive Company in Westland, Michigan.

U.S. gov't plans to appeal LA 8 decision

BY AL DUNCAN

LOS ANGELES—The U.S. government plans to appeal a June 21 court ruling favorable to the "Los Angeles Eight." The case involves seven Palestinians and a Kenyan in the Los Angeles area who are longtime activists in the fight for Palestinian self-determination. For years they have been fighting a witch-hunting campaign and effort by Washington to deport them.

In an August 14 phone interview, Michel Shehadeh, one of the Los Angeles Eight, reported that defense lawyers were informed by government representatives a few days before the August 5 deadline that the government had decided to appeal the decision by U.S. immigration Judge Bruce Einhorn.

"The government intends to appeal the decision to the BIA [Board of Immigration Appeals] with the aim of having it reversed. This whole process could take months to resolve," Shehadeh stated.

"In fact, we expect that this case could eventually work its way to the U.S. Supreme Court because of the issues involved. These are issues that affect the rights of every immigrant in this country."

In his decision Einhorn agreed with the

argument of defense lawyers for Shehadeh and Khader Hamide that the two Palestinian men could not be charged retroactively with the 1990 "antiterrorism" law because they were already facing the threat of deportation under the McCarran-Walter Act, a 1950s witch-hunting law that has since been ruled unconstitutional.

In 1987 the eight immigrants were charged under the McCarran-Walter Act with possession of literature advocating "worldwide communism" and for having ties to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP).

Call for Justice, a newsletter published by the Committee for Justice to Defend the LA Eight, explains that "since then, charges against them have been dropped and added repeatedly by the INS [Immigration and Naturalization Service], all aimed at constitutionally protected speech and associations."

Shehadeh reported that the group's lawyers would soon file papers asking the Board of Immigration Appeals to reject the government's appeal.

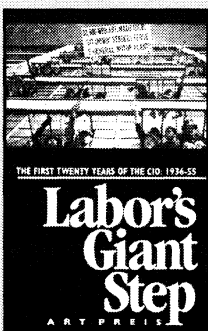
"We want people to continue to campaign to demand that the government drop the charges against us," Shehadeh said.

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Japan's crisis has deep historical roots

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

In the letter printed below, reader Robert Dees responds to an article I wrote in the July 30 issue of the *Militant* titled, "Japan sinks deeper into economic recession." The questions he raises are important for workers and farmers to discuss because they help deepen an understanding of class and social relations in Japan and the special challenges they place before the working class of that country. Japan is a major imperialist power whose rulers still face the many internal tensions on the one hand, and the rivalry with Washington on the other, that previously drove them on the path of conquest and war. For its part, the working class in Japan has enormous po-

RESPONSE TO A READER

tential economic power and political weight, especially in Asia and the Pacific.

The *Militant* article reported the signs of a new dip in the Japanese capitalist economy, coming on top of a decade where recessions have alternated with sluggish growth. While this fits into the long-term crisis of the international capitalist economy, many problems facing the Japanese ruling class have unique historical roots. The article pointed to the massive level of bad loans carried by the major banks as symptomatic of the fact that unlike its counterparts in the United States in the 1930s, the superwealthy rulers of Japan never carried out sweeping reforms in the banking system. Agriculture survives in its present form only by virtue of a host of protectionist barriers maintained by the capitalist government.

Japanese industrial prowess, while real, is narrow and lopsided, stated the article. While giant companies like Sony and Toyota represent the now-tarnished "Japanese miracle," the bulk of the economy is still comprised of small-scale businesses using relatively primitive technology.

Lack of a bourgeois revolution

The article pointed briefly to the deep roots of these problems in the country's history. The Japanese superwealthy ruling class "never carried out a thoroughgoing revolution to overturn the feudal aristocracy," it stated. "Feudal families dominated politics, the military, and the economy before and during World War II." Without explanation this formulation is too truncated and open to misinterpretation.

The character of Japanese imperialism, which Dees requests more discussion on, is taken up in the writings of communists on the conditions of war and crisis of the 1930s and '40s. The myth of a strong Japanese imperialist power that threatened to defeat the United States in war—a myth that lingers to this day—was manufactured by the capitalist rulers of the United States and Britain as part of their preparations to mount a long and costly assault against Japan in World War II. Communist leaders of the day assessed that Japan was weaker than either Russia or the United States, and was doomed to defeat in the war. Despite its invasion of Manchuria in 1931 and occupation of Formosa (now called Taiwan) and Korea, given its economic backwardness and overwhelmingly peasant population, the country could never supply an army in a war against an imperialist power

for even a handful of years.

For the international communist movement, Tokyo's 1931 invasion of Manchuria was one sign of the desperate and reactionary nature of Japan's ruling classes. "Belated Japanese capitalism, feeding on the juices of backwardness, poverty, and barbarism, is being driven by unbearable internal ulcers and abscesses on the road of unceasing piratical plunder," stated a 1934 resolution adopted by supporters of the Fourth International, founded to rebuild the revolutionary communist movement in the wake of the consolidation of the political counterrevolution in the Soviet Union led by Joseph Stalin. "From semi-feudal Japan, torn by all the contradictions that beset Czarist Russia, sooner than from other countries, the call to revolution may sound," continued the document. Until 1917 Russia was ruled by an autocratic monarchy. Although Russia was an imperialist power, its capitalist class had failed to lead a bourgeois revolution to stamp out feudal remains and establish fundamental rights. That task fell to the working class, led by the Bolshevik party.

"Japan is today the weakest link in the imperialist chain," wrote Leon Trotsky, a leader of the Russian Revolution and the Fourth International, in 1940. "Her financial and military superstructure rests on a foundation of semi-feudal agrarian barbarism.... The regime as a whole maintains itself only through the dynamics of military seizures."

Writing seven years earlier, Trotsky had contrasted the 1868 Meiji Restoration, which laid the basis for the modern Japanese capitalist state, with the bourgeois revolutions of Europe and America. "It was not a middle-class revolution," he wrote. "It was a bureaucratic attempt to buy off such a revolution.... Today the mighty remains of Japanese feudalism have become a terrible brake on the development of the country.... As a result of historical conditions and forces, the Japanese middle classes have adopted aggressive foreign policies before cutting the knot of medieval serfdom. In this lies Japan's greatest danger: her structure of military power is erected over a social volcano. Furthermore her empire has been erected over a political volcano."

Noting the Japanese military's dependence on Formosa, Korea, and Manchuria, Trotsky said, "Today [there are] almost 50 million oppressed Koreans and Chinese to the 65 million Japanese. This mighty reservoir of political revolution will become especially dangerous to Japan in time of war." He pointed out that in the "collapse of [Russian] Czarism—and the Mikado's counselors had better study how this happened—the oppressed nationalities, which composed 53 percent of the population of pre-war Russia, play an enormous part."

This assessment is important to keep in



Workers in Japan demonstrate for shorter workday, 1992. Working class in Japan has huge potential economic power and political weight in a major imperialist country.

mind when considering why the U.S. ruling class decided to use two atomic bombs against Japan and sought to move quickly to assert itself as the new lord and master over China and Korea at the end of World War II. In a surprise to Washington, the Chinese and Korean people followed the historical line of march described by Trotsky and waged mighty revolutionary struggles to throw out the foreign conquerors once and for all.

In Japan, the Meiji period established a unified country under the restored rule of the emperor, whose word was final. The landed families were handsomely compensated for their loss of title to their estates. Meanwhile, the great majority of the peasants were forced to sell their land under a growing burden of debt, and then to resume their toil as tenant farmers, paying half their crop to the new usurer-landlords.

The result was a capitalist state deeply deformed by feudal hangovers. Revolutionary journalist C. Frank Glass, writing as Li Fu-Jen, discussed these questions exhaustively in a series of articles titled "Japan Faces the Abyss," published in the monthly *Fourth International* magazine during 1944.

Glass explained that under Meiji, who ruled until his death in 1912, Japan was gradually transformed from a feudal into a capitalist state and an imperialist power without a bourgeois revolution.

"The bourgeoisie of the West," wrote Glass, "established its power and freed the productive forces from the fetters of feudalism by civil war and violent revolution.... In contrast, Japan's merchant-capitalists,

embryo of the modern bourgeoisie, allied and later merged themselves with a section of the old feudal rulers instead of overthrowing them, and preserved all they could of feudal institutions and customs that could in any way be fitted into the new system of capitalist exploitation."

Glass explained that the stimulus for the development of capitalism in Japan arose less from internal factors than from the "fear of foreign conquest and domination." The feudal rulers had been forced to open up to trade with the West only decades before.

Powerful trusts and tiny workshops

Glass stressed the uneven character of the country's economic development. "In the foreground of the picture," he wrote, "are modern, highly organized, powerful trusts and combines controlling whole industries equipped with the most modern machinery, while the background consists of small-scale industry—the tiny workshops of artisans working for a local market, and a widespread domestic industry. The entire structure rests on the narrow foundation of a primitive, small-scale agriculture."

"Nowhere in the world are there greater concentrations of capital than in Japan," he wrote. The Mitsui and Mitsubishi families—the former a noble family, the latter an outgrowth of a feudal clan famous for the sword-fighting skills of its samurai—"dominate the entire economic life of the country. Nevertheless, the characteristic of industry as a whole is not power-driven machinery

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A question about the class character of Japan

In a recent article, "Japan slips deeper into economic recession," Patrick O'Neill wrote that Japan "never carried out a thoroughgoing revolution to overturn the feudal aristocracy. Feudal families dominated politics, the military, and the economy before and during World War II." What are "feudal families?" Does this mean that feudal social and property relations still obtained in Japan through 1945? Did Ja-

pan build a powerful military, and therefore industrial base using medieval labor relations (i.e. unfree peasant labor)?

Then the next paragraph seems to contradict this view. "After Japan's defeat in World War II...the U.S. rulers...were concerned only with restoring a stable capitalist state in Japan." If Japan still had feudal property relations, how could a stable capitalist state be restored?

I am anything but an expert on the history of Japan. According to my limited reading, however, a layer of rural capitalists, growing out of an increasingly restive and well-organized peasantry, did develop during the Tokugawa period (1603-1867). Peasant revolts rose from an average of five per year in the late 1700s to more than 100 in the 1830s, and most were successful. In the Tempo crisis of the 1830s, some 100,000 peasants rose up and won their demands, deepening the crisis of the feudal state.

A new rise in peasant revolts in the 1860s led to the overthrow of the Tokugawa regime and installation of the so-called Meiji Restoration, led by an alliance of wealthy peasants, village merchants, and samurai. The samurai were comparable to the lower nobility in Europe, likewise reduced to poverty by the central regime. They certainly represented the old order, but they were quickly pushed aside, and their revolt of 1877 was crushed, leaving the rural capitalists in charge.

Peasant revolts again grew in the first years of Meiji rule, and the peasants were mollified only by a decree that granted all land to the peasants. Feudal restraints on agriculture and commerce were abolished and equality before the law and private property were established, leading to the rapid loss of peasant land to landlords.

The fact that there were "noble" families running around doesn't in itself mean much. The aristocracy in England continues to plague the working people of that country. This is anything but a feudal aristocracy, however. It has been based in capitalist property relations since the 1500s. The same is true in Germany—there's still today lots of "vons" in the phone book, but if you trace them back, most of them were rich merchants who bought their titles on the open capitalist market. It may well be that the transformations in Japan, not being based on as deep a revolutionary struggle as was the U.S. Civil War, accomplished less. But the same could be said for Germany and England—that doesn't make them feudal.

The very limited reading I have done on Japan may well be off the mark. But the *Militant* has in the past made passing references to "feudalism" in Japan. I would appreciate an explanation of what is meant by this.

Robert Dees
Palo Alto, California

For further reading from Pathfinder

The Founding of the Socialist Workers Party Minutes and resolutions 1938-39

Includes 1938 resolution, *The Present War in the Far East and the Tasks of the Party*: "Japan... is seeking to overcome the maladies of its decline by a war of colonial conquest."

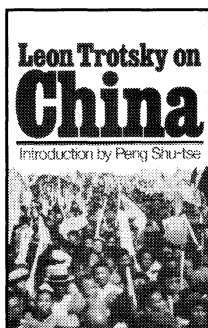
By Leon Trotsky

Writings of Leon Trotsky (1932-33)

Includes *Japan Heads for Disaster*, which describes the "Japanese epoch of transformations" as "a bureaucratic attempt to buy off" a bourgeois-democratic revolution.

Leon Trotsky on China

Includes *The Soviet Union and Japan's Manchurian Adventure*; *Japan and China*; and *On the Sino-Japanese War*.



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Rightist convicted in attack on immigrants

Continued from front page

mainly from construction contractors and landscapers.

The Sept. 17, 2000, attack on the two workers occurred in the midst of a campaign by rightist forces and local capitalist politicians demanding the deportation of "illegal aliens." The rightists organized regular pickets to harass the workers on Saturdays at a corner where they gathered. Their scapegoating campaign blames immigrant workers for crime, overcrowded housing, unemployment, and other social ills.

The anti-immigrant campaign has met with protests by the workers and supporters of their rights. Many of them turned out at a hearing a few weeks before the attack to encourage the defeat of a proposal by county legislator Joseph Caracappa to sue the Immigration and Naturalization Service for allegedly failing to do its job of arresting and deporting workers.

At the trial, Israel Pérez identified Slavin, and testified that he had attacked Magdaleno Estrada with a posthole digger, hitting him in the head and knocking him out in the basement of a deserted site in the nearby town of Shirley.

Before driving the two workers to this site, Slavin and Ryan Wagner, who will soon face trial, asked the workers if they were Mexican. Pérez suffered severe cuts after Wagner attacked him with a knife. Estrada recovered consciousness after hearing Pérez's screams for help, and the two workers were able to fight off the attackers and flee to the Long Island Expressway where they flagged down help.

Over objections from Slavin's lawyer, jurors were presented with photos and an explanation of the array of racist tattoos covering Slavin's body, including a swastika, a white power fist, and a crude caricature of a Jew. Witnesses testified that Slavin and one of his housemates are followers of Christian Identity, a movement that considers Blacks, Latinos, and Asians to be subhuman and Jews to be descended from Satan.

After the verdict, Wagner's lawyer said he would seek a change of venue, arguing that it would be hard to get a fair hearing in Suffolk County. He cited signs that said "Stop the Hate" that workers who attended the trial had carried outside the courthouse.

Wagner, 20, turned himself in a few weeks after the attack and admitted participating in the assault. He claimed it was not motivated by racism, but rather was the result of a drinking and drug binge. Echoing this line, his lawyer has asserted that Wagner has a problem with "anger management."

Ultrarightist meeting

As the trial was under way, a fascist-minded group that has spearheaded the anti-immigrant campaign in the area, Sachem Quality of Life Organization, sponsored a national conference against immigration. The speakers included Ezola Foster, the Reform Party's vice-presidential candidate last November, who ran with Patrick Buchanan; Barbara Coe of the California Citizens for Immigration Reform; and Glenn Spencer of the Los Angeles-based American Patrol.

Spencer's group puts forward the view that Mexicans are trying to "invade" the

United States, in what rightist groups call a planned "reconquista" (reconquest).

Meredith Burke, touted as an environmentalist, blamed immigrants for threatening the U.S. environment by aggravating "our excessive use of energy."

"Do we want to turn America into another China, India, or Mexico, countries many of our ancestors have left?" said Yeh Ling-Ling, a Chinese-American lawyer from the rightist Diversity Alliance for a Sustainable America.

Some of the arguments presented appealed to resentment of the "elite" by middle-class and some working-class layers. Virginia Abernethy of the Council of Conservative Citizens argued that "lower and middle classes bear the costs of immigration, whereas the 'power elite' receives the benefits," according to a column by Spencer published in the August 8 issue of *Newsday*.

Spencer himself added, "We are becoming a land of haves and have-nots, headed for serious social conflict," arguing that large-scale immigration threatens the "have-nots."

Rightists outmaneuver liberal forces

An editorial in *Newsday*, a liberal Long Island daily, decried the rightist speakers for warning of an immigrant "invasion," but echoed their demagogic arguments. "There was little discussion about overcrowding, safety and other problems now facing the Suffolk County community of Farmingville," the editorial declared.

Several organizations opposing the anti-immigration event, including a group called Brookhaven Citizens for Peaceful Solutions, held a press conference the day before the rightist event, while deliberately avoiding a counterprotest during the ultrarightist meeting. Leaders of Sachem Quality of Life, however, crashed the press conference, aggressively competing for the television cameras.

The rightists have been aided by the actions of mainstream capitalist politicians

Nebraska meat packers set back in union vote

BY DONALD REED

OMAHA, Nebraska—Workers at Nebraska Beef, one of the largest meatpacking plants in this city, suffered a setback to their organizing drive when they lost a union representation election August 16. The outcome of the vote, with 345 ballots cast in favor of the union and 452 against, is disputed by many workers, who point to company intimidation and violations of election procedures. Far from giving up, workers are discussing what steps to take next in the fight to improve wages, working conditions, safety on the job, and union organization.

The United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW), along with the religious and community coalition, Omaha Together/One Community (OTOC), are engaged in a sustained drive to organize Omaha's 4,000 meat packers. Nebraska Beef is the largest plant they have targeted so far. Although the union has been defeated in a vote by production workers at ConAgra-Northern States Beef, two smaller elections have been won. One result of the drive is that meatpacking workers from a number of plants are forging ties, discussing their common conditions, and sharing the lessons they have learned as they work to counter the bosses' antiunion campaign. For example, meat packers at two ConAgra plants in the area have been part of the union organizing drive at Nebraska Beef.

A UFCW official and coordinator for the organizing drive said in response to the election outcome that Nebraska Beef's antiunion campaign "was equal to or worse than any I have seen in 20 years of organizing, including the Smithfield plant" in Tar Heel, North Carolina. The Smithfield plant is a notoriously antiunion hog slaughterhouse that employs roughly 5,000 workers.

"They had to cheat us to beat us. But the battle is not over," said Anselm McCrimon, a worker in the fabrication department. On the day before the election, McCrimon reported that workers in his department "were chanting 'We want a union!' and slamming their hooks on the tables. A lot of people came back after the election—they couldn't

Timber workers strike in New Zealand



Militant/Malcolm McAllister

Striking members of the National Distribution Union on picket line at Carter Holt Harvey timber company in Auckland, New Zealand. They walked off the job August 18 demanding a pay raise and resisting job cuts.

who have joined the anti-immigrant campaign. In April, when immigrant rights activists and others pushed to get a proposal passed by the Suffolk County legislature for a center to be built in Farmingville to serve as a hiring hall for the day laborers, County Executive Robert Gaffney vetoed it, a move that put wind in the sails of the rightists.

County legislator Caracappa is now proposing a bill targeting contractors who hire undocumented workers. The legislation would subject employers to losing their county licenses for five years after three violations.

Immigrant rights protests planned

Workers waiting on street corners to be offered day jobs face continual harassment by the police. Jacobo Herrera Zenteno told the *Militant*, "You can come to the main street in town [in Farmingdale] any morn-

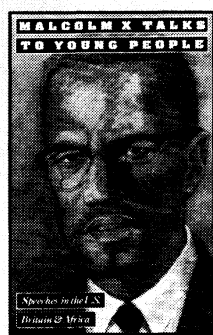
ing and they will be there. They give tickets to anyone who stops." In nearby Farmingville they are also hassled by the police, as well as by the weekly rightist pickets.

Meanwhile, workers are organizing to protect their rights. Elizar, a Mexican-born worker in Farmingville, is a member of the Unión de Jornaleros de Long Island (Union of Day Laborers of Long Island). "The work of ULI is to keep pressuring the contractors to pay for the wages owed to the workers," he said. Contractors often attempt to pay workers less than promised or not at all.

A coalition of groups is planning an event in defense of immigrant rights around the anniversary of the September 17 attack. There are also plans to participate in a September 25 march on Washington to demand an amnesty for all undocumented workers.

Gerardo Sánchez contributed to this article.

from Pathfinder



Malcolm X Talks to Young People

"I for one will join in with anyone, I don't care what color you are, as long as you want to change this miserable condition that exists on this

earth"—Malcolm X, Britain, December 1964. Also includes his 1965 interview with the *Young Socialist* magazine. \$10.95

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6,700 youth at Algiers festival discuss fight against imperialism

BY ANNE HOWIE
AND ALFONSE MALONE

ALGIERS, Algeria—The fact that the 15th World Festival of Youth and Students took place, and its political character as a meeting of anti-imperialist youth, was a big victory.

That was the conclusion of many of the participants in the August 8–16 event, especially those organizations and individuals that, since the previous world festival, held in Havana four years ago, had been working to hold another anti-imperialist gathering.

According to the festival's International Organizing Committee, nearly 6,700 youth from 143 countries took part in the gathering, which was held in Africa for the first time ever.

The international festival was marked by the political tone and content of groups and individuals engaged in popular struggles for national liberation, worker and peasant struggles, and student protests. Those who came to Algiers wanted to speak about their struggles, learn about those of others, and discuss how to advance the fight against the imperialist plunder of the world.

This character of the festival was registered at the Anti-Imperialist Tribunal, held August 13–14. One of the most popular sessions of the festival, it was set up as a mock trial of the imperialist system.

Dozens of delegates testified on the crimes perpetrated by Washington, London, Paris, Tokyo, and other imperialist powers against the toilers of the world. The presentations also shed light on many struggles for national liberation—from Korea to Western Sahara to Kanaky (New Caledonia).

Twenty-six years since Vietnam War

Summarizing the conclusions of the Anti-Imperialist Tribunal August 14, Otto Rivero, first secretary of the Union of Young Communists (UJC) of Cuba, said there is one fact above all that has the greatest weight in world politics: "That's the existence of imperialism."

As part of the determined resistance to this imperialist reality around the world—from Palestine to Puerto Rico, "the Cuban Revolution offers an example to all humanity," Rivero said. "Cuba will continue its struggle against imperialism."

Among the first speakers in the tribunal was Bui The Giang of the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union of Vietnam. "Twenty-six years ago the world saw the end of a war in my country that has often been called 'the Vietnam war,' yet as victims and victors of this war, we Vietnamese call it 'the American war in Vietnam,'" said Giang, who fought in the Vietnamese liberation army as a teenager.

"We emerged victorious from that war due to, among other things, the solidarity and support extended to us by youth, students, and people the world over.... We are eternally indebted to you for that."

Giang went on to describe how, between 1964 and 1975, Washington used 14.5 million tons of ammunition to try to crush the Vietnamese people—seven times the tonnage used during all of World War II. In this war 3 million Vietnamese died, 4 million were injured, and about 10 million unexploded bombs and land mines have continued to maim and kill people, he said.

Some right-wing groups in the United States are still "making big noises about some 2,000 Americans missing in action in Vietnam," Giang noted. "Although my people consider and treat this as an issue of a humanitarian nature, I am obliged to remind you that in Vietnam today my people continue searching for the remains of some 300,000 missing Vietnamese."

Giang also referred to the ongoing effects of the use of the chemical defoliant Agent Orange, which has contributed to higher than normal rates of cancer and birth defects among Vietnamese and has had devastating effects on the health of many U.S. soldiers. He pointed out that

John F. Kennedy was the first U.S. president to order the massive use of chemical weapons against the Vietnamese people four decades ago.

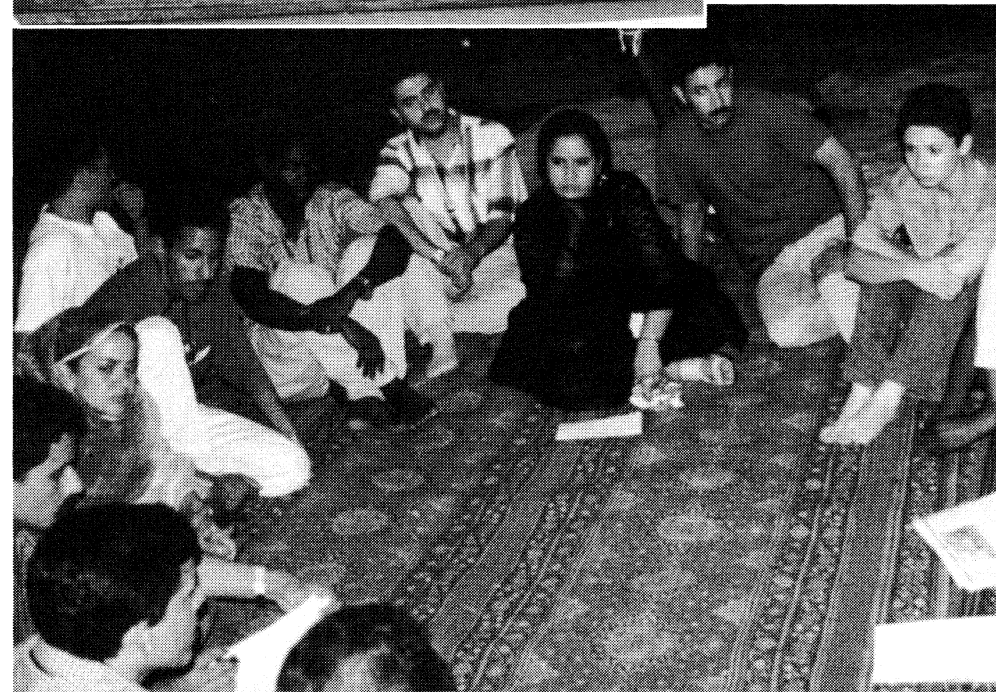
"Twenty-six years have passed since the end of that imperialist war in Vietnam. However, we have seen dozens of smaller wars, conflicts and disputes inflicted by imperialist forces...from the decades-long undeclared war against Cuba to the war against Iraq, to the recent war against Yugoslavia—a country in Europe itself, where many had thought peace was firmly and deeply rooted," Giang stated in conclusion. "Cherishing peace, we understand that as long as imperialism exists, it is impossible to avoid war and destruction."

Exposing various imperialist powers

The U.S. government, which many speakers described as the number one enemy of humanity, was the main target of numerous presentations. In addition, a range of other delegates testified about struggles against other imperialist powers.

Son Kyong Nam represented the Kim Il Sung Socialist Youth League of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea at the opening of the Tribunal. He focused his remarks on Washington's role in dividing the Korean peninsula and the struggle today to get the 37,000 U.S. troops out of south Korea and reunify the country.

Kim Song Ho, speaking for the same orga-



Delegates meet with representatives of the Union of Youth of Western Sahara, Ujsario, to discuss their fight for independence and national self-determination. Inset, participants in panel of the Anti-Imperialist Tribunal at the festival.

nization later in the program, aimed his fire at Tokyo. "There are some countries in the world that once committed disgraceful crimes against history and humanity," he noted. "Japan is an enemy state that committed unpardonable crimes against the Korean and other Asian peoples in the past." Song Ho explained that during the 40 years of colonial domination of Korea, Tokyo forcibly drafted 6 million Korean youth and working people into its army or into labor camps in Japan, more than 1 million of whom "were cruelly killed by the Japanese imperialists." He also stated that the Japanese colonizers "drafted more than 200,000 Korean women, including 13- and 14-year-old girls, and reduced them to 'comfort women' for the army—sexual slaves for the Japanese aggressor troops."

Pointing to Tokyo's refusal to take responsibility for these and other crimes, the Korean youth leader proposed the tribunal demand a formal apology from Japan's rulers and com-



Delegates from Quebec march with flag at opening ceremony of world youth festival in Algiers. They championed fight for Quebec independence from Canadian imperialism.

pensation to the victims of these heinous acts.

Annalucia Vermunt spoke for the Young Socialists and the Communist League in New Zealand. She described the role of New Zealand and Australian imperialism in the Pacific—from the occupation of East Timor led by the Australian military in 1999 to the ongoing intervention with "peacekeeping" forces in Bougainville.

"The New Zealand government has also sent troops to Iraq and Yugoslavia over the last decade," Vermunt said. "This is an extension of the New Zealand rulers' domestic policy of attacks against not only the indigenous Maori people but all working people and exploited farmers. We have a common enemy and a common struggle."

Samuel Goromido from Kanaky (New Caledonia) explained how Paris has turned the Kanak people into a minority in their own country by importing settlers to maintain French colonial rule there. He described how his organization, the Kanak Liberation Party (Palika), is

Mohammed, a delegate from Chad who asked to be identified only by his first name, elaborated further. "The imperialists make out that our nations are naturally poor. But the problem is that the prices we get on the world market for raw materials we export are lower than the prices of commodities that we are forced to import from the imperialist countries." He called for a common front against French imperialism by countries dominated by Paris.

Dimuthu Attigala, representing the Union of Young Socialists and the People's Liberation Front in Sri Lanka, painted a picture of "economic freefall" familiar in many semicolonial countries. She said 27 percent of Sri Lanka's Gross Domestic Product is spent every year on interest payments to service the country's foreign debt. Following an agreement foisted on that government by various imperialist powers through the International Monetary Fund, the government is privatizing national assets and industries, along with cuts in the welfare, health, and education systems, she said.

Spokespeople for imperialism often talk about development, Attigala stated, "but you have to defeat imperialism if you want to have development."

This discussion on imperialist oppression and the fight against it characterized many sessions. The final declaration adopted by the delegates includes the demand for "the cancellation of all foreign debts for the underdeveloped countries and implementation of measures of control over financial capital."

Anti-imperialist struggles in Americas

Several delegates from Cuba addressed the Anti-Imperialist Tribunal. Yamilka Collazo of the UJC spoke early in the tribunal's first session. She described Washington's 40-year aggression against the Cuban Revolution, highlighting the effects of the trade and economic embargo, the maintenance of the U.S. military base on Cuba's Guantánamo Bay, and the history of military assaults, provocations, and assassination attempts against leaders of the revolution.

Daisy Palma Espinosa, also of the UJC, gave a supplementary presentation on the case of "the five Cuba patriots incarcerated by the empire for daring to defend our sovereignty by gathering information about terrorist groups in Miami that the U.S. government allows to operate freely from its territory to carry out attacks against Cuba." The five were convicted June 8 in Miami on trumped-up charges of conspiring to commit espionage. Throughout the festival, Espinosa and many others of the 750 delegates from Cuba explained the campaign being waged by the UJC, the Federation of University Students, other mass organizations, and the Cuban government to demand that the five be freed.

Jacob Perasso, organizer of the Young Socialists National Executive Committee in the United States, and Noel Rabinowitz of the Young Communist League USA spoke next in the tribunal for the U.S. delegation. Reading the frame-up charges against the five Cubans locked up in U.S. prisons, Perasso said their trial and convictions are not only an attack on revolutionary Cuba but a blatant assault on the democratic rights of all working people and youth in the United States. The trial was marked by attempts to intimidate the defendants, FBI break-ins at their residences, and manufactured evidence—all features of the U.S. "just rule ourselves."

Continued on next page

'By fighting today, you sow seeds of future'

The following message by Puerto Rican independence fighter Rafael Cancel Miranda was sent to the participants in the 15th World Festival of Youth and Students held August 8-16 in Algiers, Algeria. It was read by Elizabeth Santiago, one of the two Puerto Rican delegates at the Anti-Imperialist Tribunal, one of the events held during the festival.

Cancel Miranda was one of the five independence fighters who spent more than a quarter-century in U.S. prisons following armed protests they carried out in Washington against U.S. colonial rule. Released in 1979 through an international defense campaign, he is today one of the best-known leaders of the Puerto Rican independence movement.

The translation is by the *Militant*.

BY RAFAEL CANCEL MIRANDA

I want to thank you for the invitation to take part in the world festival in Algeria. It would have been a great honor and joy for me to have been able to attend. I want to extend my greetings to the people of Algeria, who carried out such a heroic struggle for their national liberation, a struggle that was victorious and that served as an example to other peoples.

I also send my greetings to those attending this festival. You are the hope that we can have a better world. By fighting today, you sow the seeds of our own future. It's



Militant/Eric Simpson

Puerto Rican independence fighter Rafael Cancel Miranda sent greetings to Algiers festival.

necessary, as we know, to struggle against the globalization of oppression and exploitation. You have the power to win. The very existence of all humanity hangs on the outcome of this struggle.

The international mafia disguised in the clothes of big businessmen is willing to put our very existence up for sale. I understand you because I too, when I was young, along with other Puerto Rican youth, undertook this struggle for the national liberation of my Puerto Rican nation. Although I spent 28 years of my youth in the prisons of the empire, I do not regret having fought for the independence of Puerto Rico.

On May 12, 1898, the U.S. Navy shelled San Juan, our capital city, killing 100 Puerto Rican men and women, and destroying buildings and cathedrals. On July 25 of that year they invaded. Since then we have been a militarily occupied country, a colony of the U.S. Anglo-Saxon imperialist power. And since then we have resisted and fought for our national liberation. The imperialists have carried out massacres against us, such as on March

21, 1937, when they murdered people in cold blood. I know that massacre because my parents survived that brutal attack in which they killed 21 and wounded 200 people, including women and children.

They have carried out other massacres. On October 30, 1950, there was an insurrection for the national liberation of Puerto Rico, during which many were killed and many more imprisoned—among them Pedro Albizu Campos, who is for us what Ben Bella and other Algerian patriots have been for Algeria.

Besides controlling our lives socio-politically, economically, and militarily, they use our youth as cannon fodder for their imperialist wars. They used us against our brothers and sisters in Korea, in Vietnam, in the Dominican Republic, in Panama, in Haiti. In one of those wars they wanted to use me against the Korean people. I refused to go, so they removed me from high school and sent me to jail in Tallahassee, Florida.

On March 1, 1954, together with Lolita Lebrón, Andrés Figueroa Cordero, and Irving Flores Rodríguez, I went to Washington and we fired shots in the U.S. Congress, which holds all power over the Puerto Rican people. In this way we drew the attention of the world to our colonial situation. For that action we spent many years in U.S. prisons, until the struggle of many people—including, perhaps, the parents of many of you—forced U.S. imperialism to free us unconditionally. That was a victory, thanks to your parents. It was also a victory because we imposed conditions on the jailers, not them on us.

'U.S. Navy out of Vieques'

Today, many Puerto Rican men and women are being abused by the forces of the U.S. Navy—and by the U.S. imperialist courts imposed on Puerto Rico—for defending the right to life, peace, and justice for the Puerto Rican people of Vieques. Right now there are many people locked up—among them many university students and young workers—in the U.S. prisons on Puerto Rican territory.

In recent days, the people of Vieques voted overwhelmingly to stop the bombing of Vieques and to get the Yankee Navy out of Vieques now. The "democratic" response by this Navy and the U.S. government is that they continue to bomb us at this very moment. Apparently they respect so-called democracy only when they can control it.

I want those of you at this festival to know that at this very moment there are people carrying out civil disobedience inside the firing range of the U.S. Navy, defending the right of the Puerto Rican people of Vieques to live in peace and justice. Since I believe, like Fidel Castro, that we must globalize international solidarity, I ask you, as comrades, to extend your solidarity with the struggle in Vieques—which is the struggle of all—in whatever form you think necessary. Vieques is where they train the criminal forces of war that could attack any of your countries at any moment.

I send you warm revolutionary greetings. Thank you and *pa'lante* [Forward] Your comrade, Rafael Cancel Miranda

Youth discuss fight against imperialism

Continued from previous page

tice" system experienced regularly by U.S. residents.

Perasso also described other assaults against the democratic rights of working people in the United States, including the use of the death penalty and the quadrupling the size of the prison population over the last two decades.

Washington, he added, has "a long history of crimes against humanity. We need to look no further than the record of U.S. aggression against Iraq, including last Friday, when 50 U.S. and British warplanes bombed Iraq." He also noted the U.S. government's use of cluster bombs and history of using napalm in numerous assaults around the world, beginning in Korea and Cuba. The YS leader pointed to Washington's support of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land, the four decades of aggression against the Cuban Revolution, and the U.S. Navy's continued use of Vieques, Puerto Rico, as a bombing range.

Working people will most effectively fight against imperialist rule by building a revolutionary movement that can establish a workers and farmers government and overthrow capitalism, he concluded.

Rabinowitz called for fighting against the "new world order." He offered solidarity to Cuba, saying "we will not rest" until the five Cubans jailed in Miami are freed.

A number of other speakers addressed U.S. military intervention and domination in the Americas, from Colombia to Venezuela to Argentina.

The two delegates from Puerto Rico—Ismael Guadalupe, representing the United Youth of Vieques, and Elizabeth Santiago of the Socialist Front—addressed the tribunal. They both pointed to the indispensable example the Cuban Revolution has set in the worldwide struggle against imperialism. The fact they were able to travel to Algiers with the Cuban delegation, since they did not have the financial means to travel on their own, was another proof of the internationalism of the Cuban people, Guadalupe said.

He proposed the tribunal solidarize with the struggle in Vieques by demanding the "immediate end of U.S. military practices in Vieques, the prompt return of all Navy-occupied lands to the people of Vieques, and the dropping of charges against all those who have participated in the struggle against militarism in Puerto Rico."

Santiago referred to a message Puerto Rican independence fighter Rafael Cancel Miranda sent to the delegates, which she had read a few days earlier at a forum in solidarity with the people of Cuba, Colombia, Puerto Rico, and Venezuela (see text of message on this page).

The resolutions adopted by delegates at the tribunal and several other discussion

centers included the proposals made by the two Puerto Rican delegates. The festival's final declaration also expressed solidarity "with the people of Puerto Rico in the struggle for their independence."

Among the dozens of delegates who addressed the tribunal, Fuldo Gimaldi, representing the Communist Refoundation party of Italy, pointed to the "antiglobalization" protests of the last two years, from Seattle to Genoa, as the harbinger of a new progressive movement in the struggle against imperialism. Only one other delegate, from India, expressed a similar view at the tribunal.

In contrast, several other delegates hailing from countries in the imperialist world pointed to struggles by oppressed nationalities and their interconnection with the broader class struggle in the countries where they live.

Natalie Chevrier, a leader of the Young Socialists in Canada, spoke on behalf of the delegates from Quebec. She described Canada as an imperialist state that has used its armed forces to advance the interests of its ruling class at the expense of the toilers and has levied economic sanctions against Brazil and other semicolonial countries for the same reasons. She called for the lifting of all these sanctions.

Referring to the Canadian state as a "prison house of nations," Chevrier explained why she supports independence for Quebec and the fight for the rights of Native peoples in Canada. Supporters of Quebec independence are natural allies of meat packers fighting against steep wage cuts and worsening job conditions as well as other workers and farmers resisting assaults by the employers and the government throughout Canada, she said.

Anne Howie from the United Kingdom described the progress in the struggle for Irish independence and unification in the 20 years since the 1981 hunger strikes in which 10 young Irish freedom fighters died, and the impact of that fight on the class struggle in Britain. "There are 6 million Irish people in Britain, the vast majority of them workers," she said. "Each step forward in Ireland increases their confidence to fight, not just for Irish independence but as part of the vanguard working-class resistance to the rulers in Britain."

Howie also referred to the recent mobilizations of youth in the United Kingdom, mostly of Bangladeshi and Pakistani origin, against police harassment and attacks by fascists. "As the workings of imperialism draw more and more workers, particularly from the old empire, into the imperialist heartlands, they are strengthening the working class in these countries in our resistance to

the capitalists' attacks on wages and jobs, on our social wage, and against democratic rights."

Debates on anti-imperialist struggle

On a number of occasions, delegates expressed divergent views on how to wage the struggle against imperialism. In virtually every such instance, an open and civil political discussion was held.

During the Anti-imperialist Tribunal, for example, a delegate from the National Democratic Youth Organization (EDON) of Cyprus described the role of British and U.S. imperialism in dividing the island and fueling the process that led to complete segregation between Greek- and Turkish-speaking Cypriots since the Turkish army invaded Cyprus in 1974. "We recognize that today the United Nations finds it hard to implement many of its own resolutions because the UN is disregarded by the American government and other big powers," he said. "But we are still pressing for a peaceful solution, a peaceful reunification for Cyprus, within the framework of adopted UN resolutions. The UN is the only collective and democratically constituted world body," he argued.

Bouatrous Nordin, a university student in Jijil, eastern Algeria, took the floor after the delegate from Cyprus. He condemned the

Continued on Page 13



Militant

One of several Pathfinder literature tables during World Festival of Youth and Students. Revolutionary literature was in high demand from delegates from throughout the world. Over the course of the festival some 560 books were sold.

Farmers and workers, not 'American agriculture'

Cuba sets example in equalizing toilers' cultural and social conditions in order

Below is the last in a four-part series the *Militant* is running on "Communism and Labor's Transformation of Nature." The series was occasioned by a letter to the editor from Karl Butts, a farmer from Florida, commenting on an article in our July 2 issue, "Cubans celebrate 40th anniversary of farmers organization." That article, Butts said, provided a good summary of what Cuban farmers have accomplished over the past four decades as a result of the socialist revolution and land reform in that country. But he was concerned that a sentence in the closing paragraph could be read to imply that communists lend credence to the concept that organic agriculture is "superior to other approaches" and even that "Cuba generally chooses not to use chemicals in agricultural production."

The first three parts of this series clarified that the anti-science prejudices of concern to Butts have nothing in common with the views of the communist workers movement. The series has reviewed Marx and Engels's materialist explanation of the relationship between human labor and nature, as well as recent discussions of the communist approach to science and human progress at national and international gatherings of the Socialist Workers Party. Last week's installment assessed the campaign against genetically modified food (GMOs) and pointed to the ways in which the workings of the capitalist system are deepening the debt slavery of working farmers and continuing the proletarianization of layer after layer of these rural producers.



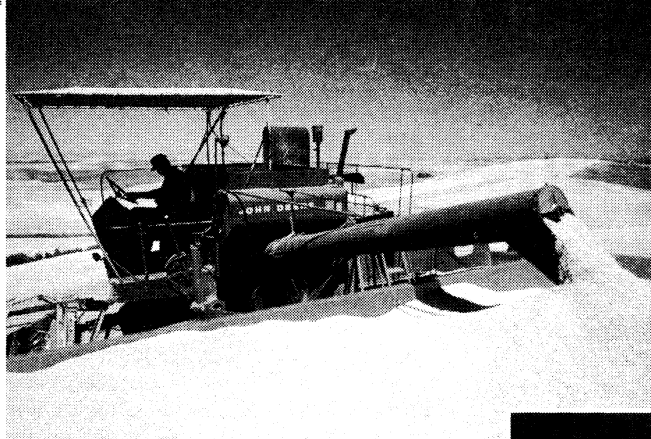
BY STEVE CLARK

(Last of four parts)

The U.S. rulers are not only global capitalism's leading banking and manufacturing power, they also lead the imperialist world in both agricultural output and exports.



Far right, Militant/Elizabeth Lariscy
Above, sugar cane harvester in use in 1970s Cuba, where such machines were first developed to provide alternative to backbreaking work of cutting cane with machetes. In capitalist world, agricultural workers' wages were so low mechanization of sugar harvest was not profitable. Right, barley harvest in U.S. Images of agricultural bounty are used to buttress lies of U.S. monopolies "feeding the world." Far right, farmer dumps milk as part of protest against ruinously low prices received by dairy farmers. Behind the classless fiction of "America," workers and farmers alike face exploitation and oppression by U.S. capitalist class.



Patriotic voices of the U.S. bourgeoisie, from capitalist farmers to major grain monopolies and government agencies, trumpet the "miracle of American farming."

"American farmers grow food that helps

feed the world," says the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

"America's farmers and ranchers are equipped to feed the world in the 21st century," says the president of the capitalist-dominated Farm Bureau Federation.

"Our mission is to feed and nourish a growing world population," says the website of the grain giant Archer Daniels Midland. And its top competitor, Cargill, speaks of "helping farmers grow a wide variety of goods to feed a growing world."

The American Soybean Association recently organized a campaign of postcards to the USDA around the slogan, "America's Surplus Soybeans Can Feed a Hungry World."

'America' doesn't feed the world

The first thing to note about these chauvinist claims is that they are simply lies. "America"—that classless fiction behind which a tiny handful of U.S. propertied families shield their domination of the armed forces, cops, courts, and other institutions of the capitalist state based in Washington—does *not* feed the world.

In 1998, for example, the 25 countries cited by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization as having the world's greatest levels of undernourishment received less than 0.03 percent of U.S. soybean exports, and in 1996 they received none! They were the destination of less than 0.3 percent of U.S. corn exports in 1996, as well.

What does it mean "to feed the world," anyway, when according to United Nations figures nearly 50 percent of children under age five in South Asia are underweight? Nearly one-third in Sub-Sa-

haran Africa? More than 15 percent in the Middle East and East Asia and the Pacific? Nearly 10 percent in Latin America and the Caribbean? What does it mean when right in the United States itself, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, some 10 million people are estimated as being hungry, and another 21 million go for parts of each year without "enough food for an active, healthy life"?

Nor are working farmers faring well under the laws of motion of capital in the United States and worldwide. According to a study released in June 2001, some 33,000 U.S. farms have gone under since the early 1990s. Prices paid to Mexican corn farmers fell by half over that period, driving many more off the land. While farmers in Canada suffered a 20 percent drop in their net incomes between 1989 and 1999.

The giant monopolies that dominate U.S. and world food markets, however, have done much better. Between the mid-1970s and the turn of the new century, for example, food prices paid by consumers in the United States shot up by 250 percent, while the prices received by farmers in real terms over that period have been stagnant at best.

No wonder the latest annual figures show Archer Daniels Midland posting more than \$300



million in after-tax profits, while ConAgra raked in \$683 million.

Cuba's example

Contrary to the USDA, Farm Bureau, and U.S. agribusiness, it is not American capitalist agriculture that points a way forward for the workers and farmers of the world, or shows how science and technology can be put to use to feed the world and advance broader social needs. To the contrary, the only such example in today's world is the socialist revolution in Cuba, along the lines described in the *Militant* article by Joel Britton on the 40th anniversary of the National Association of Small Farmers (ANAP).

The revolutionary government of the workers and farmers in Cuba expropriated the capitalist landowners, nationalized the land, and thereby guaranteed farmers the right to till it for as long as they wanted without fear of foreclosure and ruin. The socialist government provides cheap credit to farmers, as well as invaluable technical assistance in making a collective go of it on the land.

One accomplishment of which Cuban farmers and workers are justly very proud is the mechanization of sugarcane harvesting. No such machine had ever before been manufactured anywhere, since throughout the capitalist world the wages of agricul-

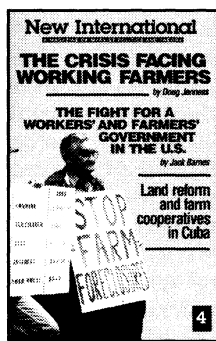
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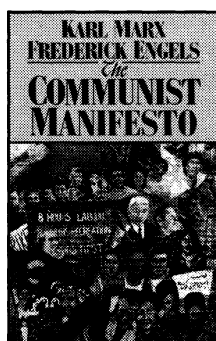
Frederick Engels

Includes "The Part Played by Labor in the Transition from Ape to Man," in which Engels explains that capitalist production, including agriculture, is concerned with only "the most immediate results." As long as the "usual coveted profit" is made, the capitalist is satisfied and unconcerned with human, environmental, or other consequences. \$17.95

The Communist Manifesto

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels

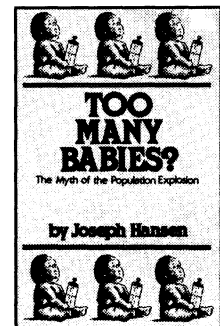
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Joseph Hansen

With humor and scientific rigor, the author debunks the myth that humanity faces a crisis of overpopulation. Millions go hungry amid abundance, he says, because production and distribution under capitalism are driven by considerations of profit, not social needs. He defends the use of scientific and technical advances to increase the productivity of human labor and sustainability of agriculture. \$3.50

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12.

ire' can feed the world

to advance world fight for socialism

ural labor gangs to perform this backbreaking work were so desperately low. Plantation owners and other capitalist farmers found it more profitable to press these workers into service at harvest time, leaving them without steady jobs or income during the "dead season," sometimes as long as nine months out of the year.

Cuba's revolutionary government, on the other hand, began organizing production in countryside and city to meet the needs of working people, not maximize the profits of landlords and capitalists. Mechanization of the harvest was among its central goals from the outset, said Cuban president Fidel Castro in his report to the first congress of the Communist Party of Cuba in December 1975.

"In this country, we could no longer tolerate an army of unemployed, that had risen from 600,000 in 1953 to 700,000 in 1958, part of which worked on the harvest four months in the year," Castro said. He continued:

This was a typically capitalist method of sugar production, and it could only exist under the [U.S.-backed Batista] regime's subhuman conditions. But the country had no machine-building industry, and under the existing conditions our mechanized harvesting techniques were absolutely embryonic. Such machines simply had neither been designed nor built by modern industry. Che [Guevara] was one of the leading advocates of this endeavor.

The revolutionary government gave top priority to designing several successively more effective sugarcane harvesting combines and built a factory in Cuba to manufacture them, giving a boost to the country's industrialization. Cuba also licensed a West German company to produce these combines; as of 1989 it had sold hundreds of them to customers in 44 countries. By the early 1980s more than half the sugarcane harvest in Cuba had been mechanized, as had almost all the lifting of the cut cane. Machinery is also used to clear the cane fields of scrap and to perform other tasks.

For the reasons described in Britton's article, Cuban toilers have had to carry out agricultural production in face of reduced resources since the economic crisis that hit them so hard during the opening years of the 1990s. But they have put their ingenuity to work to use whatever they do have at hand—be it a tractor or a team of oxen, be it precious imported fertilizer or a domestic by-product from the refining of sugar—to organize labor in town and country to feed and clothe the population and maintain the revolution's proletarian internationalist political course.

The job is to make a revolution

That underlines the reality that the main thing to be learned in Cuba by farmers or other working people and youth from abroad is not agricultural techniques—organic or otherwise. The most important lesson is what workers and farmers can accomplish anywhere in the world when we organize a successful revolutionary fight for state power and use our conquests to join in the international struggle for socialism.

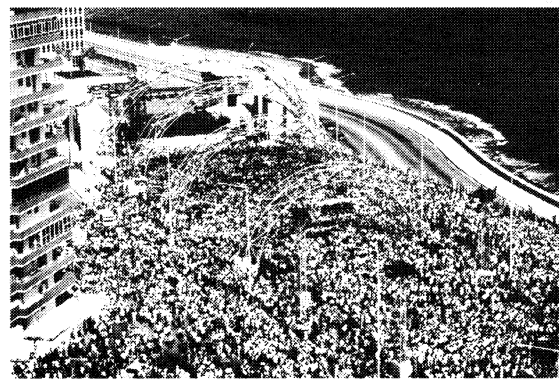
Communist leader Ernesto Che Guevara once told a gathering of medical students in Cuba that "to be a revolutionary doctor, or to be a revolutionary, there must first be a revolution." That, Guevara said, is the "fundamental thing" he as a young doctor had come to understand half a decade earlier in deciding to join in the revolutionary war to free Cuba from the boot of imperialist oppression and capitalist exploitation. (*Che Guevara Talks to Young People*, Pathfinder Press, p. 46)

The same holds true, even more so, to be a revolutionary farmer or a revolutionary worker. The "fundamental thing" in either case is to join in the proletarian movement to make a revolution and become a disciplined militant in its ranks.

Frederick Engels made a similar point nearly a century earlier in his article on

"The Part Played by Labor in the Transition from Ape to Man." At every step along the advance of society, he wrote, human beings "are reminded that we by no means rule over nature like a conqueror over a foreign people, like someone standing outside nature—but that we, with flesh, blood, and brain, belong to nature, and exist in its midst, and that all our mastery of it consists in the fact that we have the advantage over all other creatures of being able to know and correctly apply its laws."

Doing so, however, "requires something more than mere knowledge," Engels said.



"It requires a complete revolution in our hitherto existing mode of production, and with it of our whole contemporary social order." (*Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, Pathfinder Press, p. 236)



Above: Militant/Joel Britton

Above, retired worker tends crops in urban garden in Havana. Such gardens, which employ some 60,000 people, provide more than half the city's fresh produce. Left, thousands in Havana mobilize in defense of revolution in September 2000 after U.S. government refused to return plane that had been hijacked. "The main thing to be learned in Cuba is not agricultural techniques but what workers and farmers can accomplish anywhere in the world when we organize a successful revolutionary fight for state power and use our conquests to join in the international struggle for socialism."

It is only along that road that working people will accomplish the goal set forth in the *Communist Manifesto* of a "combination of agriculture with manufacturing industry" through the "gradual abolition of all

the distinction between town and country."

It is then, to paraphrase the *Manifesto*, that humanity will truly discover what immense "productive forces slumbered in the lap of social labor."

Detroit socialist joins mayoral debate

BY ELLEN BERMAN

DETROIT—Osborne Hart, the Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Detroit, joined several of the other mayoral candidates on August 20 at a forum sponsored by the Youth Connection and the League of Women Voters of Detroit. The event was covered by the city's major news media. Hart, a meat packer and member of the United Food and Commercial Workers union, will appear on the ballot in the September 11 primary election.

Hart and his supporters have been campaigning among working people involved in resistance to the attacks by the employers and their government. The socialist candidate has been speaking out to protest the ongoing war drive by the Israeli regime against the Palestinian people, and championing the Palestinians' fight for national self-determination. In campaigning for the socialist alternative to the employers' parties and their profit system, Hart points to the example of Cuba, where working people took political power and made a socialist revolution, which they are successfully defending today.

In the forum all the other candidates discussed political issues from the standpoint of the employer class. Several of them referred to Detroit as a "\$3.3 billion business" and put forward their managerial experience or careers in the police department as qualifications for mayor.

"My campaign brings a working-class perspective to the crisis facing our class and the capitalist economic crisis facing working people around the world," Hart told the 75 people who attended the gathering at Wayne State University.

"The recession has hit Detroit hard. We are witnessing massive layoffs in the auto industry, the crumbling of the infrastructure, a lack of housing, libraries, decent roads, and the erosion of social protections such as health care and day care. Education in this country is maintained as a privilege instead of a right."

Hart stated, "This is the best that the capitalist system has to offer. This system can't be reformed—we need a revolutionary change of government. My campaign demonstrates that working people have the capacity to reorganize society for human needs and not profits."

A panel of high school students read prepared questions for the candidates. Each

candidate was given one minute to respond. Questions focused on the issues of education, after-school programs, and how the candidates would fund such needs.

"The city of Detroit spends millions of dollars on casinos and not on youth. How can funds be better spent on youth?" Kizzmet Pringle, an 11th grader from Cass Technical High School, wanted to know.

Big-business politicians, including current Democratic Party mayor Dennis Archer, have argued for establishing more casinos as a way of providing jobs and revenue to fund social programs in the city. Three casinos have been built.

"Detroit has one of the highest income tax rates of any city in the country," Hart replied. "Detroit is the center of the auto industry. The enormous wealth created by workers goes into the hands of a few super-rich families. The socialist campaign is against any taxes on workers' wages, but demands that Detroit's corporate profits be taxed to fund social needs, not casinos."

"I have friends that have been shot over the use of drugs. How would you change the police department?" was one of the questions from the audience.

Hart described the role of the police un-

Continued on page 14

from Pathfinder

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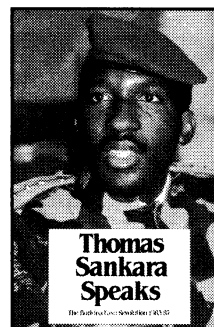
Thomas Sankara

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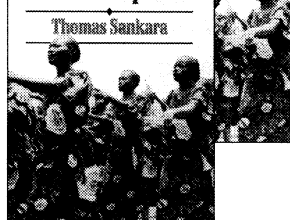
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La emancipación de la mujer y la lucha africana

L'émancipation des femmes et la lutte de libération de l'Afrique



NATO deploys 3,500 troops in Macedonia

Continued from front page

Trendafilov, a spokesperson of the party of Prime Minister Lupco Georgievski. According to the *Washington Post*, Western diplomats have offered to organize a "donor conference on aid" as a bribe for Macedonia officials to accept the agreement.

NATO's expanding role in Macedonia follows the massive bombing assaults against Yugoslavia that led to Washington establishing military occupation forces in the Balkans over the previous decade. Washington and other imperialist powers have taken advantage of the collapse of the Yugoslav regime in the early 1990s and the resulting infighting and wars between rival bureaucratic gangs—portrayed by the big business media as tribal or ethnic conflicts—as a pretext for their military intervention.

The federated Yugoslav workers state that the imperialists and rival Stalinist factions began to tear apart was a gigantic accomplishment of the Yugoslav revolution of 1942-46. Workers and peasants who were Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian, and from other nationalities forged unity to oust the Nazi occupation forces and their local collaborators, carry out a radical land reform, and expropriate the capitalist exploiters. This proletarian socialist revolution, among the most powerful of the century, is the ultimate target of the imperialist intervention.

In 1994-95 U.S. and NATO warplanes conducted air strikes against Bosnia and carved the republic up into zones of operations of British, French, German, Italian, and U.S. imperialist occupation forces. In 1999 Washington and other NATO forces launched an 11-week bombing campaign, claiming that their targets were Serb armed forces operating inside Serbia and Kosova. That onslaught devastated Yugoslavia's industrial and transport infrastructure, as well as working-class neighborhoods. Nearly 20,000 troops of the Atlantic alliance are currently deployed in Bosnia, and another 46,000 NATO military personnel occupy the Yugoslav province of Kosova.

Interimperialist conflict

The new moves into Macedonia have brought to light some of the competing interests between the imperialist powers in Europe.

According to the *Financial Times*, British soldiers, who are "on the front line in the world's hot spots," could comprise about half the NATO intervention force. Prime Minister Anthony Blair is "seeking to set an example to the rest of Europe in an area where Britain is strong—versatile, rapidly deployable armed forces—to help make up for his inability to take Britain into monetary union," the paper noted.

Some of the 300 U.S. soldiers who will join the operation have already been de-

ployed in Macedonia for months at Camp Able Sentry, a support base for Washington's occupation force in Kosova. The U.S. military base is near Macedonia's capital Skopje. U.S. general Joseph Ralston, NATO's top commander, traveled to Macedonia August 20 to assess the region and gave the green light for the deployment the next day.

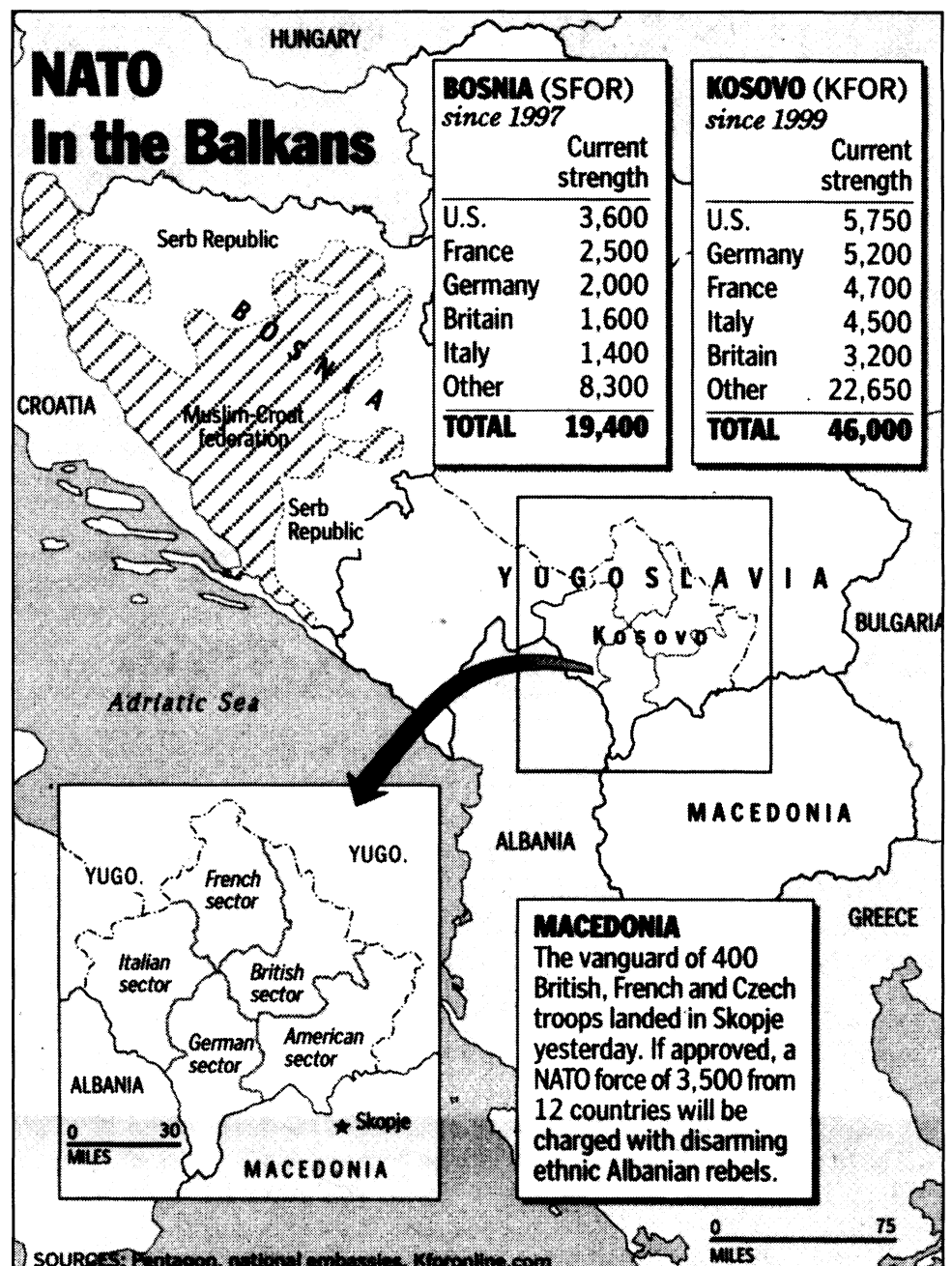
New disputes have been engendered in the German government, which is seeking to provide 500 troops to the new deployment. At least 28 members of parliament belonging to German chancellor Gerhard Schröder's Social Democratic Party (SPD) and four legislators from the Green party declared their opposition to Berlin's involvement in the military operation. "We are against German participation because we believe it is not appropriate to deploy NATO in the region because NATO is not trusted in the region," asserted SPD representative Harald Friese.

As Schröder worked to assemble a majority for the deployment, two members of the opposition Christian Democrats introduced legislation to amend the constitution to in future allow the government to send troops abroad without prior parliamentary agreement.

Like their colleagues in Germany several other imperialist representatives are nervous about the Macedonia operation. "Although 3,500 is not so many, this is a political decision," said one NATO official. "It's the third deployment in the Balkans after Kosovo and Bosnia. In the backs of people's mind is the risk that things could go wrong."

"No one...is breaking out the champagne," said Australia's former foreign minister Gareth Evans about the NATO occupation. "This is Macedonia 2001, but it looks unnervingly like Bosnia 1992."

Meanwhile, Washington has taken further steps to get Belgrade to do its dirty work of policing the Kosova boundary area with



Serbia. According to the Associated Press, Norwegian lieutenant-general Thorstein Skiaker, a NATO commander, signed an agreement with Yugoslav lieutenant-general Momcilo Momcilovic August 17 officially

allowing the Yugoslav army back into the area. This "buffer zone" was created in southern Serbia to separate the province as part of the deal imposed on Belgrade after NATO's 1999 bombardment of the country.

Rally backs Abu-Jamal, opposes death penalty

BY JOHN STAGGS

PHILADELPHIA—More than 1,000 people marched here August 17 to oppose the death sentence against Mumia Abu-Jamal and back his years-long fight for justice.

Demonstrators, who came from several cities, rallied outside the Pennsylvania Common Pleas Court while a hearing was held on arguments by Abu-Jamal's lawyers asking that his appeal be reopened to admit new evidence in the case.

Abu-Jamal, a well-known journalist and activist who is Black, was framed up and convicted in 1982 on charges of killing Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner the year before.

Protesters marched through downtown

Philadelphia carrying signs demanding "Free Mumia" and "Stop the Death Penalty." Many carried their own signs, some reading, "Free Mumia and Palestine." The rally was addressed by several national political and artistic figures including Jesse Jackson, who had not previously spoken out on Abu-Jamal's behalf, actor Ossie Davis, poet Sonia Sanchez, and comedian Dick Gregory.

The largest contingents of demonstrators came from the Philadelphia area and New York. A few people came from other countries. Eleven activists from France, representing groups in that country that support the fight to free Mumia, were organized to participate by Julia Wright, the daughter of noted author Richard Wright. Bernard Birsinger, the mayor of Bobigny, a suburb of Paris, addressed the rally.

The same day, 2,000 people rallied in Paris for justice for Abu-Jamal. And in Berlin, 200 gathered at the U.S. embassy demanding his freedom and an end to the death penalty in the United States.

The Philadelphia media gave prominent coverage to the rally, letting participants speak for themselves, in contrast to their usual tone in covering past protests, which always starts by labeling Abu-Jamal a "convicted cop-killer."

The *Daily News* quoted Josh Block, a north Philadelphia resident now attending New York University, who said, "Whenever young people participate in something like this, adults often say, 'You don't know what you're talking about.'"

"But we do. We care. And for me, Mumia is an inspiration. Even though he's in jail, he talks about the real issues that affect all of us."

Court hearing

In the courtroom, attorneys Marlene Kamish and Eliot Grossman, selected by Abu-Jamal earlier this year to replace his previous team of lawyers, are moving to introduce new evidence before the courts that they believe requires a new trial and that will exonerate Abu-Jamal. In a sworn affidavit, Arnold Beverly states that he was one of two individuals hired by Philadelphia area criminal figures to kill Daniel Faulkner because the police officer had interfered with

their activities in the Center City area and with payoffs to cops.

In addition, for the first time Abu-Jamal has submitted a statement to the court giving his explanation of what happened when he drove into the area where Faulkner was shot in December 1981. Before he could do anything, Abu-Jamal says in the papers filed with the court, he got out of his cab and was shot by a police officer.

The Philadelphia District Attorney's office argues that regardless of its merits the evidence cannot be admitted on technical grounds. The prosecutors argue that Abu-Jamal's lawyers at the time became aware of this affidavit in 1999 but did nothing about it. A time limit of 60 days set in the law has expired, the DA's office argues, and therefore it can't be introduced now.

"We contend that Mumia's previous team of lawyers committed serious misconduct in not presenting the confession of Arnold Beverly," Grossman told a meeting the day after the demonstration. "There is more than enough legal justification to waive the time limit. We think the court will want to hear the confession of Arnold Beverly, which exonerates Mumia, and will order a new trial."

State court judge Pamela Dembe did not rule on the defense appeal, but asked for written arguments in three weeks.

On July 19 U.S. district judge William Yohn Jr. denied a similar motion in federal court. Yohn used the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996, signed into law by then-president William Clinton, as a reason for denying the motion, writing that "the enactment of [this law] AEDPA served to limit the availability of federal habeas relief in many respects."

Another action demanding justice for Abu-Jamal has been called in Philadelphia for Saturday, September 8. For more information, contact the Concerned Friends and Family of Mumia Abu-Jamal at (215) 476-8812, or log onto their web site, www.mumia.org.

John Staggs is the Socialist Workers candidate for District Attorney in Philadelphia, and a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 56.

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Palestinians: Israel out of West Bank, Gaza

Continued from front page
force in time to make the evening news or later under cover of darkness. As the generals were debating, Arafat made a phone call—monitored, like all such calls, by the Israeli government—and urged the firing be stopped. Tel Aviv was thus denied the pretext for proceeding with the military strike.

Lightning and massive attack

"There is only one way this war will stop," wrote *Washington Post* columnist Charles Krauthammer August 16. "The scenario would go like this: A lightning and massive Israeli attack on every element of Arafat's police state infrastructure—the headquarters and commanders of his eight (!) security services, his police stations, weapons depots, training camps, communications and propaganda facilities (radio, TV, government-controlled newspapers)—with a simultaneous attack on the headquarters and leadership of Arafat's Hamas and Islamic Jihad allies. Arafat has given Israel war; he will now receive it."

Columns including the same proposal were written by Michael Kelly, editor of the conservative *National Journal*; columnist George Will; Graham Fuller, former vice chairman of the National Intelligence Council at the CIA, whose piece was published in the *Los Angeles Times*; Fareed Zakaria, editor of *Newsweek International*; and others.

Krauthammer counseled that "Israel does not reoccupy Palestinian cities. Israeli troops stay only the few days necessary to 1) begin building a wall of separation between Palestinian and Israeli territory and 2) evacuate the more far-flung Israeli settlements. With a new border consolidated, Israel withdraws." He said that because "there already is a wall separating Gaza from Israel," Tel Aviv has been able to effectively control its border. Israelis should then "wait for a Palestinian generation that will sign a peace treaty that it intends to live by. That really accepts a Jewish state as its neighbor, that really forswears violence."

Placing the blame on the Palestinian people for the violence, rather than on the Israeli state, with its denial of self-determination and a homeland for the Palestinians, has become stock-in-trade of the war preparations.

Some voices seek to portray the ongoing Israeli assaults and looming war as one aimed only at the Palestinian leadership. *National Review Online* contributing editor Michael Ledeen wrote August 21 that there "is no hope of a durable peace with a tyrannical and corrupt Palestine. Arafat and his cronies are as corrupt and autocratic as any of the Middle East nasties, which is one reason they like him and support him." Ledeen added, "Israel needs not only military tactics to destroy the terror network, but also political weapons to begin the destruction of the Arafat-led tyranny," including appeals to the "Palestinian people themselves."

Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon has won wide backing within the country's population for the accelerating war drive. The *Washington Post's* Lee Hockstader noted in an article on the government policy of assassinating Palestinians that with "the exception of a dovish minority and a handful of human rights groups, there is little domestic criticism in Israel of a policy that has killed about 40 Palestinians since last fall, at least 13 of them innocent bystanders." In a poll published in the *Ma'ariv* newspaper, some three-quarters of Israelis said they endorsed the government's handling of the conflict or stated that it does not go far enough. Nearly all were in favor of an all-out assault on the Palestinian Authority.

An Israeli army general said they know that "using helicopters to kill Hamas leaders will lead to a certain escalation for a while." Referring to the deaths of Israelis, he added: "We know the price and we consider it very carefully."

Torture, killings, sealing off Gaza

The conditions imposed on the Palestinian people by Israeli imperialism continue to worsen as the war preparations proceed.

A new report on the effect of Israeli closures of the Gaza Strip and West Bank states



Mass funeral for three Palestinians killed in July by Israeli army raid in Jenin. Tel Aviv's siege of Palestinian areas, policy of assassinations, use of torture, and military actions have sparked ongoing resistance. The Israeli rulers are pushing ahead in their drive toward war against the Palestinian people.

that one-third of all Palestinians were living below the poverty level at the end of 2000, compared with 21 percent just three months earlier. The number of work permits held by Palestinians fell from 52,000 to 4,000 in the same period, and most who held permits were not using them, according to the UN-sponsored study. Gross domestic product fell by 8.2 percent in 2000, and the Palestinian Authority's deficit was \$371 million, or 22 percent of total expenditures.

The *Washington Post* reported August 19 that the 1 million people in the Gaza Strip have now endured 11 months of closure. "Military positions ring the Gaza Strip, and overlook it from settlement blocs still controlled by Israel," wrote Daniel Williams. "Snipers hidden in towers and in a house on the short Egyptian border keep Palestinians at bay. Gunboats shoot at fishermen who venture more than two miles off the coast."

"Israel has closed off Gaza not only from itself, but from the rest of the world. The airport is closed, no road links Gaza with the West Bank or the Arab world to the east and north, and the crossing to Egypt is routinely blocked by Israeli soldiers," Williams reported.

Unemployment has risen from 50 percent in December to 64 percent in June, and more

than half of all Gaza families saw their incomes decline by at least 50 percent during the same months. "Large parts of industry stand idle," Williams wrote, "tens of thousands of laborers are barred from jobs inside Israel and checkpoints and blockades hinder trade among towns within the Gaza Strip."

Use of torture to extract confessions

Alongside the Israeli government policy of assassinating those it deems leaders of the struggle—along with friends, family members, and bystanders—reports are emerging of more widespread police torture of detainees, many of them in their teens. Fifteen-year-old Ibrahim Zaul tells how he was arrested by police, blindfolded, spat upon, threatened with death, beaten with truncheons and rifle butts, doused with freezing cold water, and forced to stand with a heavy weight hung around his neck. The torture continued until he confessed to having thrown stones at Israeli troops. He was convicted on the basis of that confession, and served four months in prison.

Torture was routine procedure by Shin Bet, the Israeli secret police, for many years. The practice was formally ruled illegal by the Israeli Supreme Court in 1999. How-

ever, the brutality against the Palestinian population continues, including at checkpoints that regulate the movement of tens of thousands of Palestinians. Last week six Israeli soldiers were arrested on suspicion of beating and humiliating passengers in a taxi for two hours, including clubbing one person into unconsciousness.

More than 520 Palestinians and 150 Israelis have been killed over the past 11 months. The Union of Palestinian Medical Relief Committees says that 89 percent of the Palestinian victims were civilians and 32 percent were children. Virtually all were hit in the upper part of the body.

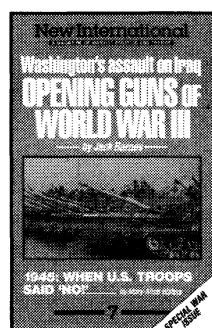
'Two sides of the same coin'

The war drive is also affecting the minority of Palestinians who are citizens of Israel, who enjoy better economic and social conditions, including rights not accorded residents of the West Bank or Gaza Strip. The case of Azmy Bishara, a Palestinian member of the Israeli parliament facing threats to his life and legal investigation, including a possible treason trial, has put their situation under the spotlight.

In a August 8 newspaper column, Bishara's brother Marwan, wrote that during a recent speech Azmy "warned against Ariel Sharon's drive toward war. Instead, he suggested supporting popular resistance to Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza to spare us all a regional war." A distorted version of the speech was featured in the press, leading to the threats of charges. "One parliamentarian suggested putting my brother in front of a firing squad," reported Marwan.

"As the indigenous population and as citizens of Israel, we were born under the shadow of a military administration. We have always been suspected as a potential enemy within," he wrote. "We have discovered early on that real civil equality and collective rights for the 1 million Palestinians in Israel cannot be achieved within the framework of a state that defines itself as the state of the Jewish people, one that subjects our people on the other side of the hills to military occupation. The rights of the Palestinians to equality in Israel and their right for self-determination on all the territories occupied in 1967, are two sides of the same coin."

From Pathfinder: The Palestinian struggle and the Middle East



Opening Guns of World War III Washington's Assault on Iraq JACK BARNES

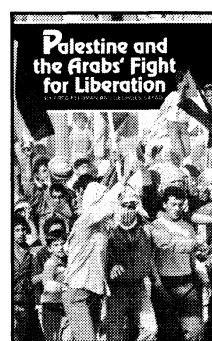
During the 1990-91 Gulf War, Washington slaughtered some 150,000 Iraqis. But the outcome did not bring the dawn of the "new world order" trumpeted by the U.S. rulers. Nor did it deal a lasting setback to the struggle of the Palestinians or other toilers in the region. Instead, it held a mirror to

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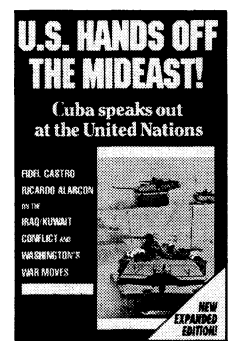
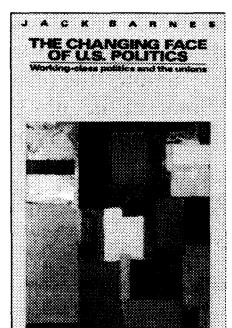
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Japan's crisis has deep historical roots

Continued from Page 4

and corporate finance, but primitive tools, handicraft or semi-handicraft production.... Every nail driven in Japan is still produced by hand," he wrote.

Japan's "unsolved agrarian problem," wrote Glass, "is at the root of both the fearfully low wages paid in industry and the high cost of food." The landlords enjoyed a guaranteed surplus from the tenant-farmers. For the capitalist rulers, the "agrarian distress" provided "a bottomless reservoir of cheap labor," available for exploitation in their industries or for sacrifice in imperialist conquest.

Women's status was "medieval," Glass observed. At the same time, "they are exposed to all the brutality of the earliest forms of capitalist exploitation." Peasants were forced through poverty to sell their daughters into brothels, where they often remained

until they died, or into factories, where they were confined to dormitories. Unions were prohibited. Workers, entitled to the barest minimum of rights, chafed under a totalitarian military dictatorship.

A 1938 document adopted by the Founding Conference of the Fourth International stated: "Weakened by what will turn out to be Pyrrhic victories in China, Japanese imperialism will go down to defeat in the coming world war if its career is not brought to a speedier end by the proletarian revolution." Several years earlier Trotsky noted that the "real armament of a nation is determined, not by the weapons on parade, not even by the weapons stored in arsenals, but by the weapons implied by the productive power of the nation's industries...the facts indicate that Japan would be crushingly defeated." He added that the Japanese soldier, a large part of whom were drawn from the peas-

antry and a backward agrarian environment, would not master "the new technology and the new tactics of modern war."

Following their barbaric defeat of Japan, Washington established a military occupation. Vincent Copeland, in an article in the May-June, 1952 *Fourth International* titled "Wall Street's Dilemma in Japan," explains that the U.S. rulers were intent on both nullifying the Japanese threat to U.S. preeminence and in cultivating Tokyo as a stable capitalist ally in the face of advances by anti-imperialist and socialist revolutions in China and Korea. Washington was concerned, too, with the relative strengthening of the Soviet Union coming out of its victories in World War II.

MacArthur implements reforms

These were among the factors behind the reforms introduced by Gen. Douglas MacArthur, head of the occupying force. They included: a purge of the officer corps of the military, and the official removal of the armed forces from political life; the extension of the suffrage to women and to younger men, who had previously been denied this right; the reconstruction and partial empowerment of the *Diet*, or parliament; the legalization of unions and left-wing parties, leading to a mushrooming of membership and activity; and the beginning of a land reform aimed at breaking up the large estates accumulated by the landlords.

At the same time, MacArthur shored up

the domination of the old ruling families. He reinstalled the emperor on his Chrysanthemum Throne, albeit stripped of his official "divinity." Other reforms had a double-edged character. The land reform, for example, "was designed from the outset to serve the interests not of working farmers, but the restoration of a stable bourgeois state," wrote Jack Barnes in the 1999 Pathfinder book *Capitalism's World Disorder*.

The U.S. general broke a planned strike by hundreds of thousands of government and railroad workers in the spring of 1947 by threatening to mobilize his troops against them.

As social temperatures rose and working people took advantage of their newly won democratic space to oppose the hated government, the occupation government banned strikes and demonstrations.

In the decades since the occupation, some sectors of Japanese industry have competed successfully with their European and North American rivals. Economically, politically, and militarily, Japan is today a modern imperialist power with the second largest economy in the world. But many of the particular economic and social problems in Japan today—from the status of women and immigrant workers to the crisis in agriculture and the banking system—have their roots in the lack of a thoroughgoing bourgeois revolution to sweep away all remnants of the feudal past.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

New York City Militant Labor Forum

Working-class resistance in the coalfields

Speaker: Frank Forrestal, Socialist Workers candidate for Pittsburgh mayor, member of United Mine Workers of America Local 1248 in Pennsylvania.

Sat., Aug. 25, 7:30 p.m. Dinner 6:30 p.m.

Donation: \$5 program, \$5 dinner

Village Community School, 272 West 10th Street.

For details, call (212) 695-7358, (212) 740-4611, (718) 567-8014.

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Communism and Labor's Transformation of Nature. Speaker: Wendy Lyons, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Aug. 31, 7:30 p.m. 4229 S. Central Avenue. Tel: (323) 233 9372.

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Farmers and the Fight for Water: Report back from the Klamath River Basin. Speaker: Rollande Girard, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Aug. 31, 7:30 p.m. 3926 Mission St. Tel: (415) 584-2135.

NEW JERSEY

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Ecuador: the Struggle against Government Austerity and Repression. Includes video on recent mass actions by working people. Fri., Aug. 31, 7:30 p.m. 506 Springfield Ave. 3rd Floor. Donation: \$4. Tel: (973) 643-3341.

NEW YORK

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Israel's War Drive against the Palestinians. Fri., Aug. 31, 7:30 p.m. 372A 53rd Street. Donation: \$4. Tel: (718) 567-8014.

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Protest Israeli War Drive against the Palestinian People. Fri., Aug. 31, 7:30 p.m. 545 8th Ave. Donation: \$4. Tel: (212) 695-7358.

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Israel's War Drive against the Palestinians. Fri., Aug. 31, 7:30 p.m. 540 W. 165 St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (212) 740-4611.

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British Troops Out of Ireland. Fri., Aug. 31, 7:00 p.m. 7 Mason Ave., Otahuhu. Donation: \$3. Tel: (09) 276-8885.

CALENDAR

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Alameda

Discussion on Che Guevara Habla a la Juventud (Che Guevara Talks to Young People) in Spanish. Wed., Sept. 5, 7:00 p.m. Alameda Free Library at the Interim Main Library 2200-A Central Avenue Tel: (510) 748-4660 or (415) 584-2135.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Charleston

Labor Day Picnic and Rally to Defend the Charleston Five. Mon. Sept. 3. Gate opens at 10:00 a.m. Speakers at 1:00 p.m. Exchange Park, Ladson Fairgrounds, Highway 78.

Colonial rule in Palestine

Continued from Page 15

ish Communist Party (Poale Zion). We believe that in the ranks of fighters for the rights and interests of the working people there is no place for groups that have in one form or another maintained Zionist ideology, concealing behind the mask of communism the nationalist appetites of the Jewish bourgeoisie. They are using communist slogans to exert bourgeois influence on the proletariat.

We note that during all the time that the mass Jewish workers' movement has existed, the Zionist ideology has been foreign to the Jewish proletariat. The social-Palestinian parties have been insignificant groups. We declare that the Jewish masses envision the possibility of their social-economic and cultural development not in the creation of a "national center" in Palestine, but in the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the creation of socialist Soviet republics in the countries where they live.

We call on the Jewish working masses of all countries to take part actively in the unfolding socialist revolution and to join the ranks of the Third International through the Communist parties of their respective countries.

The term "social-Palestinian parties" refers here to Zionist organizations functioning within the Socialist and labor movements.

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Workers at Sony Walkman plant in Sakato, Japan. Industry in Japan is marked by contrast between major exporting companies, like Sony and Toyota, and small, technically backward firms producing for the home market.

We're dumbfounded—The lead headline in the August 11 *Los Angeles Times*: "Sudden power glut puts state in costly bind—Surplus



Harry Ring

bought under long-term contracts was resold at a \$46-million loss in July. Paradoxically, if trend continues, higher usage could be encouraged."

Really?—*USA Today* did several

articles on Bush's "compromise" stem cell policy. Two top headlines: "Reading, reflection brought Bush to decision—Solicited opinions from all sides on issue that goes 'way beyond politics,'" and "Professor helped president weigh ethics."

Pst—Folks who bought Kolcraft strollers for their tots and who rely on the *Los Angeles Times* for their news would have required diligence to spot the three-inch item at the bottom of page 16. It reported Kolcraft had "recalled" 115,000 strollers because 22 children had been injured by ones that suddenly collapsed. The company said consumers should stop using the strollers and call them for a free "repair kit."

"Sorry about that too"—"Lawyers [in federal court] for 300,000 Indians claim the government squandered at least \$10 billion in trust accounts created in 1887 to manage royalties from grazing, logging, mining, and oil drilling on Indian land. The government acknowledges that over the years money was stolen, used for other federal programs, or never collected."—News item.

Try turning off the lights—University of Utah staffers are looking for a 2.2-lb. package of recycled uranium it received in 1970. Neither the school nor state nor federal officials can explain the missing package shipped from the uranium processing plant in Rocky Flats,

Colorado. The school said the risk of radioactive contamination is low.

Let's round it out—The Ronald Reagan Presidential Library is dickering with the feds to acquire a jet and limo made available to him during his time in office. How about tossing in a bottle of ketchup to bring back the time when his administration struck a blow for more nutritious school lunch programs by declaring ketchup a vegetable.

No end to problems—In California's San Bernardino Mountain, a huge underground fuel storage complex has been leaking gasoline for 25 years. Officials say there's no immediate danger of drinking-water contamination. But

they did seem nettled that two wells have been drilled within a mile of the seepage.

How clever can they get?—The United Kingdom parliament recently passed a law to reduce traffic congestion in London by imposing a \$7.50-a-day fee for entering the central area of the city. Now, it's apparently been confided to the media that the travel allowance plan for members of Parliament will exempt them from the tax.

Mark it down—A few of the readers who send clippings for this column haven't caught up with our current address. Send items care of Pathfinder Bookstore, 4229 S. Central Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90011.

Youth in Algiers discuss fight against imperialism

Continued from Page 7

imperialist powers' use and control of the United Nations. "How can we talk of peaceful solutions within the UN," he asked, "when our Palestinian brothers are being killed by Israeli jets, with help from the U.S., despite countless UN resolutions? When Cuba faces a relentless economic war, despite many UN resolutions to lift the embargo? When Iraq is bombed again and again?" We can only talk of the masquerade of the UN, he said, "just as France masquerades as a 'supporter' of the peoples' just demands in Kabylia."

Nordin condemned the intervention by French imperialism in Algeria to try to use popular discontent in that country for its own aims. At the same time he expressed support for the protest demands of the Berbers and pointed to the need to wage a struggle against imperialism.

Kabylia is a region east of Algiers where Berbers, the indigenous people of northern Africa, comprise the overwhelming majority. Many protests have taken place there since April to press demands for expanding the cultural and language rights of the Berber people and to oppose police repression.

Many workshops and forums in solidarity with national liberation struggles took place during the festival. Some were organized on an impromptu basis. The first session on "Globalization and Development" turned into a rally against Tel Aviv's use of F-16 warplanes to bomb Palestinian towns in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Hundreds of delegates poured into the Houari Boumedienne university campus after that meeting for a demonstration to back the struggle for a Palestinian homeland.

A forum in solidarity with the people of East Timor took place August 10. Filomena Hennique was the main speaker on the panel. She was one of six East Timorese students attending university in Portugal. The Timorese waged a hard-fought battle for independence against a military occupation by the Indonesian regime.

"We are now preparing for the first free elections in East Timor," Hennique said. She expressed support for the role of the Portuguese government in East Timor and backed the "humanitarian" intervention by foreign troops under the auspices of the United Nations, which has been spearheaded by the government of Australia.

Under discussion, Linda Harris from Australia expressed a different view. "Australian imperialism has no progressive role in East Timor or anywhere else in the world," Harris said. "A special TV program prepared by a team of investigative reporters three months ago revealed Australia's complicity with the Indonesian army in the massacres that followed the pro-independence referendum in 1991. An intelligence officer in the Australian army, who had been stationed in East Timor then, explained to reporters how Australian officials had encouraged East Timorese freedom fighters to come down from the mountains and stay in an area controlled by Indonesian police and UN supervisors. Then the UN and Australian officials withdrew, and left the East Timorese to be slaughtered."

Sahrawi independence struggle

One of the national liberation struggles that received prominent attention and support at the festival was that of the Sahrawi people. Two rallies of more than 400 delegates each took place in solidarity with the struggle for independence of Western Sahara, which is occupied by the Moroccan regime with imperialist backing. Discussion on the history and current stage of this fight was part of many workshops and forums. Delegates from the Ujsario, the youth organization of the Polisario Front, the organization leading this national liberation struggle, organized many informal dinners and discussions with youth from around the world at solidarity tents they had set up at each of the four campus dormitories for delegates.

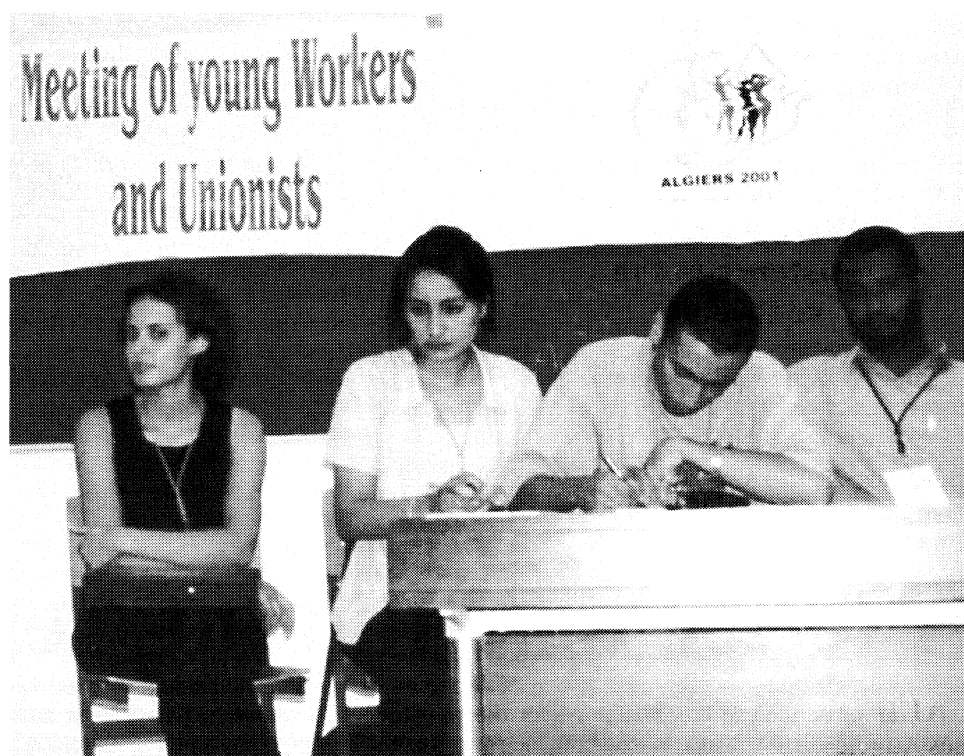
On August 10, the 150-person delegation from Morocco, which was led by the youth groups affiliated to the Socialist Party and Communist Party in that country, walked out of the festival and boarded a plane back home. All major political groups in Morocco, from the Socialist Party in the government to opposition formations, call Western Sahara a Moroccan territory and strongly oppose the struggle led by Polisario.

During the August 8 inauguration of the festival, a small verbal confrontation took place between delegates from Morocco and Western Sahara, which the Moroccan group used as the pretext to walk out. The king of Morocco called a press conference in Rabat to declare that the Moroccan delegation had been assaulted, that he was sending a plane to Algiers to pick up its members, and that the Moroccan government would provide emergency care for the injured. These claims were a fabrication.

The truth was that the Moroccan delegation had been unable to find a single person among the thousands here who would defend their position that Western Sahara is part of Morocco. No one backed their demands to share the platform equally with leaders of Ujsario, although they were guaranteed that they could take part and speak at all the festival events on Western Sahara.

Open political discussion and debate

During this year's festival, the ability of delegates representing different organizations and viewpoints to hold open political discussion—a gain that was first established at the 14th world youth festival held in Cuba, in a break with previous such gatherings—was advanced further. Participants were largely able to speak in workshops and soli-



Panelists at 15th World Festival of Youth and Students in Algiers. Speakers from many countries described Washington as the number one enemy of humanity.

arity meetings without discrimination by the chair or presidium. Only a couple of incidents took place in which attempts were made to limit free political debate, and these were dealt with by conference organizers.

One move to undermine the festival involved the Front of Socialist Forces (FFS) of Algeria, a social democratic organization affiliated to the Socialist International that has been leading antigovernment protests in Kabylia since April. According to many Algerian students, including several among the 50 Berbers from Kabylia who were delegates at the festival, the FFS is supported politically and financially by the Socialist Party of France, which dominates the imperialist government in Paris.

Several of these students said the French rulers are particularly angry at the government of President Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria because it has opened more and more of the country's vast natural resources to exploitation by U.S. capitalists. Some 80 percent of Algerian oil drilling and refining operations that have been opened to foreign capital are now owned by U.S.-based companies, according to these sources.

The FFS, together with some other groups in Kabylia, issued a call to boycott the festival, following a similar call by the youth groups affiliated to social democratic parties around the world. The same forces called a demonstration against the festival to take place during the August 8 inauguration of the youth gathering in Algiers. The Algerian government banned the protest. The Algerian press reported the following day that the police had stopped thousands at the outskirts of the capital city who were coming on buses and trucks for the action. The major media in France made a big deal of this incident. The August 9 *Le Figaro*, a major daily, for example, featured it in a front-page banner headline.

Days prior to the opening of the festival, the Movement of the Communist Youth of France (MJCF), affiliated with the French Communist Party, which has ministers in the SP-led government in Paris, published its call for boycotting the festival. Until Feb-

ruary the MJCF had participated in meetings to prepare the festival.

The August 9 issue of *Le Matin d'Alger*, a French-language daily in Algiers, published the MJCF statement titled, "Why we boycott the festival." The group stated that its leadership had decided to not take part in the gathering because of "unsafe conditions" in Algeria, repressive actions by the Algerian government, and the decision of a number of organizations in France, including trade unions led by the SP and Communist Party, to stay away from the Algiers gathering.

A month prior to the festival, Giovani Comunisti, the youth group affiliated with Italy's Communist Refoundation party, sent an "open letter" to all organizations around the world building the event. For reasons similar to those stated by the MJCF, Giovani Comunisti, which had hosted the third international meeting to prepare the festival in Rome in February, called for postponing the festival for a year. The overwhelming majority of organizations building the festival, however, did not heed these calls.

The fact that the 15th World Festival of Youth and Students took place, and its political character, represented an important victory for those forces seeking to hold a meeting of anti-imperialist youth from around the world.

"We won, we are doing it," Im Song Sun, a leader of the Kim Il Sung Socialist Youth League, told *Militant* reporters at the ceremony launching the festival.

"It's a victory we held it, especially given all the odds against us," said Harchand Singh, a leader of the All India Youth Federation, at the conclusion of the meeting. Singh is also general secretary of the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY), the main international organization sponsoring the Algiers meeting.

Organizers said an international meeting to draw the lessons from this festival will be called by WFDY within six months. That gathering will also consider initial proposals on when and where to hold the next world youth festival.

From Pathfinder

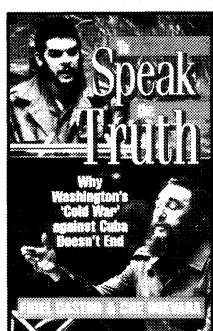
TO SPEAK THE TRUTH

Why Washington's 'Cold War' against Cuba Doesn't End

Fidel Castro and Che Guevara

In historic speeches before the United Nations and UN bodies, Guevara and Castro address the workers of the world, explaining why the U.S. government so hates the example set by the socialist revolution in Cuba and why Washington's effort to destroy it will fail. \$16.95

Available at bookstores listed on page 12



Back the Palestinian struggle

The propaganda offensive by capitalist politicians backing the Israeli government's drive to war aims to undercut support for the Palestinians' struggle for self-determination and to prepare the groundwork for a brutal military assault on the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In face of this assault, working people around the world need to respond by getting out the truth about the ongoing resistance by the Palestinian people and their battle for a homeland, including by joining protests and other actions to condemn the mounting Israeli government assaults.

The accelerated course of the Israeli rulers is headed toward a war. But campaigning in solidarity with the Palestinians by calling on Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories can make the rulers in both Tel Aviv and Washington pay the highest political price possible for the aggression and contribute to the necessary process of forging a revolutionary leadership.

The calls by big-business politicians for a war against the Palestinians followed by the building of a wall around Palestinian cities show the hatred of the imperialist rulers for the Palestinian resistance. It has been some years since such warmongering columns have openly been run in major newspapers in the United States. They stand as a warning of the plans Tel Aviv has on the drawing board. The conditions already imposed on Palestinians in the Gaza Strip are an initial indication of the terrible toll such an outcome would have on the Palestinian people.

Many bourgeois pundits and some government officials have begun to portray Israel as a bastion of freedom and democracy in the Middle East standing against the backward nationalism of an irrational Palestinian-Arab Islamic people. This is nothing but a crude attempt to dehumanize the Palestinians and numb workers, farmers, and other defenders of democratic rights to the reality of Tel Aviv's repression and war preparations.

The nationalism pushed by Israeli officials is the nationalism of an imperialist state. It has no progressive content and is simply used to justify any means employed to defend the interests and prerogatives of the capitalist class

that rules Israel. Palestinian nationalism, on the other hand, is one of an oppressed and dispossessed people fighting for their right to self-determination.

Following Washington's war against Iraq in 1990-91, Washington and other imperialist powers hoped that they could impose a "settlement" on the Palestinian people. They hoped the Palestine Liberation Organization under the leadership of Yasir Arafat would play a key role in controlling the Palestinian population if offered some concessions. The 1993 accords, signed between Arafat and Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin on the White House lawn under Clinton's gaze, and numerous other talks under the aegis of the Clinton administration, proved a cruel illusion to the Palestinian people. The patches of territory ceded to the nominal control of the Palestinians in the West Bank, and the prison the Gaza Strip has been turned into, have never come close to resembling the homeland they have fought for generations to achieve.

The conflict between the Palestinian people and the capitalist state of Israel is irreconcilable. The violent dispossession of the Palestinians is built into the very foundations of the colonial-settler state. The Palestinian people have refused to get on their knees or be dispersed as a people, and they continue to demand their rights. The battle for a democratic, secular Palestine is one that advances the interests of workers and farmers in the region as a whole. It is the only road open for working people who are Jewish within Israel to break out of the deadly logic of war and repression the capitalist rulers have led them into.

Within this growing conflict, many working people will want to learn the truth about these questions. Reading, studying, and helping to distribute the many titles produced by Pathfinder Press on this and related subjects is an important part of campaigning against the accelerating Israeli war drive. Along with protest actions, picket lines, public forums, and speak-outs, they can be used to help counter the growing war propaganda and point to the common interests of workers and farmers in championing the cause of the Palestinian people.

A letter to 'Militant' readers

Dear reader,

If you subscribed to the *Militant* over the past few months, you've had a chance to read both the paper's truthful reporting and its socialist point of view. If you like what you've read, I urge you to renew your subscription.

In the last two months a significant number of readers have renewed their subscriptions to the *Militant*. The heightened interest in the paper has been especially noticeable among workers, farmers, and youth engaged in resistance to the attacks by the employers and their government—from coal miners opposing attacks on their union in Pennsylvania and Ohio to anti-imperialist fighters at the recent world youth festival held in Algeria.

From September 5-19, supporters of the *Militant* and its sister publication in Spanish, *Perspectiva Mundial*, will be organizing a renewal campaign to help expand the long-term readership of these two socialist publications. They will be calling or visiting new subscribers, finding out what they think of the paper, and encouraging them to renew their subscription.

Militant supporters contacting you may also invite you to visit the local Pathfinder bookstore to check out the whole array of revolutionary books and pamphlets, as well as to attend the weekly Militant Labor Forum in your area.

Supporters of the socialist press are also gearing up to carry out a campaign in the fall to win new readers. To do so, over the coming weeks they will be stepping up their circulation efforts on the job, in working-class districts, at political events, and on college campuses.

You can join with other supporters of the *Militant* to-

day to campaign to tell the truth about the Israeli regime's accelerated war drive against the Palestinian people.

The correspondents of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* are active participants in the labor and farm resistance. As workers in coal mines, meatpacking, textile, and garment plants who are involved in the labor movement, they provide firsthand coverage of struggles today—from the union organizing battle among packinghouse workers in the Midwest, to the fights against cop brutality in cities such as Miami, Cincinnati, and New York.

The *Militant* not only tells the truth. It has a unique viewpoint. The paper explains the irreconcilable class antagonism between working people and the capitalist rulers. It points to the need for working people to organize a mass revolutionary movement to take political power out of the hands of the ruling class of billionaire families, establish a workers and farmers government, and join with working people worldwide in the fight for socialism.

From workers who were on strike at Hollander Home Fashions a few months ago, to unionists joining actions in defense of five framed-up dockworkers in South Carolina, to young people who recently returned from a trip to learn about the Cuban Revolution, a growing number of militant workers and farmers and revolutionary-minded youth are finding that they need the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, and are becoming regular readers.

I urge you to do the same and renew your subscription. In solidarity,
Martin Koppel
Editor

Detroit socialist joins mayoral debate

Continued from Page 9

der capitalism as protecting the interests of the wealthy rulers. "I participated along with thousands of other protesters in demonstrations against the police in Cincinnati who killed an unarmed Black man in April," he said. "That is a city where five people have been killed by the cops since November and 16 since 1995.

"Detroit is right up there, number one in police brutality. Blacks, and Black youth in particular, are targets of police violence. My campaign calls for the full prosecution and sentencing of police who commit such atrocities," Hart said.

The Socialist Workers candidate pointed out that the problems of young people are the problems of society, such as the growing re-segregation of schools and communities, the attempts to roll back affirmative action, and the pitting of young people against one another in a dog-eat-dog competitive environment.

"Public education was a historic gain for working people," said Hart. "I am opposed to privatization of the schools and

in favor of funding for bilingual education for the multinational students in Detroit who speak a variety of languages, from Spanish to Arabic. I would use the wealth created by the workers in this city and put it into funding the schools instead of increasing the profits of the Big Three."

"But these changes won't happen by putting a ballot in the box on September 11," Hart continued. "It will take a social movement by working people of the city to demand social needs versus private needs, things that are in the interests of the majority, human needs, not profits for the wealthy minority."

Only when working people make a revolutionary change and begin running society, say Hart and his campaign supporters, will it be possible to transform education—from a capitalist institution aimed at regimenting working-class youth, into an opportunity for lifetime education and culture for all.

Ellen Berman is a member of United Auto Workers Local 157 at Textron Automotive in Westland, Michigan.

Western Sahara

Continued from front page

Canada, France, Iceland, New Zealand, Sweden, and the United States who participated in a two-day visit to the refugee camps of Western Sahara.

The trip was organized right after the 15th World Festival of Youth and Students, held August 8-16 in Algiers, Algeria (see article on page 6). At the anti-imperialist gathering, thousands of youth from around the world came to share experiences of their struggles and discuss the most effective ways to resist the plunder of the world by the imperialist powers. Some 420 youth from Western Sahara, organized by the youth organization of the Polisario Front, Ujsario, participated in the world festival and used the occasion to expand awareness and solidarity with their decades-long struggle for self-determination.

Some of the 14 youth on the solidarity visit decided to make the trip after meeting members of the Ujsario and learning about their struggle during the festival.

During their stay, they participated in a reportback rally from the Algiers festival and visited the national hospital in the refugee camps, the radio station, the museum of captured Moroccan military equipment, and the UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara. They were hosted overnight in the tents of Sahrawis in the Smara camp.

The delegation also met with the leadership of the Ujsario, the Women's Union, the Minister of Health, a local council in the Smara camp, and leaders of the Association of Family Members of Sahrawi Prisoners and Disappeared (AFAPREDESA).

Western Sahara is located on the northwestern coast of Africa, bordered by Morocco, Algeria, and Mauritania. It was a direct colony of Spain from 1884 to 1975.

The Sahrawi people fought for decades against Spanish imperialism, and in 1973 the Front for the Liberation of Saguia el Hamra and Río de Oro, Polisario, was formed, launching an armed struggle for independence.

Under the 1975 Madrid Accords brokered between the governments of Spain, Mauritania, and Morocco, the Spanish government relinquished direct control of Western Sahara and handed it over to the regimes of Mauritania and Morocco, which swiftly moved in to militarily occupy the territory. The Polisario Front continued to lead the independence struggle and defeated the Mauritanian regime in 1979. The Mauritanian government withdrew from the southern third of Western Sahara and recognized the SADR government-in-exile. Moroccan forces extended their occupation into the previously Mauritania-controlled region, and have built six walls lined with military bases and land mines to defend their control from attacks by the Polisario Front, which controls a liberated zone in the eastern region.

The Moroccan government and the Polisario Front entered into a cease-fire in 1989. Two years later they signed a UN-brokered plan to hold a referendum vote by Sahrawis to decide on independence or integration with Morocco.

"The Moroccan government knows that if there were a free and fair referendum vote, they would lose and the Sahrawi people would vote for their independence," said Brahim Salem Bousseif, a representative of the Sahrawi Commission for the Referendum.

Maneuver by UN Security Council

Seeking to undercut the independence struggle, the UN Security Council, dominated by Washington, has put forward a proposal aimed at pressuring the Sahrawi liberation movement to accept a deal that falls short of self-determination. The aim of Washington, Paris, and other imperialist powers is to maintain their control of the phosphate-rich area by giving a new face to the occupation by the Moroccan regime. The proposal, the so-called third way, would give territorial "autonomy" to Western Sahara, while allowing the Moroccan government to continue its occupation and control over the region.

Former U.S. secretary of state James Baker, the emissary on Western Sahara for the UN Security Council, will meet with members of the Polisario Front and others August 27 to discuss this proposal.

"The people feel betrayed by the referendum we agreed to a decade ago," Bousseif said. "Now, after so many years, the UN is acting as though we did not agree to a referendum vote and is putting forward the 'framework agreement,' which gives Western Sahara to Morocco. This proposal is just another form of integration and denial of our self-determination."

The attempts by the imperialist powers to pressure the Polisario Front come as frustration among the Sahrawi people grows in face of the foot-dragging of the Moroccan regime on a referendum vote.

The international delegation met with Brahim Dahi and Mohamed Tamik, members of the Executive Committee of AFAPREDESA. They spoke about a September 1999 demonstration for self-determination held by Sahrawis in the occupied territory, which was attacked by the police. Some 1,500 protesters were taken into police custody and 27 protesters were convicted for various offenses and given prison terms of 5-15 years each.

They also showed video coverage of a May Day rally held in the occupied capital of Western Sahara this year that was called by the Moroccan Workers Union. Although the union officially supports the regime's occupation of Western Sahara, Sahrawis were able to participate in the rally to demand that the Moroccan government release information about the hundreds of Sahrawis who are "disappeared" or political prisoners.

A coming issue of the 'Militant' will have further coverage on the solidarity visit to Western Sahara.

Comintern and fight for free Palestine, 1920

Reprinted below is an excerpt from *To See the Dawn: Baku, 1920—First Congress of the Peoples of the East*, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for September (see ad below for special offer). This congress, which drew 2,000 delegates representing workers and peasants of more than two dozen countries and peoples of Asia, was convened by the Communist International in September 1920 in Baku, the capital of Soviet Azerbaijan. The book contains the complete record of the gathering.

The item selected is titled "The slogan of the Jewish proletariat must be 'Hands off Palestine!'" It is a declaration by the Central Bureau of Jewish Sections of the Communist Party of Russia, which was originally published in *Kommunist* (Baku) on Sept. 8, 1920. At the time Palestine was under British colonial rule. The Entente, of which the United Kingdom was a member, was the group of imperialist powers that emerged victorious in World War I. Copyright © 1993 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission.



1. It is the policy of the Entente (and particularly Britain) regarding the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine, where the overwhelming majority of the population is Arab—a policy backed by the Yellow Second International—that provides the basis for the bourgeois Zionist party's agitation among the Jewish popular masses in favor of Zionism. Under the given conditions, this agitation favors the Entente, especially Britain.

2. Jews are being provocatively identified as initiators and culprits in the parceling out of Arab lands among the victorious powers, including the handing over of Palestine to Britain. This identification serves British imperialism in Palestine and throughout the East as a means to ignite national passions among the working people of the East and to sow hatred between Arabs and Jews. This found expression in the three-day-long pogrom of Jews in Jerusalem in April this year, which enjoyed the open sympathy of the British occupying authorities.

3. The Entente's whole policy is a typical example of colonial domination. It finds striking expression in the "constitution" of Palestine adopted by the San Remo conference of the League of Nations. At the same time this policy endeavors to utilize the capital of the small and middle Jewish bourgeoisie of all countries and to hitch them to the chariot of British imperialism, "the herald of the peoples' liberation."

Under this constitution, the government in Palestine aims to include the Jewish capitalists (through the Zionist party) in the intensified exploitation of the Arab peasantry and to implicate them in this plunder. It aims to ignite a national dispute between Jewish and Arab cliques in the legislative bodies. By this it seeks to retard the awakening of the masses of the East.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

Britain's entire policy on Palestine aims at maintaining power wholly in the hands of the British occupiers and ideologically subordinating the Jewish community in all countries to Britain's interests. With the assistance of imperialism's Zionist servants, Britain's policy aims at drawing away from communism a portion of the Jewish proletariat by arousing in it national feelings and sympathies for Zionism. This policy of the Entente is actively supported by the Jewish bourgeoisie. In matters of exploitation and oppression,

they solidarize fully with the capitalists of other nationalities. Their own class interests lead them to strive to participate in the plunder of the Arab peasant.

4. In the name of the Jewish proletariat and the working masses, we therefore most vigorously protest that, on the pretense of national liberation, a privileged Jewish minority is being artificially implanted in the population of Palestine. Such a policy is a direct violation of the rights of the Arab working masses in their struggle for independence and for complete possession of the land and of all the products of their labor.

The slogan of the Jewish proletariat, and of every friend of the toiling masses and every fighter for national liberation, must be "Hands off Palestine!"

We also sharply condemn the attempts by certain Jewish left-Socialist groups to combine communism with adherence to Zionist ideology. This is what we see in the program of the so-called Jew-

Continued on Page 12



Palestinians from Abu Ghosh, west of Jerusalem, back revolt against British rule, April 1936. Baku conference resolution in 1920 calls for Jewish proletariat to demand, "Hands off Palestine."

New pamphlets added to Pathfinder's arsenal

BY STEVE CLARK
AND MIKE TABER

Pathfinder has added five new pamphlets to its arsenal of revolutionary books and pamphlets. They are: *Nous sommes les héritiers des révolutions du monde* (We are the inheritors of the revolutions of the world), a collection of Thomas Sankara's speeches in French; *Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle* in French and Spanish; *Pathfinder Was Born with the October Revolution* in French; and *Revolution in the Congo*, published originally in 1965 and out of print for almost three-and-a-half decades.

During the same period that Pathfinder's printshop produced these five new titles, it also printed several important reprints, which Pathfinder is featuring as its September Books of the Month. These are:

* *Revolution Betrayed: What Is the Soviet Union and Where Is It Going?* by Leon Trotsky;

* *To Speak the Truth: Why Washington's*

'Cold War' against Cuba Doesn't End by Fidel Castro and Che Guevara;

* *Out Now! A Participant's Account of the Movement in the United States against the Vietnam War* by Fred Halstead;

* *To See the Dawn: Baku, 1920—First Congress of the Peoples of the East*.

Through September 30 Pathfinder will make all four titles available at a special 60 percent discount to Pathfinder bookstores. They will be available throughout the month at a 25 percent discount to members of the Pathfinder Readers Club.

The last two of the above titles had been out of stock for well over a year. At 880 pages, *Out Now!* is one of Pathfinder's biggest books. The preparation of this newly digitized edition—with larger, more readable type, and with greatly improved graphics—required an intensive effort by many volunteers around the world who are working on digitizing all of Pathfinder's titles.

This comprehensive account of the social movement in the United States against the Vietnam War during the 1960s and early 1970s was reissued in a second edition in June 1991, a few months after Washington's murderous war against the Iraqi people. A foreword to that edition by Kate Kaku placed the lessons of the fight against the Vietnam War in the context of the intensifying conflicts among rival imperialist powers that had been revealed during the Gulf War.

"For Washington, this was a war for oil, to protect imperialist interests in the Middle East, and to gain a stronger hand against its capitalist rivals," Kaku wrote. "It heralded a new march by the imperialist powers toward wars to defend their decaying social system...."

"A new generation of youth, working people, and GIs [who] have become politically conscious since the Vietnam War...will find the history and politics recounted in this book an irreplaceable tool in combating these new wars and the social system that breeds them."

Revolution Betrayed, Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky's explanation of the social roots of the political degeneration of the leadership of the Soviet Union under Joseph Stalin, includes a chapter dealing with the strategic approach of the revolutionary workers movement toward the inevitable conflicts and divisions among rival imperialist powers. The young Soviet republic under the proletarian internationalist leadership of V.I. Lenin, Trotsky said, had effectively maneuvered to exploit these fissures and gain some time and breathing room in face of the economic and military pressure on the encircled workers state.

In the wake of the devastation of World War I and a fierce civil war and imperialist military assaults on the Soviet government, Trotsky pointed out, the Bolsheviks signed peace treaties with imperialist Germany and with the governments of Poland, Estonia, and other capitalist countries.

"It could never have entered the mind of

the Soviet government as a whole, however," Trotsky wrote, to portray these capitalist regimes as "friends of peace," and still less "to invite the communist parties of Germany, Poland, or Estonia to support with their votes the bourgeois governments which had signed these treaties."

This was the opposite, Trotsky said, of Stalin's counterrevolutionary course a decade and a half later of urging Communist Parties in the imperialist countries to seek a so-called Popular Front with sections of the bourgeoisie most open to the diplomatic maneuvers of the Stalin government in the USSR.

One title that will be reprinted by Pathfinder's printshop this month is *Revolution in the Congo*. Since its publication five weeks ago, Pathfinder has already sold out the entire first run of over 2,000 copies, and is rushing back to press. The majority of these copies were sold outside showings of the movie *Lumumba*, which tells the story of the 1961 assassination of this leader of the Congolese revolution organized by the U.S. and Belgian imperialist governments, with cover from United Nations "peace-keeping troops."

The pamphlet will be back in stock in time for the film's opening in a number of additional cities at the beginning of September.

The murder of Lumumba was condemned by Cuban revolutionary leader Ernesto Che Guevara in a December 1964 speech before the UN General Assembly printed in another of Pathfinder's Books of the Month, *To Speak the Truth*.

"How can we forget the betrayal of the hope that Patrice Lumumba placed in the United Nations," Guevara said. "How can we forget the machinations and maneuvers that followed in the wake of the occupation of that country by United Nations troops, under whose auspices the assassins of this great African patriot acted with impunity?"

Who were those assassins, Guevara asked: "Belgian paratroopers, carried by United States planes, who took off from British bases."

Workers, farmers, and youth the world over who are determined to resist imperialist policies such as those—which persist to this day, organized first and foremost from Washington—will find the last of the Books of the Month an invaluable handbook, as well. It is the documentary record of a 1920 congress organized by the Bolshevik leadership in Baku, Azerbaijan, to bring together fighters against imperialist oppression from throughout Asia and the Middle East.

Lenin said shortly after the Baku congress that its success confirmed that the internationalist program and course of the Bolsheviks are "an emblem of salvation, an emblem of struggle to the workers of all civilized countries and the peasants of all the backward colonial countries." Its proceedings "for many months to come provide food for thought and assimilation by the workers and peasants of the world."

Eighty-one years later they still do.

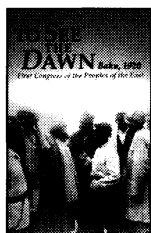
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How can peasants and workers in the colonial world achieve freedom from imperialist exploitation? By what means can working people overcome divisions incited by their national ruling classes and act together for their common class interests? These questions were addressed by 2,000 delegates to the 1920 Congress of the Peoples of the East. **Special offer \$15.00** (regular price \$19.95)



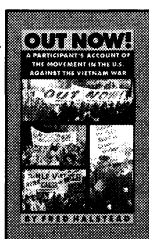
To Speak the Truth:

Why Washington's 'Cold War' against Cuba Doesn't End
Fidel Castro and Che Guevara

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Fred Halstead

The story of the political fight for a course that could organize in action the maximum number of working people, GIs, and youth and help lead the growing international opposition to the Vietnam War. Gaining momentum from the fight for Black civil rights, the antiwar movement helped force the U.S. government to bring the troops home, spurring struggles for social justice and changing the political face of the United States. **Special offer \$23.25** (regular price \$30.95)



The Revolution Betrayed:

What is the Soviet Union and Where Is It Going?
Leon Trotsky

In 1917 the workers and peasants of Russia were the motor force for one of the most profound revolutions in history. Yet within ten years a political counter-revolution by a privileged social layer whose chief spokesperson was Joseph Stalin was being consolidated. This classic study of the Soviet workers state and its degeneration illuminates the roots of the social and political crisis shaking Russia and other countries that formerly made up the Soviet Union. Also in Spanish. **Special offer \$15.00** (regular price \$19.95)



Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12

S. Africa auto strikers stand up to bosses

BY T.J. FIGUEROA

As employer threats to move production out of the country failed, the strike by 21,000 workers at South African auto plants entered its third week, and members of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) were considering whether to accept a wage offer proposed by government mediators.

The auto strike—the longest in South Africa since 1995—has shut down nearly all production at plants owned by BMW, Volkswagen, Toyota, Delta, Daimler-

could lose the export contract. Consideration may soon have to be given to transferring production from South Africa to Germany. This production would forever be lost to us, our suppliers and South Africa."

NUMSA reacted by raising the stakes, saying it would call out on strike the entire workforce in the local motor trade and component manufacturing, putting 150,000 workers on the picket line compared with the 21,000 who walked out of assembly plants. The union also called for support from international metalworker unions. "Considering the proud his-

port deals were brought to South Africa because of our skilled workforce, political stability, good infrastructure and the capacity of the workforce to produce high quality cars. It makes business sense for them to invest in South Africa because of cheap labor costs as compared to DaimlerChrysler Germany," he said.

NUMSA originally set its wage raise demand at 12 percent, then lowered it to 10 percent. The employers are offering a 7.5 percent raise, with a onetime payment of 500 rands (about \$60).

Following a failure to resolve the dispute in talks, the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration, a government-appointed body, proposed a 9 percent raise across the board. NUMSA members were scheduled to meet on August 21 to consider this offer. A spokesperson for the employers' association, however, said the companies had not seen the offer, and that it might be "premature."

Car exports from South Africa have grown by nearly 40 percent a year since 1992. "The current 7.5 percent offer is not commensurate with the conditions currently prevailing in the industry," said a NUMSA statement. "Workers' real wages have remained the same over the past three years. The lowest-paid worker earns R16 (about \$1.91) an hour for a 40-hour week. It means an ordinary worker earning R16 an hour will not even purchase the very same car he is making."

Walkouts mark negotiation season

The auto strike is the longest so far in this year's annual wage bargaining season, which runs through July and August. Workers have scored wage and other gains in walkouts against Eskom (the state-run electrical utility), and Highveld Steel and Vanadium (the second-biggest steel producer), among others. Strike threats brought some concessions from the employers in gold and coal mines. Major settlements have included wage raises in excess of the current inflation rate.

About 5,400 platinum miners walked out of the Northam Platinum shafts at Thabazimbi in the Northern Province on

August 12, and remain on strike in support of their demand for a 15 percent increase.

In addition, millions of workers are expected to take part in a two-day general strike against the government's plans to privatize some state-run entities. The August 29-30 protest follows the failure of talks between the largest trade union federation—the Congress of South African Trade Unions—and the African National Congress government to address union demands on the pace and scope of privatization. Among the unions' central concerns are the layoffs expected from the anticipated "restructuring." The official unemployment rate is already 35 percent.

Trade and Industry Minister Alec Erwin said August 17 that the government would stick to its privatization policy. "It is unlikely that such a basic policy, which has been part of the ANC's central policy since 1990, could that easily be changed. I think that's a very unlikely prospect."

Twelve unions representing state employees are also considering taking strike action after declaring a deadlock in talks. The unions lowered their demand from 15 percent to 9 percent for the lowest paid workers, and 7.5 percent for the highest paid. The government is offering 5.5 percent.

The strike against privatization is set to coincide with the opening of the United Nations conference against racism, which begins August 31 in Durban.



Demonstration in Johannesburg in April 2000 by Congress of South African Trade Unions. Some 21,000 workers have entered the third week of what is now the longest auto strike in the country since 1995. Nearly all production has been shut down.

Chrysler, Ford, and Nissan.

During the second week of the strike, which began August 6, DaimlerChrysler CEO Christopher Kopke declared in widely publicized advertisements and interviews that unless the strike ended soon, the company would shift production to Germany. "Our survival is at risk!" said one ad. "Should the strike carry on much longer...we

tory of the German workers and their contribution to the anti-apartheid struggle, we doubt whether they will agree to the scab arrangements," a union statement said. DaimlerChrysler officials subsequently backed away from their threats.

Another reaction to the threats came from Blade Nzimande, general secretary of the South African Communist Party. "The ex-

12,000 workers walk out at Mexico VW plant

BY RÓGER CALERO

In the first major labor challenge to the administration of President Vicente Fox of Mexico since he took office eight months ago, some 12,500 workers at the Volkswagen plant in Puebla went on strike August 18, demanding a wage increase comparable to other auto workers in that country. The strike has made front-page headlines in Mexico's dailies.

Red-and-black banners reading, "Volkswagen union on strike" went up in front of the plant as workers walked out that day. They shut down production after nine days of negotiations failed, with the company refusing to agree to a wage hike.

Since then the company has offered a 7 percent increase, but has threatened to withdraw that offer, saying the union demand for a 21 percent rise was "totally dispropor-

tionate" with inflation. It called on the government to declare the strike illegal.

José Luis Rodríguez, general secretary of the Independent Union of Volkswagen Workers, said the union had scaled its original demand of a 30 percent increase, and said the raise was "negotiable," but insisted that the union will not go lower than 10 percent.

"We want a wage increase within the levels in the auto industry," said Rodríguez. This year workers at Mexican plants of General Motors, Nissan, and Ford won wage increases of 10.5 percent to 16.5 percent, according to union officials.

The federal government sought to put an end to the labor dispute by proposing a 5.5 percent increase. The proposal was rejected at a union membership meeting the day before the strike began.

The strike has won the support of other

unions, community organizations, and the Permanent Land Congress, a peasant organization that has been involved in recent farmers' protests demanding relief for the crisis in the countryside.

The VW plant in Puebla, which employs 16,000 workers, is the third-largest foreign company after DaimlerChrysler and Ford Motor Co. Last year it turned out some 426,000 vehicles, 80 percent of them for export, with the big majority for the U.S. market. The plant manufactures the new Beetle, Jetta, Golf Cabrio, and the old Beetle.

Company officials say the slowdown in the U.S. economy and the weakening of the dollar have affected sales of cars produced at its Puebla plant this year. The company has idled the assembly line for a total of nine days so far this year to avoid inventory overflow. Union officials argue that the company is using the strike as an opportunity to get rid of its excess stock in the face of a slow market in the United States and Canada.

The Mexican daily *La Jornada* reported that the VW plant is tied to some 90 outside parts suppliers, employing 100,000 workers. René Sánchez Juárez, general secretary of the Revolutionary Confederation of Workers and Peasants (CROC), the main union that organizes these plants, said that at least 10 plants will have to stop production in a matter of days, affecting more than 3,000 workers.

The strikers have received support from other unionists, including those organized by the National Workers Union (UNT), a labor federation. UNT leader Francisco Hernández Juárez said that if an agreement was not reached, the organization would hold rallies in the state of Puebla, a demonstration in Mexico City, and protests at Labor Department offices around the country.

Workers in China protest sale of state-owned plant

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Facing the loss of their jobs, hundreds of workers in China conducted a sit-in August 14 at a state-owned factory that the government is now moving to privatize.

A banner hung across the gate of Beijing Measuring and Cutting Tools Factory in western Beijing read, "Sell your houses and limousines and give the workers means to live. 150 million yuan [\$18 million] in state assets—where has it gone?"

The Chinese government is attempting to implement a policy of capitalist market reforms in this workers state of an estimated 1.3 billion people. In the case of this factory, for example, Beijing has agreed to sell the land on which it has been located for the past 42 years and move the plant to a new spot in neighboring Hebei province later this year. Those workers not willing to make the long commute have been offered 2,500 yuan for every year they had worked at the plant (1 yuan = US 12 cents).

"I'm 50 years old and I'll get 80,000 yuan," said one man in an interview with Reuters news service. "What do I do till I'm eligible for social security in 10 years?"

Another man named Li, 33, stated, "They say they're broke, [but] how can they be broke and driving top-of-the-line Audis." A woman surnamed Jia, 38, added, "No one's representing our interests. Even our so-called labor union is in their hands."

According to the Reuters report, "Labor ministry figures recorded more than 120,000 labor disputes in 1999." These have included protests over layoffs and inadequate and delayed payments to workers.

In another development, the Chinese government said that they would end their decades-old system requiring people to work in the area where they are registered to live. This move comes in response to mounting migration by those living in the countryside in search of work in the cities.

According to an August 17 *CNN* story, "Chinese officials estimate there are more than 150 million people out of work in the countryside, and their numbers are estimated to rise by five to six million each year." Authorities expect close to 50 million people to make their way to the cities in search of work.

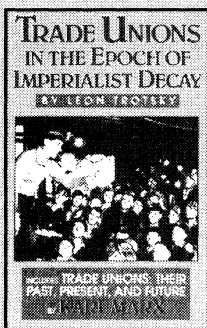
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