

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Uranium workers demand
gov't compensation

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Oppose U.S. military assaults and curbs on democratic rights

Socialist Workers candidate responds to attacks in N.Y., Washington

The following statement by Martin Koppel, candidate for mayor of New York, was released September 11 by the Socialist Workers Party.

Waving the banner that "America is under attack," that it has sustained "a second Pearl Harbor" in the wake of today's assault on New York's World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the U.S. government will seek to advance its "right" to launch military assaults on other countries, as it has done over the past few years against the peoples of Yugoslavia, Iraq, Sudan, and Afghanistan. The U.S. rulers will become even more bra-

zen in their backing for the Israeli regime's escalating war drive against the Palestinians.

Calls by capitalist politicians and apologists for stiffer measures to prevent future such "intelligence failures" are being played up nonstop by the big-business dailies, news agencies, and TV and radio networks. Anti-Arab and anti-Islamic bigotry is being cranked up to bolster this onslaught.

The Socialist Workers Party calls on workers, farmers, and all defenders of democratic rights to speak out against the U.S. rulers' demagogic efforts, in the name of preempting "terrorism," to rationalize re-

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Washington prepares aggression abroad, curtailing rights at home

BY GREG McCARTAN

In response to the September 11 air attacks that destroyed New York's World Trade Center and part of the Pentagon, killing and injuring thousands, Washington is preparing military aggression abroad and new assaults on democratic rights at home.

U.S. President George Bush, at a Septem-

ber 12 news conference, called the attacks "more than acts of terror, they were acts of war." Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld taped a message to U.S. troops later that day saying, "More—much more—will be asked of you in the weeks and months ahead. This is especially true of those who are in the field. We face powerful and terrible enemies, enemies we intend to vanquish."

For the first time in its 52 years of existence, the U.S.-dominated NATO alliance has invoked Article V of its charter, which says

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U.S. trade edge ruins peasants in Mexico

BY RÓGER CALERO

In a move to bail out capitalist investment in Mexico's sugar industry, the Mexican government took over 27 sugar mills belonging to five deeply indebted, privately owned sugar refiners in the country September 3. Faced with a wave of imports from the United States, sharp limits on exports imposed by its northern imperialist neighbor, and declining sugarcane prices on the capitalist market, the sugar industry in Mexico is facing its worst crisis in decades.

The government bailout takes place in the midst of growing protests by working farmers and peasants who grow sugarcane. Along with mill workers, they are demanding back payment for crops delivered to the mills, payment of back wages, and for state aid to alleviate the effects of the crisis.

Government officials have made it clear the measure is not a "populist" one, but instead is a move to rescue investors in the bankrupt companies, which have accumulated a debt of \$2 billion, most of it owed to the Mexican government.

The 27 mills were owned by five consortiums that included Mexico's second largest sugar refiner, Grupo Azucarero Mexico SA (GAM), which, according to the *Wall Street Journal*, has Chicago real estate giant Sam Zell as one of its main investors.

The Mexican government has pledged the mills will be sold back to capitalists within

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UMWA wins round at Murray coal mines

BY FRANK FORRESTAL

PITTSBURGH—The Ohio and Pennsylvania regional offices of the National Labor Relations Board have dismissed charges filed against the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) by coal boss Robert Murray for allegedly calling "illegal memorial days." The two memorial days were taken by UMWA miners in July at Murray's Powhatan No. 6 mine in Ohio and Maple Creek mine in Pennsylvania.

For years, the two UMWA locals have been locked in battle with Murray over jobs, safety issues, and union rights. Murray is the largest independent coal operator in the United States. Seven of his nine mines are nonunion.

In a related development, the UMWA staged a protest September 4 outside Black Beauty Coal's Francisco mine near Oakland City, Indiana. Peabody Energy, the largest coal company, owns about 82 percent of Black Beauty. The Evansville-based Black Beauty employs about 1,100 coal miners in Indiana and southern Illinois and is Indiana's largest coal producer and the largest supplier of coal to the state's utility companies. It also has two mines in Kentucky, according to the union.

The protest was designed to "rekindle" organizing drives at more than two dozen Black Beauty mines. UMWA International president Cecil Roberts appealed to miners to join the union.

"Hundreds of Black Beauty miners lack a real pension as well as job security, lifetime health care, and other benefits that the UMWA provides to its members," said Rob-

erts. Along with 11 other people Roberts was arrested for blocking a road during the protest at the mine. This is the third civil disobedience action the union leadership has organized over the past few months. The other two took place in front of Massey Energy's Elk Run mine in southern West Virginia, and outside Robert Murray's Galatia mine in Illinois.

Coal Week, an industry magazine, said in its September 10 issue that Black Beauty

"has been a large thorn in the UMWA's side for years. As the company has grown over the past two decades from a small, non-descript company to the largest coal producer in Indiana, it has successfully deflected the union's organizing overtures. Now that Peabody Energy owns 83 percent, things may be changing."

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) rulings against Murray come as a

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Youth discuss struggles of students and working people in South Pacific

BY ANNALUCIA VERMUNT

ALGIERS, Algeria—At the 15th World Festival of Youth and Students, held here August 8–16, delegates from Asia and the Pacific were among those who used this international platform to win new support for struggles in their region. The festival brought together some 6,500 young people from around the world to discuss the struggle against imperialist domination.

At a workshop during the festival called "Network meeting for action of young indigenous people," about 20 people joined a discussion on the challenges facing indigenous youth. Pauline Tangiora, a Maori elder from New Zealand who chaired the workshop, opened the meeting by encouraging participants to use their networks to report back widely from the festival and work to bring more indigenous youth to fu-

ture international gatherings.

Samuel Goromido addressed the meeting, speaking about the struggle of the Kanak people in New Caledonia to win independence from France. With French colonial rule the Kanak people lost their independence, their culture, and their land, but today they are on a course toward independence, he said.

A delegate from Venezuela explained, "In Latin America we face the same problem of the exploitation of our land, and we call for the recognition of linguistic and cultural rights."

She said the new constitution enacted in Venezuela in 1999 recognizes many of these rights for the indigenous peoples. "But in Venezuela we still face many pressures on the natural resources, which we consider to

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Workers rally in Manhattan to demand: 'Legalization now!'



Dozens of demonstrators march in front of the Mexican consulate in New York September 6, demanding amnesty for undocumented workers in the United States. Sign carried by protester stating, "You call us heroes and sell us as legal slaves," refers to Mexican president Vicente Fox's support for "guest worker" plan that would organize toilers as reserve army of labor. (See articles on page 6.)

Gov't panel presses Social Security attack

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

Pressing forward the ruling-class attack on Social Security, a bipartisan commission appointed by U.S. president George Bush held public hearings this past week to push proposals for the government to cut benefits and start individual investment accounts with a portion of Social Security funds. Articles in the big-business press, such as the *Wall Street Journal*, are promoting claims that the Social Security system will soon be bankrupt and drastic measures are needed to "save" the entitlement program.

The Bush administration is stepping up the assault carried out under the Clinton

administration, which eliminated Aid to Families With Dependent Children, with the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act in 1996. This was the first major reversal of any part of Social Security, which was a concession granted by the U.S. ruling class to the growing social battles by working people in the 1930s and expanded under the impact of the civil rights movement.

The federally-funded entitlement provides coverage for the disabled and their spouses and minor children, an old-age retirement income, benefits to minor children and spouses in case of death. Social Security is set up as a universal program, paying

benefits to all regardless of income level.

The White House set up the 16-person commission early this year, drawing on politicians and business figures aligned to both the Democratic and Republican parties. Commission appointees all support the establishment of private investment accounts to provide retirement income, a plank in Bush's 2000 election campaign. The commission is expected to present its final proposals early next year.

Former Democratic senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, who co-chairs the commission, told the media that they plan to restructure Social Security for the long term. "There will be some effects as things go up and down," he said in reference to the declining budget surplus and the prevailing economic uncertainty, "but we're trying to think in half-century terms."

AOL-Time Warner executive Richard
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Miami cops face federal indictments

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

MIAMI—U.S. prosecutors announced September 7 that they have brought federal indictments against 13 Miami cops for lying and planting guns at the scenes of police shootings between November 1995 and June 1997 that have taken three lives and left one other person wounded. The move once again focused attention on the growing number of deaths at the hands of Miami police.

In each case the police officers on the scene insisted the suspects were armed. In all but one case still under investigation, Miami police investigators and the state prosecutor found the shootings justified. Now the federal indictment charges that the cops lied.

Newscasters on the September 7 evening news joined Mayor Joe Carollo and Police Chief Raúl Martínez in expressing regret that these indictments would further erode public confidence in the police. According to the *Miami Herald*, Florida State attorney Katherine Fernández Rundle stated that until revelations surfaced of a "gun-planting conspiracy" by cops in the 1997 police shooting of a homeless man, "no one would have believed that a group of officers would get together to concoct stories and plant weapons."

In fact, the indictments come at a time when working people in Miami have grown increasingly angry over a recent series of police shootings.

On April 30 police shot 18-year-old Nicholas Singleton in the back of the head. The cops claimed he had a gun, but investigations have shown that he was unarmed and that

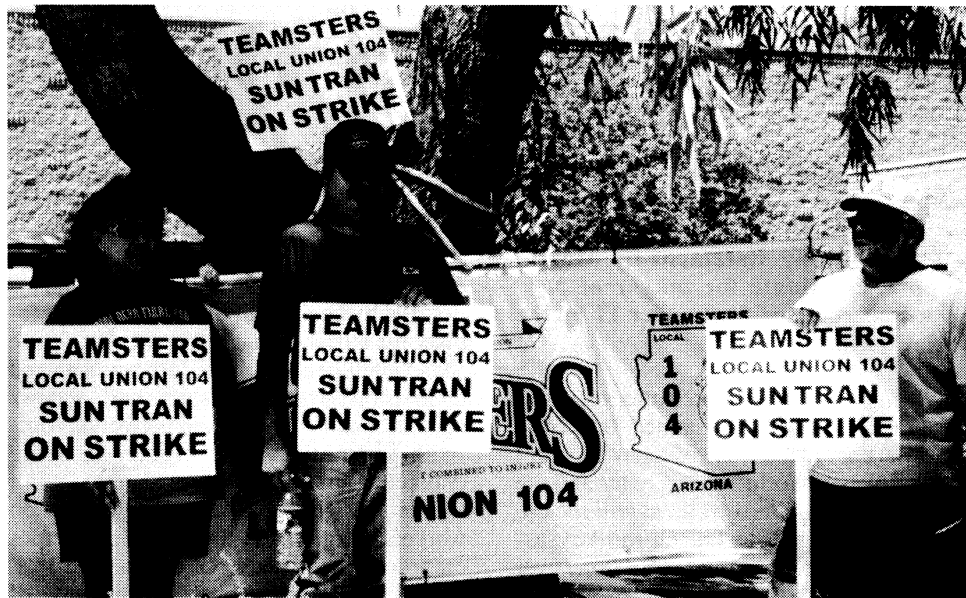
the 19 bullet shells found on the scene were from police guns. Marc Dorvil, a Haitian immigrant who worked as a carpenter and part-time minister, died in the custody of North Bay Village police on May 14. One thousand people protested June 2 against the killing and the police cover-up and lies reported in the press that Dorvil was in a "cocaine fit" at the time of his death. Supporters and family of Alphaeus Dailey have kept alive the fight for justice in his June 17 shooting death. Confined to a wheelchair, Dailey was shot eight times in the back by a North Miami Beach police officer.

Two of the 13 indicted cops have pleaded guilty and are cooperating with the prosecution. John Mervolion, a cop involved in one shooting, told prosecutors that officer Jesus Aguero kneeled over the body of dying robbery suspect Antonio Young and said, "How does it feel to rob white people, nigger? Well, now you are going to hell and die."

Antonio's mother Alice Young was outraged by the report and told the *Herald*, "Didn't I tell you they were racist? How many people do you think he killed? Now you know that man has to pay for what he did." Federal prosecutors have discussed seeking the death sentence for Aguero, who was involved in three of the shootings. Alice Young opposed such a penalty, saying, "I wouldn't want someone to be put to death. That's not for me to say about anybody. But put his butt in jail. Put him in jail for 30 to 40 years."

Michael Italie is the Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Miami.

Workers strike Tucson bus system



Militant/Louis Turner

Bus workers in Tucson picket on third day of strike against Sun Tran transport company

BY LOUIS TURNER

TUCSON, Arizona—City bus drivers and mechanics here went on strike September 5 for better wages and respect on the job. The 413 members of Teamsters Local 104, who work for Sun Tran, are demanding a 50 cents per hour raise in the first year of a new contract, 42 cents more than the company's offer. The strike is affecting more than 30,000 riders daily.

Professional Transit Management, a private Cincinnati-based company hired by the city of Tucson to manage the city's buses, is the immediate target of the strike. They offered the unionists a three-year contract with an hourly raise of 8 cents in the first year. Annual raises of 54 cents and 52 cents were to follow. The workers rejected the offer in a 237—7 vote on August 26. Management claims they can't afford the workers' demands because of the high cost of health care, and because the city has allotted only \$3.6 million for the Sun Tran system.

Bus driver Les Martinez, a former member of the United Auto Workers and a veteran of two previous strikes, told the *Militant* that the workers have been preparing for the walkout for a year. The unionists are very unified, he said. "Of the workers that are still driving some are new drivers still on probation and strikers don't harbor any bad feelings towards them," he noted.

The strikers are picketing three transit stations and Sun Tran's headquarters. Among those walking the picket line are Denise and Valerie, two veterans of a strike in 1997. This strike is more disciplined and better orga-

nized than the previous one, they said. Other strikers described how their fight for parity and dignity is inspiring other workers in Tucson to stand up for their rights.

Sun Tran is attempting to maintain a limited bus service on only a few routes, using inexperienced replacement drivers and management personnel. During the second day of the strike a pedestrian was struck by a bus.

Previous strikes

A number of workers mentioned the previous stoppage in 1997. In August of that year, 369 drivers and mechanics at the company went on strike, demanding parity with city workers with comparable jobs. "Workers were fed up," said Jeff Miller, chief steward for Local 104, explaining that they had received no wage increase over the previous six or seven years.

The workers stayed out for a week. At the end of the successful stoppage they voted to approve a one-year contract that included raises of 51 cents for drivers and 58 cents for mechanics, along with other gains in health-care coverage. At the time the City Council promised the workers that parity would be reached by the next contract.

A strike deadline loomed once again in August 1998. The workers again demanded the parity they had been promised but had not received. The day before the deadline, the workers voted to approve a three-year contract with a \$1.40 per hour raise in the first year and 4 percent raises in the following years.

THE MILITANT

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Uranium miners fight gov't for compensation funds

BY DANNY WILSON

GRAND JUNCTION, Colorado—After signing a supplemental military appropriations bill July 19 that includes funding to pay all outstanding claims by uranium miners, the Bush administration is moving to reduce the number of former uranium miners who qualify for payments under the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA).

According to newspaper reports, the administration is delaying the compensation until studies are completed to determine whether exposure to uranium and silica dust in the mines caused the illnesses.

RECA, passed in 1990, is supposed to compensate uranium miners who contract lung cancer and other diseases from prolonged exposure to radiation during the 1940s, '50s, and '60s.

In 1992 RECA was amended to include uranium haulers and millers. But about a year ago the government let the fund run out of money, and the Justice Department issued IOUs to miners whose claims had been approved. Since 1990, out of 10,654 claims received, the department has approved 3,907, totaling \$286 million. The department has denied 3,587 claims and there are 3,160 pending.

Meanwhile, the federal government set up another program this year, the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program (EEOICPA). The fund is to compensate a larger group of workers who were employed at plants such as the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons facility in Colorado and others. The compensation is administered through the Labor Department.

The RECA program originally provided up to \$100,000 in compensation to former uranium miners, participants in nuclear weapons testing, and people living downwind from test sites. Under a new federal program, eligible workers or their survivors who have been approved for compensation under RECA could receive an additional \$50,000 and future benefits under EEOICPA.

In an article entitled, "The Shaft for Uranium Workers?" the August 29 *Rocky Mountain News* reported that according to budget documents, "the administration is working on legislation for later transmittal that will limit the eligibility of those downwinders who contracted lung cancer who were also heavy smokers, and would postpone awards for millers, ore transporters, and above-ground miners, pending the outcome of the ongoing studies." An Associated Press report in the August 29 *Denver Post* said that the administration wants to delay the payments until three studies are completed. The newspaper cites Chris Ullman, a spokesman for the Office of Management and Budget, as its source.

Several days later, area newspapers be-

gan reporting that some of the miners and their widows who held IOUs from the government were starting to receive their payments.

'Shouldn't have to wait anymore'

"My husband worked in the mines starting in 1943," said Elva Ayers in an interview with the *Militant*. "He developed lung problems in 1958 that forced him out of work and eventually killed him. We don't need any more studies; the studies have been done. They denied compensation to my husband because he worked 18 months above ground out of the 10 years he worked in underground uranium mines," she said.

"I have seven brothers that worked in the uranium mines. I've lost four to cancer and another has bladder cancer," Ayers explained. "The people should not have to wait any longer. The first mistake they made was to cover up the facts. The second was to provide little or no ventilation to the miners. They lied to us and now they want to find a way to weaken the compensation. They are supposed to work for us yet we have to fight for every cent due to the miners and others affected by exposure to uranium."

Recent news reports featured Clara Harding, whose husband Joe worked at the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant, in Paducah, Kentucky. Before Joe Harding died of cancer in 1980, his bones were found to contain up to 34,000 times the expected concentration of uranium. Harding was denied compensation, "because official records showed he was only exposed to small amounts of radiation," according to an AP report.

When Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao traveled to Paducah to hand over a \$150,000 check to Clara Harding as part of the compensation program, Chao had to publicly admit the government's responsibility for the situation. "It's difficult to accept the fact that the illnesses which claimed the lives and best years of workers like Joe Harding were the result of carelessness, inaction, and even duplicity at the hands of our government," Chao said at the event.

Beginning in the 1950s, workers at the Paducah plant were involved in enriching recycled uranium to create plutonium for use in nuclear bombs. The workers came into direct contact with technetium and plutonium, the most radioactive and toxic substances known. The government estimates that it would take 75 years and \$240 billion to clean up the plant.

Government IOUs

As of July of this year there were 438 government IOUs totaling more than \$30 million. The majority of those are held by workers in the West: 191 in Utah, 71 in Colorado, 68 in Nevada, 47 in Arizona, 42 in New Mexico, and 13 in California.

Many of those who have received payments have had to wait years for compensation and a growing number have died before payment was made. One of those miners was Robert Key, a uranium miner from Fruita, Colorado. He died July 28 of complications from pulmonary fibrosis as a result of working for years in uranium mines. He held an IOU from the government for close to a year.

Although some uranium miners and widows have received their compensation recently, there are many others who haven't. From their home in Grand Junction, Colorado, Lucille Hill, wife of Wayne Hill, a uranium ore hauler from 1953-1961, told the *Militant*, "Where is our compensation? We haven't even gotten an IOU."

Hill said she and her husband filed for compensation almost a year ago. Wayne Hill, 69, suffers from lung cancer and just completed treatment for the cancer that spread to his brain. Hill loaded dump trucks and drove uranium ore to several sites in Western Colorado, which included Uravan, a town that was condemned in the 1980s by the Colorado Department of Public Health. The town was leveled because of radioactive contamination.

"We would drink the water that was running down the walls that would pool up in the mine," Wayne Hill said. "It was clear, cold, and tasted good but it was poisonous as hell. We didn't know it was hot [radioactive]. The mine walls were hot, the floor was hot, the dust was hot." Hill described how miners would butcher a deer, bring it into the mine, and hang it on the wall. "When we would get hungry we would slice off a piece and eat."

"The government and companies weren't about to tell us what we were doing to ourselves," he said. "We were told everything was safe. We didn't know we were killing ourselves. The government didn't tell us anything and they knew. Almost everybody I worked with has died from working at the mines."

Hill will be directly affected by the Bush administration's attempts to limit compensation for ore haulers, millers, and downwinders. "We just have to keep fighting," explained Lucille Hill, who, along with Wayne, is a member of the Colorado Uranium Miners Council. The organization has helped to expose the U.S. government's complicity in hiding the facts about uranium exposure and is fighting for the compensation miners and others affected deserve.

According to government sources, there were 600,000-plus workers employed by the nuclear weapons industry since the 1940s. Nearly every state, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico had companies owned by or under contract with the U.S. government to process radioactive and toxic material for the weapons program.

The Sept. 21, 2000, issue of *USA Today* contained a list of 550 sites where the Energy Department either knows work was performed for the nuclear weapons program



Courtesy of Lucille Hill
Wayne Hill, 23, loading uranium ore into dump truck in 1954 for delivery to processing plants in Western Colorado.

or where questions have been raised about whether such work was done. The newspaper found thousands of workers at the private contracting sites were exposed to extreme levels of radiation and chemical toxins.

Shelby Hallmark, director of the office of workers' compensation programs at the Labor Department, told the *New York Times*, "These are people who incurred diseases in the last 60 years, since the beginning of the Manhattan Project. A lot of those individuals, obviously, have died. There may not be an eligible survivor to pursue a claim."

Management practices at many of the facilities also allowed pollution of the air, soil, and water with contaminated waste. One site is the Atlas mine tailings pile at Moab, Utah, which is located 750 feet from the Colorado River. Atlas's uranium mine operated from 1956 to 1984. The 150-acre, 10.5 million-ton uranium waste pile leaks 57,000 gallons of contaminated fluids into the river each day.

The contaminated waste sits on the Ute tribe reservation. The radioactive isotopes released into the river slowly make their way down river into the water of Lake Mead, which supplies drinking water to 25 million people in Arizona, southern California, and Las Vegas, Nevada. Government officials estimate that it will cost \$300 million to remove the 40-year-old pile of radioactive waste. Atlas Corporation, the mine's former owner, declared bankruptcy and is free from liability.

State investigators in Hemet, Missouri, discovered that radioactive technetium-99 was turning up in the soil and drinking water wells near the closed Mallinckrodt Chemical uranium fuel making plant. The plant was one of many in the St. Louis area that used thousands of pounds of recycled uranium to fabricate metallic fuel rods for nuclear reactors. Officials there are debating who is responsible for the cleanup. Radioactive technetium, a highly toxic material, requires special disposal and has a half life of 213,000 years.

The U.S. government, as part of the nuclear weapons program, established a number of uranium mines following World War II. Many of these were established on the Colorado Plateau and many were on Native American land. While corporations scored huge profits from the "uranium rush" of the 1950s, Native Americans were paid less than minimum wage at the expense of their health and well-being. Just on the Navajo Nation alone there are more than 1,000 abandoned uranium mines.

Campus workers in Minnesota protest cutbacks



Militant/Sandi Sherman

More than 200 workers organized by three locals of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees and Teamsters Local 320 rallied September 4, the first day of classes at the University of Minnesota. Workers are protesting proposed increased premiums and co-pays for health insurance and an inadequate 1 percent wage raise.

'Militant' welcomes new staff member

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

Jack Willey joins the staff of the *Militant* with this issue, having recently led the work of young socialists and socialist workers at the 6,000-strong World Festival of Youth and Students, held in Algeria from August 8-15. Recent issues of the paper have featured his articles on the festival and the anti-imperialist struggles that were featured at it.

The previous month, Willey had traveled with 180 others from two dozen cities around the United States to Havana for the Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange. Willey reported on the experience for the *Militant*. In both Cuba and Algeria, he was struck by the openness of many anti-imperialist-minded young people to the books, periodicals, and political contributions of the

communist movement.

Over the last several years Willey, who is a member of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party, has been in the thick of a number of other important political events and party-building campaigns, including the effort to reinforce the party's base in the industrial unions. In 1999 and 2000 he helped lead the work of the communist movement in the coalfields of Southern Illinois and western Kentucky, working as an underground coal miner, and experiencing firsthand the initial signs of a social movement in the coal mining communities and in the miners union.

Willey joined the communist movement in 1993, in Detroit, Michigan, and was a founding member of the Young Socialists.

New York students protest cutbacks in education

BY ROSA GREENE
AND JORGE SALAS

BRONX, New York—"We are tired of the low funding for education that you see in the Bronx, Washington Heights, and Harlem. We want social uplift," stated Pedro Rivera, one of the students at Hostos Community College in the south Bronx involved in protesting education cutbacks.

On August 15 three students from Hostos and one from Hunter College were arrested by college security for handing out leaflets on school grounds. The flyers demanded the college administration cancel a \$300 fee

recently imposed on students for enrolling in the English 1306 workshop, which used to be free. They also called for additional tutors to be hired for mathematics and other subjects.

All the students were charged with disorderly conduct, except Miguel Malo, vice president of the Student Senate. He was charged with resisting arrest and assaulting two police officers, and could face up to seven years in prison. Malo was detained overnight in the 40th Precinct. He sustained injuries to both wrists and forearms and received welts across his back.

On August 16, college security officers also arrested Bill Crain, a City College psychology professor who had helped organize a small group of faculty members to picket Hostos over this violation of the students' First Amendment rights. The City University's faculty union also protested the arrests.

Protests erupted at Hostos last May when the Board of Trustees made plans to cut English as a Second Language (ESL) and Spanish-Language classes. The City University of New York (CUNY), which numbers Hostos among its campuses, claimed it was

scaling back these programs because of students' poor performance on writing tests four years ago. Mobilizations by hundreds of students forced the trustees to step back and allow this policy to be reviewed.

Since the school has been back in session, the administration has not allowed school clubs and school newspaper to convene and has cut off the Student Government Organization's phone line.

According to Rivera, the fight now is to drop the charges against Miguel Malo and to continue to defend the ESL and Spanish-language courses. Malo's court date is set for September 20 and students and faculty members are discussing plans to organize a larger protest.

Student activists are circulating a petition calling on Hostos president Dolores Fernández to drop all charges against the students and faculty members who were arrested. The Hostos Senate, a student body, will convene September 13 to discuss the issues.

The right to public education and ESL classes are gains that have been won by working people through struggle over the decades. The fight at Hostos goes hand in hand with the fight by coal miners for safe working conditions and in defense of their union, as well as with the struggle by the Palestinian people for self-determination.

As Jack Barnes, the author of the Pathfinder pamphlet *The Working-Class and the Transformation of Learning*, explains, "Schools under capitalism are not institutions of learning but of social control.... The working class cannot begin with how to change things so that youth get a better education. We have to begin with how to transform the values of society, not just the economics.... To be meaningful, education has to create the possibilities for society as a whole to advance, instead of reinforcing the exploitation of the majority by the few."

As part of the fight at Hostos, the Young Socialists helped to build a Militant Labor Forum in Upper Manhattan on the fight for bilingual education. The speakers included the president of the student senate and one of those arrested on August 15. Twenty-three people attended the meeting.

Socialist campaign wins support in Houston

BY LEA SHERMAN

HOUSTON—On the afternoon of September 9, the Houston police were called to calm Mark Dawson, 22, in this Black and Latino working-class community on the northeast side of Houston.

Residents say that instead, Dawson, naked and delirious, was handcuffed and beaten by the cops on the parking lot of Jensen's Supermarket a short distance from his house. He died a short time later at the LBJ hospital.

Anthony Dutrow, a meat packer and Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Houston, went with campaign supporters to the supermarket to talk with working people there about what happened and to discuss the socialists' stand against police brutality. Campaign supporters also collected signatures to place Dutrow's name on the ballot.

JoAnne Johnson, a resident of the neighborhood since 1995, came by the store, signed the petition for Dutrow, and volunteered right on the spot to help collect more signatures. She introduced Dutrow to the store owner in order to get permission to post his campaign leaflet on the outside of the store.

Johnson asked people to sign the petition for Dutrow as a way to protest police brutality and Dawson's death.

"I watched the whole thing," Johnson said. "What the police did to Mark on Friday was not called for. He was already handcuffed and hog-tied, and 15 or more police kept beating him with a stick. Yes, the police killed that young Black brother."

Johnson talked with neighbors, friends, and customers of the grocery store and the gas station across the street and took the petition to the projects. Some had also witnessed the assault, and many had heard about it. Johnson succeeded in getting more than 70 people to sign Dutrow's ballot petition.

Other residents in the area also gave socialist campaigners a warm response. Evelyn Davis eagerly signed up. She said that despite the fact that Houston mayor Lee Brown is Black, "He is backing the police 100 percent. I hope he gets out." She also said that the cops were laughing and talking as if nothing happened after Dawson was taken to the hospital.

Another neighborhood resident who signed the petition said she didn't like Brown since he was police chief in Atlanta and sent Wayne Williams, a young Black man accused of child murders, to prison without sufficient evidence. Altogether more than 150 people signed petitions around the grocery store.

"According to witnesses I spoke with," Dutrow said, "more than a dozen Houston cops chased down Mark Dawson, corralled him with their police cruisers, handcuffed him, threw him facedown on the pavement, then brutally beat him with their billy clubs. Within a few minutes his body fell limp. Mayor Lee Brown, himself a former Houston police chief, agrees with Houston police chief C.O. Bradford that 'correct police procedure' was used."

"My campaign joins with the residents of this section of Northeast Houston in demanding that the killer cops be prosecuted. This is yet another example of the 'correct police procedures' that workers face, and will face every day, under capitalism, a system that breeds the inequalities that cops accept as a license to treat workers, especially those who may be Black, Latino, Asian, or poor, as less than human."

"Despite the eyewitnesses, who say the police used excessive force, the cop who at-



Militant/Lea Sherman

Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Houston, meat packer Anthony Dutrow, talks to a woman near site of police killing of Black youth. She volunteered on-the-spot to help collect petitions to get Dutrow on ballot as a way of protesting cop killing.

tended the autopsy claimed that "they found no trauma that would have been fatal."

The socialist campaign has collected 2,000 signatures to place Dutrow on the

ballot so far. Organizers of the Militant Labor Forum here are planning a speakout September 22 against police brutality featuring the Dawson case.

Pathfinder volunteers to set production record

BY RUTH CHENEY

SAN FRANCISCO—More than 125 volunteers, organized via the Internet to reproduce the arsenal of revolutionary books published by Pathfinder Press, are headed toward the highest production rate in their three-year history.

Volunteers are working to produce about 10 books in electronic format on CDs this month, and next month as well. Four titles are already in the hands of the project's CD team. These are *The Stalin School of Falsification*, *In Defense of Socialism*, *The Founding of the Socialist Workers Party*, and *The Chinese Revolution and Its Development*.

Other titles slated for September completion are *FBI On Trial*, *Malcolm X Speaks*, *Mother Jones Speaks*, *Farmers Face the Crisis of the 1990s*, *Communist Continuity and the Fight for Women's Liberation*, *Workers Rights vs. the Secret Police*, and *Israel: A Colonial-Settler State?* and several books by Leon Trotsky: *The Spanish Revolution (1931-39)*, *Military Writings*, and *Writings of Leon Trotsky (1938-39)*.

Project organizers say that 14 titles are in the pipeline for September, but it's always possible for mistakes or accidents to delay delivery, which is why they say only 10 may be completed.

The indexing team's completion of the index concordance for *Sandinistas Speak* in only two weeks exemplifies the volunteers' growing skills. The project leadership has also recently agreed to a proposal from the editors of Pathfinder to take over production of the advertisements that appear in every book and pamphlet. The CD team is now organizing the digital files of the ads in English, French, and Spanish, and the proofreading team will start work on them shortly.

In addition to the new books and reprints, volunteers are also producing dozens of CDs for the reprints of reprints, or "R2s." These are CDs of books that were made digital

before present standards and procedures were set, and that now need corrections before going to another printing. Training of volunteers on the CD team is a top priority, as this is one of the most highly skilled aspects of the work. The team, currently comprised of five or six volunteers, completes the final step for every book that goes to press. Organizing this team has been one of the project's most important accomplishments.

These victories come on the heels of the project's July production of four new pamphlets in French in time for distribution at the 15th World Festival of Youth and Students, held August 8-16 in Algeria. Much of the regular work by reprint volunteers was

maintained during the summer alongside the production of the new titles. The monthly goal of completing seven books was reached in both July and August.

Since the start of the project, 197 books and pamphlets have been digitized, or almost 55 percent of all Pathfinder titles. The goal of reaching 75 percent by July 1, 2002, means completing 76 more books in the next 10 months, or 7.6 per month. The project's leadership is confident the international team of volunteers can make and even exceed this goal.

Ruth Cheney is the organizer of the steering committee of the Pathfinder Reprint Project.

Pathfinder sales reps get order from prison library in Canada

BY KATY LEROUGETEL

TORONTO—Toronto Pathfinder sales representatives have just obtained their first order from a prison library. After inviting the representative to visit the library inside the prison, the librarian ordered six titles: *Nelson Mandela Speaks*, *Malcolm X Speaks*, *Thomas Sankara Speaks*, *New International no. 6* with the lead article "The Second Assassination of Maurice Bishop," and two pamphlets, *Palestine and the Arabs' Fight for Liberation* and *Genocide against the Indians*.

Salespersons used the local phone book and began calling numbers listed under "Provincial Correctional Institutions." Librarians themselves were, of course, the most helpful. Not all institutions have libraries. Those that do are often only serviced part-time in the evenings and have limited budgets for acquisitions. But the librarians were often grateful to be solicited, since most booksellers do not appear to make the

time for visits to prison libraries. Pathfinder's titles on Black history proved a real drawing card.

Through their initial contact with prison librarians, salespeople have been all the more convinced of the need to get Pathfinder titles into these institutions. The Ontario prison system is in a process of restructuring, whereby a number of institutions are scheduled for closure and amalgamation into a series of "superjails."

Because of the construction this entails, inmates in at least one site have been in lockdown for months. They cannot go to the library themselves to get their books. The librarian is supposed to give them up to four books every week, but can usually not service each inmate more than once every two or three weeks, even with the help of outside volunteers.

Katy LeRougetel is a member of the Graphic Communications International Union.

Mine deaths and floods devastate W. Virginia

BY TONY LANE

PITTSBURGH—Almost as many miners have been killed in West Virginia's mines in the first eight months of 2001 as died in that state all of last year. The latest fatality occurred August 27 at the Massey Energy-owned Independence Coal company, a non-union mine. This brings the death toll in West Virginia to eight for this year, compared to nine deaths in 1999 and in 2000, and six in 1998. Nationwide, 17 miners have been killed on the job this year.

In July, after reviewing safety records for Massey Energy, the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) blasted the safety record of the company's operations and contractors. Only 4 percent of Massey's more than 3,600 employees are unionized. UMWA president Cecil Roberts said Massey has "the nation's worst fatality record" and said that the "company's record of death and injury cannot be allowed to continue at its present rate." West Virginia governor Robert Wise has ordered an investigation into safety in the industry, to be headed up by Davitt McAteer, former director of the federal Mine Safety and Health Administration.

The UMWA reported that Massey has increased the number of contractors working at its mines. Roberts explained that this enables the company to mask its overall abysmal health and safety record because the bosses don't have to report the injuries of workers employed by contractors as part of the safety record at the mine.

The UMWA review found that from 1997 to 2000, lost-time accident rates for workers employed by contractors have doubled at Massey mines, while rates for coal miners employed by Massey in these mines has tripled.

The UMWA has also targeted Massey's poor environmental record, such as the massive spill in October 2000 from a slurry pond in Kentucky, run by Martin County Coal, a Massey subsidiary. In the wake of that spill, residents in southern West Virginia, particularly in Big Coal River Valley where Massey has a number of operations, have stepped up protests over the dangers of Massey's slurry ponds, dust from Massey strip mines, and runoff problems from Massey mines, including mountaintop removal mining operations. The UMWA called for an inspection of all Massey Energy impoundments and facilities.

Devastating floods

West Virginia has also been hit with four devastating floods this summer, which have done damage in excess of \$100 million and left several thousand West Virginians homeless. Some 1,500 houses have been destroyed and another 5,700 have been dam-

aged. Twenty-four of the state's 55 counties have been declared flood disaster areas since May.

One particularly hard hit town is Mullens, in southern West Virginia. Windowless shells of what used to be diners, flower shops, and general stores line the streets of downtown Mullens. Entire blocks of battered houses sit empty in the south end of town.

These floods have fueled opposition among working people to how many companies carry out their operations, leading to a spat of lawsuits against more than a dozen mining and logging companies. The complaints cite the companies' "careless, willful, wanton, and malicious misconduct" and charge that flood victims have been scarred by "the terrifying spectacle of flood water raging down on them laden with all manner of coal mine and timber refuse."

In July, hundreds of area residents in Big Coal River Valley packed in to the Coal River Mountain Watch office in Whitesville to grill state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) inspectors. As one resident said, "It's time to hold the coal companies responsible."

DEP inspectors cited some coal companies for flood-related incidents including the collapse of part of a valley fill and a sediment ditch giving out. As a result of these failures water and mud flowed into the communities below.

Mining company officials denied responsibility, claiming that mining had nothing to do with the devastation. A spokesman for AEI Resources said, "The rain did this."

After similar flooding in eastern Kentucky in early August, William Caylor, president of the bosses' Kentucky Coal Association, said, "You can't blame it on coal. Mother Nature is releasing a very abnormal amount of rainfall. It's not fair to blame a particular industry when Mother Nature is to blame."

In West Virginia, DEP secretary Michael Callaghan stated, "The way some of these mining operations are set up, they stopped the flooding.... I think it could have been worse if they hadn't been there." Saying the governor agreed, a spokesperson for Wise stated, "There is no data or evidence yet one way or the other." Wise has ordered a study to determine if mining or logging contributed to the flooding.

But one Kentucky resident, whose home was deluged with mud and debris that came crashing off the mountainside, said, "All of this is mining related." Another resident explained that "there's just so much surface disturbance and so much more runoff. We're seeing more damage from flash floods because of it."

And draft reports from a study by the U.S. Office of Surface Mining and the Army

Corps of Engineers show that the way mining companies currently carry out mountaintop removal and other strip mining operations tends to make floods more likely and much worse when they do occur. The study was done as part of a settlement to a federal lawsuit over mountaintop removal mining.

One of the areas studied was Arch Coal Inc.'s huge Samples mine on Kayford Mountain where there has been severe flooding. The engineers found that one large

valley fill would increase runoff by about 3 percent, while a second would increase the flow by 13 percent.

At another Arch mine, the study reported an extremely large valley fill would increase runoff by about 42 percent. While this study was meant to be completed by the end of 2000, the project has been delayed and no results have been formally published. After coming into office, Governor Wise contacted federal officials and requested they withhold publication of the study.

Charleston chemical workers fight for safety, vacation time



Militant/Naomi Craine
Members of Steelworkers union picket Rhodia chemical plant in Charleston, South Carolina, September 3. They have been locked out since August 17.

BY NAOMI CRAINE

CHARLESTON, South Carolina—"The number one issue for us is the safety of the community," said Clyde Smith as he picketed the Rhodia chemical plant here September 2. Smith, who is vice president of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 863, is one of the 115 production workers who have been locked out at the plant since August 17, after they voted down the company's contract proposal. Safety concerns and vacation time are the main issues in the fight.

The Rhodia plant produces a variety of potentially hazardous fire-retardant and pharmaceutical chemicals. Stressing the

importance of safety, several pickets pointed to an explosion at the facility in 1991, when it was owned by Albright & Wilson. Nine workers died in that blast. In the 10 years since that disaster, "things have gone downhill," said USWA Local 863 president Donald Hutchinson. The company has instituted 12-hour shifts and is now pushing for mandatory cross-training that workers expect will lead to unsafe job combinations.

In its contract proposal Rhodia also demanded that the bosses be able to schedule at will 40 hours of each worker's vacation each year. This is on top of cutting workers' sick days from three to one. "That's my vacation time for my family," Smith emphasized.

None of the hourly workers has crossed the union's round-the-clock picket line, Smith said. The company continues to run production with managers and salaried personnel. Since August 17 they have hired private security guards who videotape the picket line. A line across the driveway marking the company's property is new, as is a "No trespassing" sign.

Cars honk as they pass the picket line in an industrial area a few miles from the port in downtown Charleston. In addition to hand-lettered picket signs, several bright yellow placards reading, "Free the Charleston Five," are posted along the driveway leading to the plant. Smith said members of USWA Local 863 have been active in supporting five members of the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) who are facing frame-up "riot" charges for their participation in a January 2000 mass picket line. Many of the Rhodia workers took part in a June 9 rally in Columbia, South Carolina, to demand the charges against the Charleston Five be dropped.

"Members of the ILA, and everyone in the unions in this area, have been very friendly—dropping by and bringing water and soda for the picket line," Smith said. Students have come to the line as well.

Dozens of USWA members and supporters beamed up the picket line September 3 for a Labor Day visit by AFL-CIO secretary-treasurer Richard Trumka. The week before the workers held a community rally at the picket line.

Naomi Craine is a member of Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees Local 1501.

Larry Quinn is a coal miner and member of the United Mine Workers of America.

Blast kills 52 in Ukraine coal mine disaster

BY LARRY QUINN

PITTSBURGH—On August 19, an underground methane and coal dust explosion killed 52 miners and left dozens injured in the eastern Ukraine city of Donetsk. It was the most serious accident this year in the country's hazardous coal mines.

The Ukrainian Emergency Situations Ministry said at least 37 injured miners were still being treated in Donetsk hospitals and that 12 are in serious condition.

The morning blast came as more than 250 miners were working underground at the Zasiadko mine, the largest of the Ukraine's 209 coal mines, in the coal-rich Donetsk region.

More than 50 rescue teams were called to the mine, battling a continuing fire, and

firefighters are using a liquid nitrogen generating system brought from Poland. Extremely high temperatures more than a mile below ground had prevented rescuers from getting within 100 yards of the trapped miners.

One miner who escaped the accident unharmed described seeing "piles of bodies" while making his way to the surface.

Miners said that concentrations of methane gas at the time of the blast were more than three times the permitted maximum. Ukrainian miners detect methane using lamps, which are less sensitive than the methanometers carried by miners in the United States and many European countries, among others.

Deadly accidents have become almost routine in Ukraine's coal mines, where the death toll has averaged almost one miner killed every day for the past three years. Over the past 18 years five major accidents have claimed the lives of 228 miners at the Zasiadko mine alone. A total of 3,653 miners have been killed in accidents over the last 10 years in the Ukraine. This year alone, 181 miners have been killed.

Mismanagement, corruption, and chronic underinvestment in Ukraine's mines are widely blamed for the accidents, as is the practice of paying miners according to output rather than by the hour, when paid at all. Often, wages arrive months too late, and miners sometimes faint from hunger while working underground.

These were also the practices of the coal

barons in the early days of mining in the United States. Long, hard-fought battles by miners and the unions won hourly wages and health and safety improvements. For example, the United Mine Workers forced changes in mine safety practices after the 1968 Farmington disaster in West Virginia that killed 78 miners. The victory of the black lung strike in 1969 and Miners for Democracy in the early 1970s brought more health and safety reforms.

Fred Higgs, general secretary of the International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers' Union (ICEM) said the Ukrainian government must "end this killing machine."

"We are angry that the safety of the coal mines in the Ukraine has been allowed to deteriorate over the past decade through neglect," he said.

Higgs also extended condolences to the families of the accident victims and pledged full ICEM support for the Miners' Independent Trade Union's (MITU) "efforts to promote a safe and caring mining industry." He called on the mine management and the Ukrainian authorities to cooperate with the union on this.

And, in reference to recent official harassment of MITU, he warned that "any attempt to suppress the union, its members, and leaders will be met with the full force of the ICEM."

for further reading...

Coal Miners on Strike

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

Available from bookstores,
including those listed on page 12

U.S. trade edge ruins peasants in Mexico

Continued from front page

18 months. The government says it will pay the current owners \$110 million for the plants and assume all debts of the companies. It plans to spend \$300 million in upgrading the mills before they are resold.

Sections of the ruling class in Mexico have questioned whether this is the best way to confront the crisis. The takeover of the mills constitutes an "extreme measure that goes against the right of law," said Héctor Rangel, president of the Bankers Association of Mexico. He added that the steps are not going to necessarily resolve the problem.

Peasants protest flood of imports

The agricultural and trade policy of President Vicente Fox has come under pressure from working farmers and peasants. There has been a wave of protests demanding the government pressure the sugar mill owners to pay the \$420 million owed to sugarcane farmers and review the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

Peasant organizations have carried out roadblocks and camped out in front of government buildings in Mexico City and other states since the beginning of July. Fox was met with protests August 23 by sugarcane growers during his visit to the city of Cuernavaca in the state of Morelos. In response to the demands by the cane growers, Secretary of Agriculture Javier Usabiaga announced at the time that a solution would be announced by September 6.

Several of the refiners received bank loans from the Foreign Trade National Bank to begin making payments to the growers, and others have been promised that the debt will be paid off as the sugar is sold.

Peasant organizations from 12 Mexican states announced they will shut down the Port of Veracruz September 15 to protest a flood of imports, illegal trade, and corruption that have ruined different agricultural sectors.

"We are not going to respect the government. We are fed up, and if they try to repress the mobilization, we will bring gasoline and torches," Victorio Malpica, a pineapple grower from Oaxaca, told the Mexican daily *La Jornada*. "We are not going to allow one more gram of pineapple to be imported or have our families go die in the desert in the United States," he added.

According to the article, Mexico consumes 43 million tons of grain annually, of which 16 million is imported. Pineapple imports have grown 546 percent recently.

Malpica said companies such as Del Monte and Herdez no longer buy pineapple from producers in Mexico, but their warehouses are still full. The peasant organizations are demanding Fox suspend imports or raise tariffs substantially to avoid the total bankruptcy of this section of Mexican agriculture.

In response to trade pressures from the

United States, the Mexican Congress September 7 invalidated "side letters" to the North American Free Trade Agreement imposed by Washington. The unilateral protectionist "side letters" limited Mexico's sugar exports to the United States to 116,000 tons a year. Mexico produces some 500,000

tons a year of excess sugar and claims that under NAFTA it can export sugar into the United States without any tariffs.

In an address to the U.S. Congress the first week of September, Fox pointed to some of the unequal trade relations between the two countries, such as Washington's

move to prevent Mexican trucks from traveling freely into the United States. He also urged Congress and the Bush administration to find a quick way to legalize the status of the estimated 3.5 million undocumented Mexicans living in the United States.

Miami action demands, 'Residency for all!'

BY REBECCA ARENSON

MIAMI—A largely Haitian crowd of more than 1,000 people, holding signs demanding "Liberty and Residency for All Immigrants," rallied September 5 in front of the Immigration and Naturalization Service headquarters here. It was a largely working-class crowd with some workers sporting union T-shirts. The protest was organized by the Haitian-American Grassroots Coalition; Unite for Dignity/SEIU Local 1199-Florida; The Pan American Coalition; Veye Yo, Haitian Women of Miami; and others.

"News stories about the Bush administration considering granting residency to 3 million Mexican immigrants has sparked debate in Haitian and Latino communities here. Herbert Gamez, and eight others who immigrated from El Salvador, joined the rally with a Salvadoran flag. "We have a lot of economic problems in our country," said Gamez. "After the earthquakes, when things were really hard, it was even more difficult for us to get permission from the U.S. to come here. I hope Mexicans do get more rights. We need to fight for all immigrants."

"We are not against the idea of Mexicans getting residence," said Jurol St. Vil, a Haitian immigrant living in Miami since 1994. "We're here to demand residency for everybody."

Michael Italie, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Miami, addressed



Militant/Argiris Malapanis

Some 1,000 rallied September 5 in Miami to defend immigrant rights

the rally, supporting the call for full rights for all immigrants coming to the United States. He explained that the attacks on immigrant rights "come in the context of more working-class struggles, from the Palestinian people fighting against the murderous Israeli war drive, to the thousands of auto workers on strike in South Africa and

Mexico, to the fight for a union among garment and laundry workers here in Florida."

Italie concluded, "Because the capitalists are trying to divide and weaken us in our struggles, workers must demand equal rights for immigrants in order to unite to build our unions and defeat the capitalist system that exploits us all."

Workers lead San Jose immigrant rights march

BY NELL WHEELER
AND ROLLANDE GIRARD

SAN JOSE, California—Janitors, farm workers, students and others joined a boisterous two-mile march of 1,000 here August 25 demanding legalization for immigrants and the right to a drivers license. Chanting, "We are here, we're not leaving; if we do leave, we're coming back," the procession met another contingent of some 150 people who marched from the other end of the city for a rally at Cesar Chavez Plaza.

Under the auspices of the Frente Unitario del Pueblo (People's United Front), the march was sponsored by several unions, social service organizations, and student and political groups. The largest contingent came from Service Employees Industrial Union (SEIU) Local 1877. United Food and

Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 428 provided logistical support for the action.

Handmade signs carried by participants in the march raised many of the demands of the action, such as opposition to temporary work programs, for a world without borders, and an end to police brutality, and access to higher education, housing, and employment. Members of the SEIU carried a banner and signs supporting Justice for Janitors, an organizing arm of the union. The protest was one of many demanding the state end its requirement of a valid Social Security number in order to receive or renew a driver's license.

Several participants in the march had worked under the bracero program of 1942-64, which organized Mexican workers to labor under harsh conditions on temporary work permits for mostly capitalist agricultural companies in the United States. The workers are seeking restitution of the 10 percent of their wages that was supposedly placed in accounts in Mexico. The workers never saw the money. According to Cecilio Santillana, who worked under the *bracero* program, a federal judge in San Francisco will hear their case September 14.

José Hernández, who lives in San Jose, has participated in several demonstrations over the last few months. "I had never really thought about participating in anything like this, but the marches for a driver's license opened my eyes. I'm a lot more aware of what is going on."

Adiya Hines, an activist with Students For Justice at DeAnza Community College, addressed the rally, quoting Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) figures stating that 27 percent of prisoners in the United States today are immigrants. She pointed out that immigrant workers are being made into scapegoats for the problems of this society, when in fact "the authorities are allowing immigrants into this country just for their cheap labor and their tax money." In an interview, Hines stated, "I would like to see equality for all people, from a fair living wage to access to medical care and education. There are too many resources in this country not to do this." She added that she thinks this will only be possible in a socialist society, and that "reforms won't be enough. We do need a revolution."

Plumbers, Steamfitters and Refrigeration Workers Local 393 member Mark Glass

said, "I try to get the union involved in events like this. It's important to support any fight for justice, and especially to get union support." The local has sent delegations to participate in a march to free Mumia Abu-Jamal, framed up and on death row in Pennsylvania, as well as a march held in April in San Jose demanding an end to police brutality.

Speaking on behalf of the Socialist Workers Party, Deborah Liatos said the march "is part of the fight of workers around the world for justice." Liatos pointed out that by requiring the Social Security number, the government is taking another step toward creating a national identification card that "will help them control the movements of working people."

José Sandoval, the leader of Centro Azteca de Información, which has been organizing demonstrations for access to drivers licenses, told the rally, "We are all here, united, fighting for the same thing. We need to remember those who have died in the desert trying to cross the border." Centro Azteca has been gathering signatures to present to the California legislature supporting legalization and a drivers license.

A bill that seeks to grant licenses to those who are in process of getting residency is before the legislature this fall. In an interview, Sandoval said, "it doesn't do anything for most of us because we don't have the 'proof' they ask for. We are pressing to change the law altogether so those of us who produce the wealth can have some rights."

Two farm workers, originally from Oaxaca, Mexico, came to the rally. They earn \$8 per hour and work up to 70 hours a week with no overtime premium harvesting apples and grapes. "I came to the demonstration because I want to progress, to go forward. I need the driver's license and the Social Security card," said one.

Another farm worker from the Salinas area, who asked that his name not be used, described an action May 14 in the broccoli fields where he works. Sixteen broccoli cutters carried out a one-day strike and won a raise from \$6.50 to \$7 per hour for all 250 who work at the farm. He briefly addressed the rally in Mixteco, the language native to San José de las Flores in Oaxaca where he and his coworkers come from. "If we fight together we will win," he said. "*¡Si se puede!*" (Yes we can).

MILITANT AND PERSPECTIVA MUNDIAL TAX REFUND

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

A growing number of readers of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* in the United States are making pledges and sending in contributions from a financial windfall of up to \$300 from the federal income tax refund.

Every contribution, large or small, is welcome and will be put to good use in expanding the reach and effectiveness of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, socialist publications published in the interests of working people.

Send in your pledge or contribution today! Please e-mail your name, address, telephone number, and the

amount you would like to donate to: themilitant@compuserve.com or send in the coupon below.

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

**Number of pledges: 60
Amount received: \$8,393**

'Raise the minimum wage,' says socialist coal miner for mayor

The following statement was issued September 3 by Frank Forrestal, Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Pittsburgh and member of United Mine Workers of America Local 1248.

While collecting signatures in the streets of Pittsburgh in July to place our campaign on the ballot, many supporters were struck by the number of workers whose main concern was the low wages they receive and finding a job with decent pay and benefits. Low pay often goes along with no health care, little or no benefits, poor working conditions, and forced overtime without receiving overtime pay. These workers included cooks, laborers, janitors, and all kinds of service workers. Many had part-time jobs. And quite a few were unemployed.

For the past month, the big-business press has been filled with articles, letters to the editor, and editorials ranting against the proposed "living wage" ordinance for Allegheny County. The titles of these items written by members of Chambers of Commerce, business owners, and newspaper editors tell it all: "No to living wage move," "Another good reason to leave town," "Workplace injury," and "It's socialism."

Their vehement opposition is echoed by similar articles in the national big-business press. Take, for example, an article in the August 21 *USA Today*, "'Living wage' to some, 'business killer' to others." The article opens saying that in the seaside city of Santa Monica, California, "84,000 owners of restaurants and luxury hotels are drawing the line in the sand. The thriving tourist industry is fighting a new ordinance that forces employers to nearly double the wages of the workers who make the beds and wash the dishes."

The "living wage" legislation in Allegheny County covers employers "who lease or sublease property from the county" and requires that they pay \$9.12 an hour and \$10.62 to those employers who don't provide health insurance. The idea is that workers will buy their own insurance out of their wages.

The call for a "living wage" is backed by the Western Pennsylvania Living Wage Campaign and dozens of local unions and Black rights organizations. Nationally it is supported by the AFL-CIO. Numerous such measures have been passed across the country and it is one of the main issues in several mayoral campaigns this year. Quite a few "living wage" measures have been rejected too.

The "living wage" campaign grows out of the fact that real wages on average are well below what they were in the opening of the 1970s. Even with the increase in 1996, the buying power of the minimum wage today is lower than it was in 1960—a full \$2.25 below its high point in 1968. The current federal minimum wage is a paltry \$5.15 an hour.

This past July Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan stated before the Financial Services Committee that he is for abolishing the minimum wage. This month the Senate is supposed to move to vote to raise the minimum wage. The Bush administration says it is willing to accept a minimum wage increase provided "governors and state legislators would have the option of waiving part of the increase." In other words, Bush supports a wage increase, but one with no teeth. We shouldn't forget that this effort to get rid of the minimum wage comes at the same time that millions of working people are being cut from state welfare rolls. This is the biggest single success of the rulers so far in beginning to erode the federal Social Security system—one that the former Clinton administration takes credit for and boasts about.

The big-business mouthpieces have been hammering away at the "living wage" measures. Higher wages will cause jobs cuts and lead to slashing social services, raise prices, and hurt the most downtrodden, they claim. To aid their efforts, the employers have an army of so-called "labor experts" and "professional economists," not to mention those who call themselves "minimum wage advocates" to back up their claims.

One of these "experts" who supports abolishing the minimum wage recently

wrote, "In 2001, we've come to recognize that Depression era and Great Society programs need a second look to reflect a different world."

All of their arguments are false, however. They are part of the ideological offensive to convince workers and working farmers of the reactionary, nonscientific view that wage hikes are the cause of everything from inflation to unemployment to outright impoverishment. Workers are told that higher wages mean lower income for everybody else. But this is a myth promoted by the capitalists, one that goes back to the origins of capitalism. The main purpose of the myth is to protect their profits and profit rates.

This ideological offensive is also designed to remind us to accept our lowly station in life and "just say yes" to our "betters."

Higher wages won by workers mean less profits for capitalists. Period. They don't come out of a "wage pool" that is depleted to the detriment of other workers and the lower middle class.

The truth is that wages have nothing to do with the value of the commodity a worker produces or the service he or she performs. To a substantial degree, wages are determined by what the working class, through organization and struggle, has been able to establish and defend over time as the socially acceptable minimum standard of living.

Karl Marx, founder of the modern revolutionary working-class movement, explained in his famous pamphlets *Wage-Labor and Capital* and *Value, Price, and Profit*, that the capitalist constantly reduces wages to their physical limit, while at the same time extending the working day to its maximum limit. Marx said that under capitalist relations "the general tendency of capitalist production is not to raise, but to sink the average standard of wages, or to push the value of labor power more or less to its minimum limit." If the labor movement did not fight this "encroachment" by the capitalist they "would be degraded to one level mass of broken wretches past salvation," said Marx.

The key thing my campaign points to is

Socialist candidate condemns Israeli war moves

BY TED LEONARD

BOSTON—"The Israeli government is the source of the conflict today with the Palestinian people. My campaign is opposed to Israel's occupation of Palestinian land and supports the demand for a democratic, secular Palestine," stated Brock Satter, the Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress. Satter was responding to a question at a candidate's forum on foreign policy August 30.

A special election is being held for the 9th Congressional District in Massachusetts left vacant by the death of Joseph Moakley, a Democrat.

Satter was placed on the ballot August 29 by state officials after supporters of his campaign submitted 4,100 signatures, well over the requirement of 2,000 signatures of registered voters.

In a news release announcing he had qualified for ballot status, Satter explained he is launching the campaign "at a time when the Israeli state is on an accelerated war drive to try to crush the resistance of the Palestinian people and deny them their right to self-determination in their own land. None of this could happen without Washington's backing. This includes supplying military hardware to Tel Aviv, such as the Apache helicopter gunship used in the cold-blooded assassination of Palestinian leader Abu Ali Mustafa as he was at work in his study."

Satter, 30, is a meat packer and participant in a drive to organize his workplace, Kayem Foods, into the United Food and Commercial Workers union. He joined six Democrats and a Republican who are vying for the congressional seat at the debate, which drew more than 150 people.

The event was sponsored by Citizens for Participation in Political Action and a number of organizations critical of some aspects

Rail workers demand scheduled days off



Militant/Jeff Ford

Some 25 members and supporters of United Transportation Union Local 324 held a protest August 29 against Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway's "availability policy," which limits time off for engineers and trainmen.

that the labor movement needs to organize a fight to increase wages, including the federal minimum wage. Doing so will create a better relationship of class forces for all workers to win better pay and safer working conditions.

Supporters of the "living wage" campaign in Pennsylvania are asking people to sign a postcard that reads, "I want my taxes invested to support working families at a living wage of at least \$9.12 per hour with health insurance." My campaign is not for investing taxes this way. We are for lifting taxes off the shoulders of working people. The socialist campaign for mayor is for taxing income from profits, dividends, interest, or rents, including the elevated salaries of middle-class professionals, supervisors, and managers. There should be no tax on the wages of working people. Nor should working fishermen and working farmers be taxed.

There were three additional immediate demands that received a positive response in our petitioning campaign.

First, the demand that the labor movement fight for a massive program of government funded public works to ensure jobs for all at union scale. In addition to providing pro-

ductive work to the jobless, such a program is needed to build housing, schools, hospitals and clinics, day-care centers, public transportation, libraries, gyms, pools, parks, and other social infrastructure the capitalists are allowing to crumble rather than fund out of their profits.

Second, labor must demand a shorter workweek with no cut in pay, binding on all employers as federal law. This would spread the available work around and allow workers, not just the capitalists, to enjoy the benefits of any advances in the productivity of our labor.

Third, in addition to raising the federal minimum wage, labor must demand that all wages be covered by full automatic cost-of-living protection. This too should be made a federal law. The capitalists' efforts to pull themselves out of a downturn in sales and profits—of which we are beginning to see today—can spark sudden and unexpected inflationary explosions that devastate the living standards and any small savings of working people. The same automatic adjustments must be guaranteed for all pension, health, workers compensation, black lung, welfare, and unemployment benefits.

of U.S. foreign policy.

In the first question, candidates were asked where they stood on "Plan Colombia," which involves massive U.S. military aid to Bogota under the guise of the "war on drugs." Several Democratic contenders replied saying they favored the "intent" of the program, but opposed it because it isn't really working.

Satter blasted "Plan Colombia," explaining that the "war on drugs" both at home and abroad is aimed at the rights of working people. "It has meant a huge increase in the prison population in the United States, where there are now more than 2 million people behind bars," he said. The expanding U.S. military presence in South America is aimed at the workers and peasants of Colombia and Latin America. "Instead, working people can fight for canceling the massive and unpayable debt owed by semicolonial countries to banks in the imperialist countries. We can demand an end to deportations by the immigration cops and equal rights for immigrants," he said. "Where I work an organizing drive is being led by immigrant workers."

Replying to candidates who said Washington needed to deploy an antimissile system to protect the United States from "rogue nations," Satter pointed out, "We must never forget that the one government that used nuclear weapons against human beings was the United States. One of the most heinous crimes against humanity was the dropping of the atomic bombs on the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We need to take away the war-making power of the imperialists and replace their government with one of workers and farmers."

Opponents of Washington's embargo against Cuba asked the candidates about their position on this centerpiece of U.S. policy. They explained they were looking for a candidate who will carry on "Congressman

Moakley's legacy" of opposition to the embargo. Moakley was one of a handful of capitalist politicians who see lifting the embargo as a way to hasten the restoration of capitalism to the island under U.S. domination.

Many of the liberal Democrats said they opposed the embargo against Cuba because it "hasn't worked," meaning it has not overturned the revolution that took place more than 40 years ago. Satter, on the other hand, said he sees the Cuban Revolution as an example for workers and farmers the world over and opposes the embargo and the travel restrictions to Cuba because "workers and farmers in the U.S. can learn from the Cubans. We can learn that revolution is possible." Satter pointed out that Washington initiated the embargo in the early 1960s in response to the deepening land reform carried out by the revolution that gave land to the peasants for the first time and other measures that benefited working people."

One of the largest ovations of the night came when Satter, answering a question from the floor, called for the U.S. Navy to get out of the Puerto Rican island of Vieques.

After the debate Satter was interviewed by a local radio station and a community newspaper.

On September 1, Satter attended a Labor Day barbeque here hosted by members of the Massachusetts Nurses Association on the 100th day of their strike against Brockton Hospital. The nurses have been fighting forced overtime and understaffing. A tentative agreement has been reached between the union and the hospital. The nurses have taken down their picket line in anticipation of a settlement of the dispute, but will not return to work until the offer is ratified.

Ted Leonard is a meat packer in Chelsea, Massachusetts. Andrea Morell and Sarah Ullman contributed to this article.

Communists discuss party building in UK

BY TONY HUNT

LONDON—After two days of thorough discussion and debate, delegates to the seventh national Congress of the Communist League (CL) in the United Kingdom voted overwhelmingly August 27 to reorganize the League to respond more effectively to the developing resistance of workers and farmers in the UK and to recruit to the League and the Young Socialists.

“Our most important challenge is to respond to the openings before us,” said Jonathan Silberman, reporting for the outgoing Central Committee.

The delegates made three intertwined decisions. Firstly, that the incoming Central Committee would rapidly decide on national targets for the industries where League members should get jobs and the corresponding industrial unions they should establish party fractions in. Secondly, to increase the geographical spread of the League by establishing an organizing committee in Scotland within a few weeks. Thirdly, to refocus the political work of the branch of the League in London so that a substantial percentage of the branch’s weekly propaganda activity is concentrated within the working-class district near its current headquarters.

These decisions were taken to increase the ability of the League to respond to the growing resistance among workers and farmers in the United Kingdom to the employers’ offensive and to function as a more disciplined, politically centralized national organization. The Congress also elected a new five-person Central Committee.

The opportunities for building the League as part of an international communist movement were highlighted in the course of a daylong International Socialist Educational Conference held on the eve of the CL Congress, hosted by the Communist League and Young Socialists.

A feature of this event was a panel presentation and discussion by Young Socialist participants in the 15th World Festival of Youth and Students that took place in Algiers August 8–16. Speakers on the panel came from the United States, Canada, Sweden, Iceland, Australia, New Zealand, and the UK (see front-page article in the September 17 *Militant*).

The panelists described the participation in the festival of thousands of young people from countries oppressed by the imperialist powers. Jacob Perasso, Young Socialists National Executive Committee organizer in the United States, said he saw at the event a “tremendous hunger for ideas, for Marxism, and a desire among many revolutionary-minded youth to build the kinds of organizations capable of effectively leading the toilers in their countries in the struggle against imperialism.” This hunger was behind the sale of nearly 600 Pathfinder books and pamphlets to festival participants.

Five festival participants were among the 11 fraternal delegates from the Socialist Workers Party in the United States and Communist Leagues in Canada, Sweden, Australia, and New Zealand given voice and consultative vote by the congress delegates. Several other festival participants attended the congress as observers.

Shift in political situation

In his report to the congress, Silberman pointed to the panel discussion and emphasized what the experience at the festival in Algiers revealed about the shift in the world political situation. “The festival shows both that imperialism is weaker today and that the relationship of forces within the workers movement has been altered,” Silberman said. “It confirms in real life the judgment made by the communist movement in 1990 that imperialism lost the Cold War, and that the shattering of the Stalinist apparatuses in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe did not register a shift in the relationship of forces in favor of imperialism.

“No longer can anti-imperialist fighters be prevented from getting to know each other and sharing experiences. The drawing together of struggles of working people the world over will mean that more anti-imperialist fighters will become revolutionaries and more revolutionaries will become communists. Through this process a proletarian leadership and international communist movement will be rebuilt.”



Above, provided by Dynamex Industrial Action Left, *Militant*/Tony Hunt
Above, solidarity march for union members locked out by auto parts maker Friction Dynamics. Left, Randy Jasper, a Wisconsin farmer, speaks to rally of 1,500 in Hyde Park, London in November 2000. Jasper traveled from the United States to London to participate in the fuel protests last year. The struggle by exploited small farmers in defense of their livelihoods is an important component of resistance of working people in the UK. The Communist League congress discussed how to deepen participation in struggles of workers and farmers.

Silberman pointed out that the current relationship of forces also registered the failure of the ruling-class offensive in the 1980s against workers and farmers, spearheaded by the administrations of Ronald Reagan in the United States and Margaret Thatcher in Britain. The working class had retreated in the face of this offensive, but the imperialist rulers had failed in their attempt to turn around the long-term decline in the rate of profit.

Growing inter-imperialist conflict

At the eve-of-congress educational conference, SWP leader Norton Sandler gave a presentation on “The Working Class Road to Peace and a Livable Environment,” in which he explained the sharpening inter-imperialist conflict between the United States and its European competitors as well as within Europe.

In his report to the congress Silberman developed some of these points. “The failure of the bosses to inflict the kind of defeats they need on workers and farmers will lead to sharper conflicts among the capitalists themselves, and sharper inter-imperialist rivalry,” he said. “In every military conflict against the toilers—from the Gulf War in 1991 to Macedonia today—there is also a simultaneous conflict between the imperialist powers themselves.”

Within the general weakening of imperialism, there has been a relative decline of British imperialism, Silberman noted. “For example, London is supplying half the troops in Macedonia today but this puts an even greater strain on British troop deployments around the world.” To this should be added, Silberman said, the British ruler’s failure to defeat or head off the determination of the Irish toilers to end British rule in Ireland; the growing strains along the national seams of the United Kingdom in Scotland and Wales; the conflicts within the ruling class over the European Union; and the related ongoing crisis of the Conservative party—historically the main instrument of capitalist rule in the UK—which has suffered two heavy election defeats and is deeply divided.

The political openings for communists in the UK had to be seen within this international context, the CL leader said. He pointed to the “sea-change” in the mass psychology of workers in the second half of 1990s when “the retreat of the working class in the UK bottomed out.” This was shown in Britain in 1997 with the overwhelming defeat, after 18 years, of the ruling Conservative government by the Labour Party. Many workers showed up for work the next day punching the air with delight.

“What we are now seeing,” Silberman

said, “are the initial stages of a vanguard taking shape, forming and reforming in the ebbs and flows of the class struggle. The only obstacles to communists being an integral part of this vanguard are those we place in front of ourselves.”

As an example of the openings, the CL leader referred to the four-month struggle by the workers locked out by Friction Dynamics, an auto components manufacturer, in Canaerfon, North Wales.

“This is the most recent example of resistance in the automotive industry where the bosses are seeking to resolve problems of overcapacity by driving down production costs as they seek to restore their competitive edge. They’re taking it out on workers through speedup, the use of temporary and agency labor, outsourcing, different tiers of wages, flexible hours, and other measures. The bosses are going after conditions built up by workers through their unions over decades.

“At Friction Dynamics, the employer launched a direct assault on the union. When the workers responded through a series of strikes, they were locked out and later sacked. But they’ve not gone away,” he said. “They’ve maintained a 24-hour picket line and reached out for support. They’ve received solidarity from fellow members of the Transport and General Workers Union and from working people in the local area in particular. Their July march drew 1,000 participants while a further 2,000 lined the streets to applaud and cheer. Standing on the picket line, you realize how deep the support goes in the local area. It appears as though drivers in every other car passing by hoot their horns in solidarity. A number of farmers in this rural area have brought food to the picket line.

“Also on the picket line is a copy of the book *Capitalism’s World Disorder* by Jack Barnes, bought by one of the strike leaders, who described it as ‘my sort of book’ and said he’d make it available to others on picket duty,” Silberman said.

Resistance by farmers

The struggle by exploited small farmers in defense of their livelihoods was an important component of resistance of working people in the UK, Silberman noted. “The sharpest manifestation was the protest movement that developed a year ago by farmers and truckers over fuel prices. In the space of one week it put the skids under the government, belying the claimed strength of Anthony Blair’s New Labour government. What so rattled the rulers,” he said, “was the combination of resistance by farmers to the worst farming crisis in the UK

since the 1930s with the overwhelmingly favorable response within the working class to the blockades of the oil depots.”

Working farmers have come under a further assault in the form of the Labour government response to the foot-and-mouth outbreak, which they are resisting. About 1,000 people joined an August demonstration in London called by Farmers for Action (FFA) demanding a public inquiry into the foot-and-mouth crisis. This demand is a response to the three government-established inquiries, none of which will be public. The FFA has now announced a second national demonstration that will take place in London October 20.

Silberman also pointed to the reception given to Randy Jasper, a farmer from Wisconsin who traveled from the United States to participate in the fuel protests in London last year. “He was given a platform. Working farmers in this country welcomed the opportunity to get to know one of their own from another country an ocean apart.”

Silberman quoted from a recent report by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party in the United States. “Our success,” Barnes said, “will be gauged by our ability to recognize, adjust to, and ‘catch up’ with such developments and integrate ourselves into them. It will be gauged by the growing numbers who look to us as a component of working-class vanguard militants—a worker-Bolshevik component armed with the traditions and generalized lessons of the modern international proletarian struggle for more than a century and a half.”

Regroup to redeploy

A year ago the CL leadership decided to close the League’s branch in Manchester and regroup the party’s forces in London to prepare to field an organizing committee in Scotland.

Over the past year’s work, the League registered some gains. Sales of books from the London Pathfinder Book Shop have increased from a total value of £8,500 in 2000 to the same amount in the first eight months of 2001 (£1=US\$1.47). This is part of a broader increase in sales of Pathfinder literature. Sales through Pathfinder’s commercial distributor in the UK have increased 70 percent over last year.

The London branch waged a successful circulation drive for the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, with half of the 40 new *Militant* subscribers and 12 *Perspectiva Mundial* subscribers coming from the working-class district within a mile or two of its headquarters. A number of the new subscribers have participated in the weekly *Militant* Labour Forums, whose attendance is younger, more multinational, and larger over recent months.

A new chapter of the Young Socialists has been established and the League and YS collaborated in building a delegation of eight to the World Festival of Youth and Students, part of the broader 35-member delegation to the festival from Britain.

One of the League’s industrial union fractions, at the General Motors IBC plant in Luton, has gained some valuable experience in the union resistance that developed in response to the job cuts at the adjacent GM Vauxhall plant. Fraction members have taken the lead in working with leaders of the Friction Dynamics strike/lockout within the Transport and General Workers Union at the plant and more broadly. The fraction sold four subscriptions to the *Militant* during the circulation drive and has sold 18 Pathfinder books and pamphlets this year.

A central challenge confronted by delegates was the necessity for centrally decided political priorities on where communists should work in industry, based on accumulated years of experience, knowledge of who the employers are targeting in their offensive, and following the lines of resistance amongst workers.

In remarks to Congress participants describing some of their experiences in the United States, SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters noted that, “Where communists work and build fractions must be based on political decisions by the party setting national priorities and targets to guide the work of comrades on the ground—not least those who will be part of the organization.”

Continued on Page 14

'Bosses' war against workers has opened on many fronts'

Printed below is an excerpt from *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* by Jack Barnes. The book is Copyright © 2001 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BY JACK BARNES

The battles we and other workers are and will be engaged in are being prepared on many fronts by the course of the ruling class.

Workers who have studied and absorbed some of the hard-earned lessons of our class—who have started to use the political arsenal published and distributed by Pathfinder, the cumulative record of more than 150 years of struggle the world over—can help other working people better understand the source of our exploitation and oppression. We can help fellow workers and farmers recognize that the conditions we face are a product of how capitalism works, not how it sometimes doesn't work. We can help them see that the root of our problems is not one or the other of the bosses' parties—the Republicans but not the Democrats, or vice versa. Nor is it the union misleaders, whose class-collaborationist course does hamper our capacity to fight effectively and win.

Our class enemy is the capitalists themselves and the two-party system that in the United States serves as the central political prop of their rule. We have no common interests with the capitalists. Everything they try to tell us about "our country," "our way of life," "our language," "our industry," "our factory" are lies. The "our" is the heart of the lie. It's a diversion aimed at dividing us from those with whom we do have common interests—the workers, farmers, and exploited toilers of all countries. All of us share the same class enemies: the imperialist ruling classes, and the domestic landlords and capitalists dominated by imperialism the world over. That's the only "we" and "they" that has any meaning for working people.

William Clinton, the politician whom liberals, with a straight face, sometimes described as the first Black president, has recently left office. From the beginning eight years ago, communist workers insisted that Clinton was no friend of the working class, that he would be a war president, a prison president, a death-penalty president—in short, a president, like those before him, whose course at home and abroad was aimed at serving the class interests of the U.S. ruling families. The same is true of Clinton's successor, George W. Bush, and of the bipartisan Congress, then and now.

Just hours before Bush was sworn in last January 20, Clinton ordered U.S. warplanes to bomb civilian targets in southern Iraq. Then, less than a month later, Bush sent U.S. planes to hit neighborhoods on the outskirts of Baghdad, dropping twenty-eight cluster

bombs. These weapons, which scatter thousands of small explosive devices, are designed with one and only one purpose in mind: to kill and maim, to mangle the flesh of the maximum number of men, women, and children. (The *Militant* was the only newspaper where you could have found out about the cluster bombs, unless you happened to catch the *Washington Post* on-line on February 26. The *Post* editors made sure the article never made it into the print edition.)

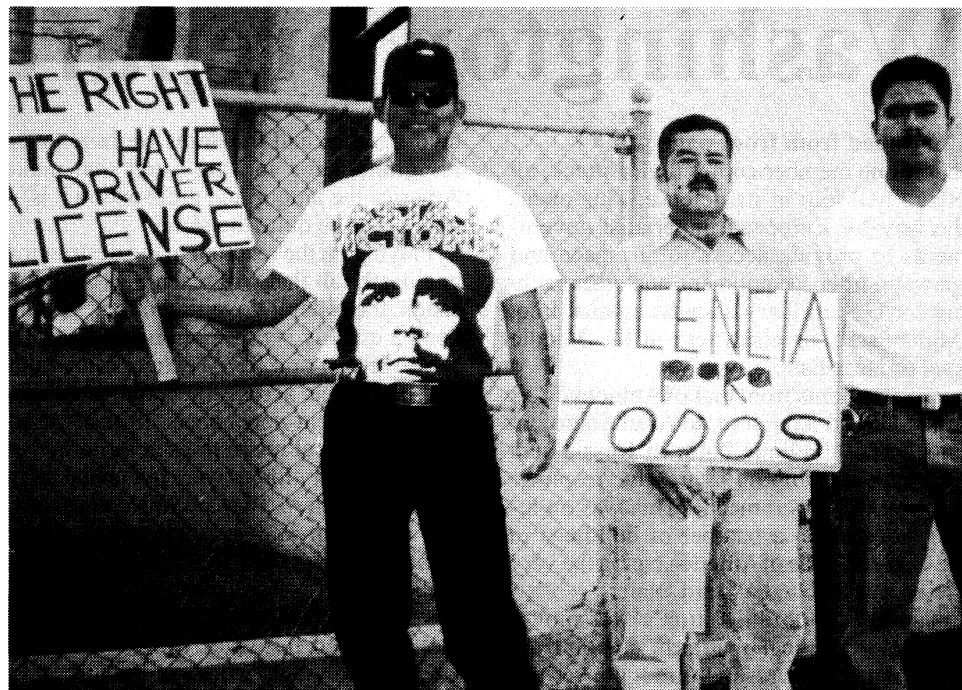
The assaults on Iraq by Clinton and Bush were a virtual replay of the handoff eight years earlier from the elder Bush to Clinton. During the days prior to the January 1993 inauguration, the outgoing Republican administration rained down bombs on Iraq, and the new administration followed suit the very next week. Ever since then, the U.S. and British armed forces have kept up the bombing of Iraq virtually nonstop; the United Nations reported that on average one Iraqi civilian was killed in such raids every other day in 1999 and 2000. Others have been wounded, many mutilated for life.

The war against working people at home by the employers and their two parties has deepened on many fronts, as well.

- During the eight years of the Clinton presidency, the number of people locked behind bars in U.S. prisons doubled to two million. While the United States has 5 percent of the world's population, today it has 25 percent of the world's prisoners. As throughout history, the overwhelming majority of those incarcerated are toilers, with the hammer falling most heavily on those who are Black, Latino, or Native American. Fully one of every three young Black males today is either in prison, on parole, or on probation. Lockdowns and solitary confinement, with all their dehumanizing effects on the human spirit, have increasingly become the norm.

- The number of privatized "services," even privately owned prisons, continues to increase, and now we are witnessing the relentless growth of a concomitant: prison labor. The *Wall Street Journal* a few days ago featured an article on the expansion of programs to hire out inmates in state-operated prisons. Pointing to the emergence of what it calls "the convict version of Kelly Girls," the article was headlined: "Prison as Profit Center: Inmates' Labor, Expenditures Enhance the Bottom Line; Temp Agency Behind Bars."

- In Oregon prisons, the article explains, "employers offer no retirement, vacation, or health benefits; nor do they pay for Social Security, workers' compensation, or Medicare....[H]iring inmates can cut an employer's payroll costs by 35%." As a result, it adds, "businessmen now all but beg for prison labor." Just like the good old



Protesters rally in California in July to back immigrants' right to driver's licenses. Immigration Reform Act signed by Clinton administration expanded powers of INS for use against those charged with being "illegal." Bush has just appointed "counterintelligence czar" to coordinate police and military agencies—a position created by his predecessor.

days—New Economy chain gangs.

- Prisons certified by the federal Prison Industry Enhancement program, the article continues, get a bonus; they are allowed to sell the products of prison labor in interstate commerce. Prisoners covered by this U.S. government "incentive" program must "be allowed to keep at least"—in other words, no more than—"20% of what they earn. The rest of their wages can be withheld to pay income taxes, child-support obligations, room-and-board charges, and payments due to victim-assistance funds."

- In 1996 Clinton signed into law the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act, adopted by a Republican Congress. That law expands the powers of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to round up and deport those charged with being "illegal" immigrants without the right to judicial review or appeal. Simultaneously the White House and Congress funded the expansion of the hated *la migra* into the largest federal cop agency, one that has stepped up factory raids and deportations to record numbers in recent years.

- Far from aiming to stem the inflow of labor from the Americas and elsewhere, the rulers intend for their repressive measures to heighten insecurity and fear among immigrants, hoping to maintain them as a superexploitable labor pool and discourage involvement in unionization efforts and other social struggles and political fights.

- Under the Star Chamber provisions of the 1996 Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, the U.S. government has held some two dozen people without bail in "preventive detention" on the basis of "secret evidence." Most are immigrants from Arab or other majority Muslim countries accused of links with "terrorist organizations"—the code word the U.S. rulers increasingly use to rationalize both assaults on democratic rights at home and military strikes abroad. Altogether some 20,000 people are being held in U.S. jails awaiting the outcome of threatened deportations—a 245 percent increase just in the five years since adoption of the anti-immigrant legislation.

- Last year, once again with bipartisan backing, the Clinton administration cynically exploited its half-year-long refusal to return the Cuban child Elián González to his country in order to burnish the image of the INS and establish legal precedents reinforcing the agency's powers that are exempt from judicial review. The April 2000 raid by heavily armed commandos of *la migra* to take the child from a home in Miami not only bolstered the powers of the Border Patrol but dealt a blow to the Fourth Amendment rights of all U.S. residents to be safe from arbitrary searches and seizures.

- During his closing days in office Clinton issued a presidential directive establishing a "counterintelligence czar," and Bush just this week made an appointment to the new top-level spy post. According to press accounts, the position is "designed to facilitate a level of cooperation never seen before among the FBI, the CIA and the Pentagon, and will, for the first time, engage the rest of the government and the private sector as well." The private sector as well? What "private sector" police agencies are included? What strikebreaking rent-a-cops will now have more federal cover and en-

couragement?

The "czar" will be responsible to a board consisting of top CIA, FBI, Pentagon, and Justice Department officials and will in turn chair a National Counterintelligence Policy Board also involving officials of the State Department, Energy Department, and White House National Security Council. The former top CIA official who developed the so-called Counterintelligence for the 21st Century plan explained to one publication that "CI-21" will prioritize "the 'crown jewels' of American prosperity and national security," and told the *Washington Post* that it aims to defend "not only critical government assets but also the computer infrastructure used by government and private industry alike."

One reporter for the big-business press covering the new position wrote that it will force "the American public to rethink long-accepted notions about what constitutes national security and the once-clear boundaries between domestic law enforcement, foreign intelligence gathering and defense preparedness."

In short, the counterintelligence czar will draw together Washington's "anti-terrorist" operations from Iran, Korea, and Cuba, to the new immigrant living down the block. It will draw together the U.S. rulers' "war on drugs" from the new U.S. military bases in Colombia and Ecuador to working-class neighborhoods and factory locker rooms across North America. It will centralize the U.S. government's informers, wiretapping, snail-mail and e-mail snooping, and other secret police operations against both "enemies" abroad and the labor movement and social protest organizations at home.

Whether it is "endangering national security" or "giving away business secrets," the U.S. rulers will work to find a frame-up charge that sticks.

I raise the Clinton and Bush administration's new counterintelligence czar not because there is reason to anticipate some tidal wave of repression right around the corner. But the U.S. rulers are already shifting gears from the last decade. They know they will face more and bigger battles as international capitalist competition drives them to slash wages, extend the workday, intensify speedup, cut social security protections, and crush the unions. And they are preparing to defend their class interests.

New York meeting postponed

The September 16 meeting in New York City, "Communists and the World Struggle Against Imperialism Today," sponsored by the Socialist Workers Party National Committee and Young Socialists National Executive Committee, has been postponed due to indefinite closure of airports and expected backup of flights coming into New York, and the unavailability of the meeting space. A new time and location will be advertised in the *Militant* and at www.themilitant.com as soon as the meeting is rescheduled.

from Pathfinder

Cuba and the Coming American Revolution

by Jack Barnes

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

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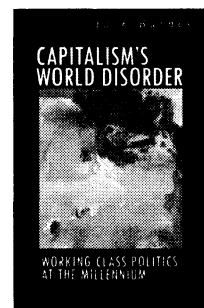
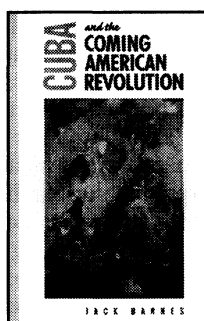
Capitalism's World Disorder

WORKING-CLASS POLITICS AT THE MILLENNIUM

by Jack Barnes

The social devastation, financial panics, political turmoil, police brutality, and military assaults accelerating all around us are the inevitable forces unleashed by capitalism. But the future capitalism has in store for us can be changed by the timely solidarity, courageous action, and united struggle of workers and farmers conscious of their power to transform the world. Also available in French and Spanish. \$23.95

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Washington prepares aggression abroad

Continued from front page

that if one member comes under attack, all others will join in its defense. This opens the way for European imperialist governments to provide access to air space and runways, troops, equipment, and other backing for U.S. military assaults against Iraq, Afghanistan, or elsewhere in the Middle East or Near East.

Governments from that of Anthony Blair in the United Kingdom, to Ariel Sharon in Israel, and Vladimir Putin in Russia sent messages backing an aggressive response by the U.S. government. "This was an attack not just on a number of buildings in the United States of America but on the very notion of democracy," said Blair.

The Bush administration's war moves have received vocal bipartisan support from Congress, which rushed through a resolution saying the U.S. government is "entitled to respond under international law."

"I say bomb the hell out of them," said Georgia Democratic senator Zell Miller, not even stopping to say who "them" might be. "If there's collateral damage"—the U.S. government's euphemism for killing men, women, and children—"so be it. They certainly found our civilians to be expendable." And Louisiana Democratic senator John Breaux said the "war against terrorism" is "going to be the No. 1, 2, and 3 priority for [Congress] for the rest of the year." Others, from Arizona Republican John McCain to New York Democrat Hillary Clinton, chimed in offering full support to the Bush administration.

The White House is coupling preparations for military action abroad with steps to implement the "homeland defense" plan it has been putting in place for the past several years under both the Clinton and Bush administrations. For the first time in U.S. history, "homeland defense" establishes a domestic command structure to deploy the U.S. military—regular forces, the National Guard, the armed forces' secret police apparatus—at home, targeting the rights of working people.

Attack on political rights

Under the guise of "fighting terrorism," the U.S. rulers are exploiting the September 11 attacks to rationalize a new extension of the steps they have taken over the past decade to widen police powers, erode Fourth Amendment protections against unreasonable search and seizure, increase the use of informers and dirty tricks against opponents of government policies, and narrow the rights of the accused and convicted.

With "the unleashing of these Pearl Harbor-style bolts-from-the-blue," wrote Frank Gaffney, a former top Pentagon official, "the

civil liberties and freedoms we have taken for granted for so long—and that make America the unique and great nation it is—may never be quite the same."

Playing on the reaction to the destruction and death toll that will reach into the thousands, the federal government on September 12 quickly set in motion the first of a series of FBI and SWAT-team police raids and detentions across the country and imposed stringent new checks of passengers and other travel restrictions at airports.

U.S. military forces were put on the highest state of alert. Two aircraft carriers and five destroyers and cruisers were deployed outside New York and Washington. National Guard troops were dispatched to both cities, and Air Force and Air National Guard jets patrolled the skies overhead. Police wielding shotguns patrolled the airport in Newark, among other cities.

Top Democratic and Republican party



National Guardsman stands outside Lexington Avenue armory in New York September 12. U.S. troops on on armored personnel carriers mounted with machine guns were stationed at Broadway and Walker Street and other locations.

leaders on Capitol Hill promised to stand "shoulder to shoulder" and called for beefing up spying operations and "intelligence gathering"—code words for secret police prying into the activities of unions, civil rights organizations, working-class political parties, and other groups that come into conflict with the policies and actions of the superrich employers and their government

and two-party system.

On September 12 heavily armed FBI agents stormed a Boston hotel and forced everyone out of the 36-story building, which was surrounded by SWAT teams holding machine guns. No arrests were made in connection with the attacks. Government officials stopped an Amtrak train in Rhode Island, and ordered everyone off. The local police chief said police in Boston had contacted him, saying there were some people on board the train they considered suspicious. A man with a long beard, wearing a green turban, was seen being taken in handcuffs from the train but was later released, with authorities saying he had no connection to the attacks. FBI agents and police also cordoned off streets and an apartment complex in Coral Springs and Vero Beach, Florida.

At the request of Washington, police in Hamburg, Germany, searched an apartment,

In addition, the FBI has executed search warrants on several major Internet providers. On September 12 the Associated Press reported that "federal police are reportedly increasing Internet surveillance," with the FBI beginning to visit web-based e-mail firms and Internet providers seeking to place the spy agency's Carnivore system, which monitors electronic communications, on the network. "An administrator at one major network service provider said that FBI agents showed up at his workplace on Tuesday 'with a couple of Carnivores, requesting permission to place them on our core, along with offers to actually pay for circuits and costs.' He said that 'a lot of people' at other firms were quietly going along with the FBI's request.

Writing on the web site of the conservative *National Review* magazine, Daniel Pipes, director of the Middle East Forum and a former Reagan administration official, said the events of September 11 will "prompt an urgent and dramatic change of course in U.S. policy" to place the government on a stronger war footing both at home and abroad. Washington must begin approaching "terrorism as a form of warfare," Pipes said, "and to target not just those foot soldiers who actually carry out the violence but the organizations and government who stand behind them."

Instead of "relying too much on electronic intelligence," he said, the CIA and other secret police agencies need to "place agents in the inner circle of a terrorist group"—not just abroad, but against what he claims to be the "large Islamist terror network in the United States, one visible to anyone who cared to see it.... The time has come to crack down, and hard on those connected to this terror infrastructure."

Statement of Cuban government

One of the few voices of a head of state dissenting from the U.S.-organized war chorus was Cuban president Fidel Castro. In a September 11 speech, Castro pointed out that "this tragedy is a consequence of the use of terrorist methods against Cuba and other countries" over many years, including the war in Vietnam. He expressed opposition to U.S. bombings or other military actions by Washington in response to the attacks.

Calling for international cooperation against terrorism, which he said "will not be solved through the use of force," Castro read the statement of the Cuban government on the attacks in New York and Washington, D.C. "Cuba's position against any act of terrorism is well known," the statement said. "It is impossible to forget that our people have been the victims of such actions, promoted from U.S. territory itself, for more than 40 years."

The Cuban government offered condolences to the families of those killed or injured in the attacks and offered to cooperate with U.S. health institutions to provide medical and rehabilitation care.

'Targets of opportunity'

Editorial-page writers and opinion columnists in the big-business media are working overtime to whip up nationalist sentiments to rationalize imperialist acts of war abroad and curtailment of democratic rights at home.

"Every one of us Americans is in this war now," the *New York Daily News* said in an editorial. The *New York Post* editorialized: "It's time for random application of American power—tangible attacks on targets of opportunity." The *New York Times* wrote: "An unconventional and frightening assault on the American homeland has commenced. The American people and their leaders must mobilize the resources to meet it." And *USA Today*: "Need for homeland defense now a 'grim reality.'"

Andrew Sullivan, a senior editor of the *New Republic* magazine, was one of many who sounded similar themes. "The barbarians are now here," he said in a column, and the "response must be disproportionate to the crime and [we] must hold those states and governments that have tolerated this evil accountable."

Conveniently passing over the U.S. wars and U.S.-organized wars against the peoples of Korea, Cuba, Vietnam, Panama, Nicaragua, Grenada, Iraq, and elsewhere during the past half century—in which no fewer than 5 million people have been killed altogether, not counting U.S. soldiers—Sullivan

Continued on next page

Steps taken by U.S. gov't in recent years to curtail democratic rights

Below are just a few examples from recent years of steps by the federal government, with bipartisan backing, to curtail democratic rights and narrow the space for workers, farmers, and formations of the oppressed and exploited to organize against capitalist assaults on our social rights and our living and working conditions.

- Last spring the federal government carried out highly publicized arrests of two Japanese scientists in Cleveland and three Chinese scientists employed by Lucent Technologies. The arrests were made under the 1996 Economic Espionage Act, a piece of Clinton-era repressive legislation that makes "conspiracy to steal" or stealing trade secrets a federal offense.

- Washington organized the June 2001 frame-up convictions of five Cuban citizens who were collecting information on rightist and terrorist groups in Florida engaged in planning attacks against Cuba and its people. The U.S. government used the prosecution to erode Fourth Amendment rights of protection against illegal search and seizure. For example, to win the convictions, the FBI obtained its "evidence" by breaking into the homes of the

five, and used what they claimed to have recovered from computer hard drives and radio transmissions. In late August federal officials arrested and indicted two other Cuban citizens on similar trumped-up charges.

- The FBI has established local counterterrorism task forces in 30 of its 56 divisions. In Portland, task force officials say they target individuals for "criminal terrorism within the traditional criteria of the Right Wing or Left Wing movements, as well as acts of criminal terrorism committed by special interest groups, such as the antiabortion movement and the Animal Liberation Front/Earth Liberation Front."

- The 1996 Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act defines terrorism as "any violent act or acts dangerous to human life that are a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or any state"—sufficiently broad to be used against union members on a picket line or against demonstrations the cops allege to have blocked public access. The government is allowed by law to seize the assets, homes, and vehicles of those facing "terrorist" charges.

- Leading up to the June 2001 convictions in New York of four men charged with bombing U.S. embassies in Africa, defense lawyers exposed the fact that the FBI interrogations of three of the accused in Africa in-

involved the extraction of forced confessions in the absence of a lawyer. One was told, "You will be hanged from you neck like a dog" if left in the hands of Kenyan authorities. A fourth was whisked out of South Africa in violation of his right to seek legal counsel and to appeal the deportation order sought by U.S. authorities.

- Under the banner of the "fight against drugs," Clinton's 1994 Crime Bill assaulted Fourth Amendment rights against unreasonable search and seizure in private homes. The courts have virtually eliminated such rights in automobiles. The law allows prosecutors to use illegally obtained evidence in court and allocates funds to put 100,000 more cops on the streets.

- In the wake of the bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City, the federal government in 1995 expanded its powers to use wiretaps, hold a person without bail in "preventive" detention, and to give the president the power to declare a person or organization "terrorist."

- The proportion of cities of more than 50,000 people with SWAT teams or paramilitary units has reached nearly 90 percent. Some 75 percent of cities smaller than 50,000 now have SWAT teams as well. —G. M.

Youth discuss issues in South Pacific

Continued from front page
be ours," she noted.

Annalucia Vermunt, from New Zealand, explained how the ruling class in New Zealand perpetuates the national oppression of the Maori people. She cited the ongoing discrimination faced by Maori, reflected in statistics of greater unemployment, poor health, low income, poor education, and greater imprisonment, which the rulers of that country justify by racist myths and stereotypes. But today these conditions have generated growing resistance, including recent protests against the police shooting of a Maori youth.

The two delegates from New Caledonia joined a lively discussion and debate about the road to independence. As a result of years of struggle by the independence movement there, New Caledonia has a timetable for "decolonization" to which the French government has agreed. The delegates learned more about the situation in Western Sahara, including the referendum on independence that the Moroccan king and the United Nations are stalling on implementing. They were also interested in finding out more about the national liberation struggle in East Timor and efforts by the new government there to find an accommodation with Portuguese imperialism, the experience in Algeria since winning independence from France four decades ago, and the example of the Cuban people in winning not just formal independence but freeing themselves from the shackles of imperialist domination by carrying out a socialist revolution.

In the halls, lobbies, and dining rooms the delegates from the Democratic Youth of Bhutan and the Student Union of Bhutan discussed their struggle against the absolute monarchical rule of King Jigme Singye Wangchuck, and his use of a "national assembly" to try to give credibility to his reign. The list of human rights abuses in Bhutan includes forced conversion to Buddhism, labor conscription, and the denial of freedom of speech and freedom of movement. Today 100,000 Bhutanese live in refugee

Titan Tire workers to vote on settlement

BY EDWIN FRUIT
AND KEVIN DWIRE

DES MOINES—Officials of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 164 announced a tentative agreement in the 40-month strike against Titan Tire September 8. Workers here will vote on the contract September 18.

An agreement was also reached with USWA Local 303L, which represents 300 workers at the Titan plant in Natchez, Mississippi. They had been on strike since September 1998. Titan owner Maurice Taylor ran that plant with replacement workers, then closed it in June 2001.

USWA Local 164 pulled down their picket lines following the announcement of the development, after keeping the pickets up 24 hours a day, seven days a week since the strike started on May 1, 1998.

According to the *Des Moines Register*, the agreement assures jobs for all union members who want to return to work, a new pension plan, an early retirement program and "guarantees against excessive overtime." Taylor is also quoted as saying that Titan intends to retain replacement workers that had been hired.

One of the main concerns of workers was mandatory overtime. Prior to the strike some union members worked 26 days in a row before getting two days off.

The *Register* article explained, "The two sides are also resolving unfair labor practices charges and lawsuits, including a Titan suit that sought \$720 million from the Steelworkers." The National Labor Relations Board has previously ruled against Titan for unfair labor practices after the strike began, including the way Titan hired replacement workers.

Edwin Fruit is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1149 at IBP in Perry, and is the Socialist Workers candidate for Des Moines city council at-large. Kevin Dwire is a member of UFCW Local 1149 at Swift in Marshalltown.

camp in Nepal, demanding repatriation to their country, he said.

A member of the All Burma Students League spoke with Linda Harris, who was representing the Young Socialists in Australia, about the character of Shining Path, a Stalinist guerrilla group in Peru. He said he thought Shining Path was a progressive political movement, but after talking with her about it decided to buy the Pathfinder pamphlet *Shining Path: Evolution of a Stalinist Sect*. After reading it, he said he agree with everything presented but wanted to read more and decided to buy the Education for Socialists bulletin titled "Maoism vs. Bolshevism," the *New International* article titled "Imperialism's March Toward Fascism and War," and the book *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* by Jack Barnes.

A delegate from the Kim Il Sung Socialist Youth League in north Korea spoke at the discussion center on "Democracy, Human Rights, and Social Justice" about the struggle for equality by Korean youth living in Japan. He described the discrimination faced by Koreans in Japan, the history of the Japanese government's aggression against the Korean people, and its ongoing support of U.S. imperialism's forced division of his nation.

He spoke about recent right-wing attacks on Koreans in Japan, saying they are an outgrowth of Tokyo's imperialist course. "Recently, after being angered by Korean girl students wearing their national costume, the right-wing gangsters collectively attacked some girl students to beat them and

Washington prepares attacks at home, abroad

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claimed the September 11 attacks were the "single most devastating act of war since Nagasaki." (Nagasaki was the second city in Japan, Hiroshima being the first, obliterated in August 1945 by atomic bombs—the only time those weapons of mass destruction have been used—that were dropped on the orders of U.S. President Harry Truman. Some 300,000 people in those Japanese cities were slaughtered those two days or died from the effects of radiation poisoning soon afterwards.)

"And it is a reminder," Sullivan added, "that the forces of resentment and evil—so prominent only recently in the Durban conference—can no longer be appeased. They must be destroyed—systematically, durably, irrevocably. Perhaps now we will summon the will to do it."

Writing in the United Kingdom's *Daily Telegraph*, John Keegan drew up a wish list of military assaults and attacks on democratic rights that the ruling class would like to implement. "The most likely outcome is the imposition of measures to restrict freedom of movement and residence" and the introduction of "identity cards, compulsorily to be carried at all times.... Registration of residence is another," he said, and "surveillance networks will emerge in order to enforce residence controls at a local level."

"The United States will not start locking up Muslims tomorrow—it has yet to be established that the perpetrators were Muslim," Keegan wrote, "but if an Islamic organization is identified as responsible, life for Muslims inside the country will become socially difficult quite quickly and may be legally circumscribed soon after." He added, "Friendly campus life for Middle Easterners may soon be a thing of the past." Washington will also use these events, he said, to restrict the rights of immigrants and political refugees, rolling back whatever limited protections they may have won in recent years.

As to Washington and Tel Aviv's use of the attack to accelerate Israel's war drive against the Palestinian people, Keegan does his bit by implicating Palestinians in the attack. "If Israel were, unprompted or nudged by Washington, now to decide to terminate the existence of the Palestinian Authority, destroy its structures and reoccupy the West Bank completely," he said, "those measures would be widely supported in America." The "one undoubted effect of the World Trade Center disaster is to heighten the likelihood of war in the Middle East," he said.

Janitors strike Pennsylvania contractors



Militant/Hilda Cuzco

Janitors in Conshohocken, Pennsylvania, picket a Tower Bridge building where they worked until launching their strike for increased wages and benefits. The workers, who are members of Service Employees International Union Local 36, struck Shellville contractors August 20. The company has refused to sign an agreement with the union. Four days later janitors at another office building joined the stoppage. Other union members have joined the picket line outside Tower Bridge. Striker Ella Ofosu Aje, 55, spoke in defiance of company threats to fire the workers. "We are not going back until we get what we want," she said. "No justice, no peace!"

tear their costume."

Participants from Asia and the Pacific came with delegations from Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burma, Cambodia, China, East Timor, India, Nepal, New

Caledonia, New Zealand, north Korea, and Sri Lanka.

Annalucia Vermunt is a member of the Meat Workers Union in Auckland, New Zealand.

In Israel, government troops occupied the Jenin Palestinian refugee camp and exchanged gunfire with several residents. Tanks also entered Jenin City and surrounded two villages as well as the village of Tabas. Israeli military forces killed nine Palestinians in the four areas and wounded 20.

Anti-Muslim and Arab assaults

Muslim and Arab organizations across the United States reported they had received threats and hostile phone calls.

"Muslims nationwide shut down their mosques and schools as Americans awaited word about who is responsible for the destruction," Rachel Zoll reported for the Associated Press. In New York, newspapers reported verbal assaults and intimidation of Arab and Muslim people, including two women who were surrounded by a gang of youth, and a businessman who escaped three attackers by sprinting through a closing subway door.

"We unequivocally condemn" the September 11 attacks, said Omar Ricci of the Los Angeles branch of the Muslim Public Affairs Council. But "in the back of every American Muslim's mind right now is the camps that Japanese-Americans were thrown into after the [Pearl Harbor] bombing."

Arab and Muslim residents of the United States have been special targets of provisions of the 1996 Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, which allows the use of "secret evidence" to imprison individuals, as well as the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act, which authorizes the deportation of noncitizens without judicial review or appeal. The U.S. government acknowledges using "secret evidence" in some 50 cases in recent years, nearly every one against a Muslim or Arab. Provisions in the two laws, both signed by the Clinton administration, authorize the government to deport immigrants, deny asylum, and deny bond to immigrants who are tarred as "terrorists." Since 1999 the government has been forced to release three Arab men jailed on secret evidence.

'Homeland defense'

In laying the propaganda groundwork for the domestic military command structure the Clinton administration established and Bush is now deploying, top U.S. officials over the past few years have spoken candidly about the need for the government to deploy troops in the United States and expand spying ac-

tivity against organizations and individuals in this country.

Last October, then-defense secretary William Cohen gave a speech reported by the American Forces Press Service. "Cohen said that when he first proposed formation of a 'commander-in-chief for homeland defense' the idea was controversial. 'Immediately there were questions being raised as to whether or not this would intrude upon the constitutional prohibitions of getting our military involved in domestic affairs,' he said."

The report added, "Cohen said the United States must deal with the question now. 'I believe we, as a democratic society, have yet to come to grips with the tension that exists between our constitutional protection of the right to privacy with the demand we made on the need to protect us.'"

The July 13 *New York Times* reported that in a new Pentagon policy document released this summer, "For the first time, defense of the American homeland is incorporated into guidelines for American military strategy."

Shortly before the end of his term, Clinton also announced the creation of the post of "counterintelligence czar," which was later filled by Bush (see article on page 9). At the time of the attacks in New York and Washington, Congress was debating appropriating \$800 million additional funds for such activity, described as "counterterrorism efforts" by *USA Today*.

At his confirmation hearing earlier this year, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld said the government needs to focus on "improving our intelligence capabilities so that we know more about what people think, and how they behave, and how their behavior can be altered, and what the capabilities are in this world."

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Gov't panel presses Social Security attack

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Parsons, the panel's other co-chair, said that members of "minorities" wanted to use private accounts to improve their lot. The view of "African Americans and Hispanics" was, "Let us build wealth and get a stake in the American pie," he said. At the same time, he said that private accounts would not necessarily increase retirement incomes, admitting that "they could be greater, could be less, depending on the performance of the securities in which you invested."

Discussion of benefit cuts

Parsons added that the panel was considering "benefit adjustments downward." He claimed that while no decision had been made, such cuts might be necessary to ensure the Social Security program's "stability."

The *Wall Street Journal*, an advocate of private accounts, cited a congressional study that concluded that "personal accounts could significantly offset the impact of cuts to standard payments that will be needed to maintain solvency.... If the system were left as it is," claimed the August 27 article, "the benefits would have to be cut by 32 percent" by 2020. Adding private accounts to the government benefit would allegedly produce "only" a 7.7 percent cut in total retirement income, the paper wrote. "Personal investment accounts would yield far bigger benefits for the well-to-do," wrote John McKinnon—that is, those with significant levels of surplus funds to invest.

The commission has picked up on themes of former presidential contender Ross Perot, who championed the idea of cutting Social Security benefits for the wealthy as a way of undercutting the program as a universal entitlement. Commission member Robert Pozen, vice chairman of Fidelity Investments, said he and others "feel strongly" that the system should be made "more progressive." This, in the words of the *Journal*,

would be accomplished by wealthier individuals absorbing "a bigger share of the Social Security benefit cuts than others."

These proposals have attracted protests from unions, Black and women's organizations, and groups representing beneficiaries. Percil Stanford, of the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, warned of the risks inherent in the proposal for private accounts. "Markets can and do stay down for long periods of time," he said. Union representatives and others staged protests outside a public hearing held by the commission in San Diego on September 6. Inside, a range of hand-picked speakers presented six hours of testimony.

Aim to undermine public confidence

Opponents of Social Security claim that the system is rapidly going bankrupt, falsely presenting it as a discrete, separate entity

within the government accounts, funded by payroll taxes and depleted by the growing army of the retired. In reality, Social Security is a government program, financed out of revenue like other items of expenditure.

As they prepare a deeper assault on Social Security, the Bush administration and Democrats in Congress parade as defenders of the program, claiming they won't dip into the "Social Security surplus" to counter the fall in government income. "Bush and [Democratic Senate Leader] Daschle Promise Not to Tap Social Security" read one *New York Times* headline.

"I've said that the only reason we should use Social Security funds is in case of an economic recession or war," said Bush on August 24, as growing joblessness and other evidence pointed to an economy on the brink of an official recession.

The *Wall Street Journal* expressed exas-

peration with this approach in an August 22 editorial advocating cuts to Social Security and Medicare programs. "Social Security [is] in surplus by about \$157 billion this year," it reported. "Those extra payroll-tax dollars...go into the federal Treasury... Either the money is spent on other programs as Congress dictates, which is what politicians of both parties did for decades. Or it is used to pay down the federal debt."

What happens to this surplus, emphasized the editorial, has no effect on the government's obligation to "meet future Social Security or Medicare liabilities—that is, what the politicians have promised to pay taxpayers when they retire. Changing that would require reforming how those programs function: For example...by creating personal retirement accounts as part of Social Security that would let individuals build assets through the miracle of compound interest."

UMWA wins round at Murray mines

Continued from front page

victory for the union. Murray had claimed the memorial days taken by UMWA members were used "unlawfully" for the purpose of organizing miners, which is a violation of labor law. Specifically it charged that the "memorial day" was designed to pressure Murray in connection with Murray's American Energy Corp., which operates a non-union mine near Powhatan No. 6.

The NLRB ruled that its investigation "disclosed that the Union exercised its contractual right to declare memorial days" and that there is "insufficient evidence that the union invoked the contractual right to call memorial days for an unlawful purpose." According to a September 4 UMWA press release, the Pennsylvania NLRB's statement "disclosed substantial evidence to support the Union's assertion that it has significant

disputes with Maple Creek over job security, which are primary in nature" and that there was "a reasonable basis for the union to question whether Maple Creek intended to honor its commitment as to the High Quality Mine."

In response to the decision, UMWA secretary-treasurer Carlo Tarley said the NLRB "obviously agreed that the union has the right by contract to call up to 10 memorial days at mines where workers enjoy UMWA representation. There was never any question in our mind that our actions were legitimate and legal."

In the aftermath of the two memorial days, the union announced a new public "awareness campaign" August 27, which will include posting full-page ads, posting billboards along major thoroughfares in both Ohio and Pennsylvania, and press statements.

The union is also planning "more community actions this fall to highlight its dispute with Murray."

Frank Forrestal is an underground coal miner and a member of United Mine Workers of America Local 1248.

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Pure coincidence—"LONDON—Gulf War veterans exposed to depleted uranium seem to have suffered damage to their cells, ac-



Harry Ring

cording to research by German scientists. Eight veterans were tested and all had damaged chromosomes. The [United Kingdom] Ministry of Defense, however, said the study

did not prove any link."—*The Times*, London.

You think they got money to burn?—A government-industry task force concluded it would be too expensive to add nonflammable gases to airline fuel tanks.

Read it and rebel—Joseph Heard, who is deaf and mute, was held for two years in solitary confinement in a Washington, D.C., jail after a misdemeanor charge against him was dropped. There he suffered abuse and his written pleas were ignored. Finally, jail officials admitted their "error" and returned him to a mental hospital where he was previously held on alleged

grounds of incompetency.

The lord's work—"A paycheck is not the only reward for workers at a growing number of processing plants where chaplains' services are part of company benefit packages," reported the July issue of the trade magazine, *Meat & Poultry*. It plugged Marketplace Ministries which provides on-the-job counseling to workers. For instance, at Pilgrim's Pride, a Texas chicken processor, chaplains have created "a confidential link between workers and upper management during a time of dissatisfaction with floor supervisors."

'Confidential' counseling—

Commenting on the info provided by chaplains about what workers at the plant are thinking and saying, a top dog at Pilgrim's Pride declares, "It's definitely worth the cost."

No comment—A trillion measurements of the earth's surface collected by a space shuttle crew will be used to create a highly accurate 3-D map of the globe—it will help planes dodge unexpected peaks, etc. But mainly it will be used by the Pentagon—the main financier—to better guide missiles.

Quality capitalist education—Scottsdale, Arizona—A school ere in suburban Phoenix, where students learn to write horoscopes and

give advice about the future, has won accreditation from a federally recognized body, in what is believed to be a first for a school of astrology."—News item.

Living like royalty—The *Wall Street Journal* reports that senior citizens are losing some of their privileges, "like early bird" restaurant discount dinners and ball park dollar days. It asserts that seniors occupy the highest income bracket and there's a developing backlash against their shower of perks. Like the San Francisco doctor who reported watching four seniors clamber out of a new Mercedes, with three of them lining up for discount tickets.

Report cites health danger of Pennsylvania gas spill

BY TOM MAILER

HAZLETON, Pennsylvania—"This is a smoking gun," said Pat Tomsho, an activist in the Group Against Gas here, about the results of a cancer study carried out by the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public Health on the Laurel Gardens section of Hazleton and Hazle Township. "We shouldn't be there. They need to get us out long-term. Playing around with this is ludicrous." Results of the study show residents had 10 times the incidence of leukemia than the rest of the state. There were also unusually high levels of stomach and prostate cancers.

Residents of the area have been fighting to win some relief from the effects of a massive underground fuel leak that sent 50,000 to 900,000 gallons of fuel into the ground water and soil under their homes. An estimated 450 homes have been affected by the spill. The spread of the fuel and its fumes has been aided by the presence of an abandoned mine shaft directly under a section of the neighborhood.

Benzene, toluene, MTBE and ethylbenzene are some of the gases given off by gasoline and detected in the homes. The Environmental Protection Agency, in charge of the cleanup of the area, insists that there is no evidence that the spill has caused any illnesses.

The Group Against Gas (GAG) hosted an August 29 meeting for the three doctors who conducted the study and issued a report. The report was based on questionnaires and interviews with 207 residents of 84 homes in the Hazle Township section of the spill area. More than 300 other homes in Hazleton are also in the spill zone but weren't part of the study. More than 120 people attended the meeting to hear the results of the study.

The doctors stopped short of saying the spill was the cause of the cancers, largely because there is no data on the actual levels of exposure. For example, air samples have been taken for eight hours at the longest, rather than continuously. Benzene levels have varied greatly over time and depend on atmospheric conditions.

Previous research has found a definite link between exposure to benzene and leukemia, and a possible link to stomach cancer.

The doctors also noted that little is known about long-term low-level exposure to benzene. Industrial standards are based on exposure five days a week, eight hours a day, not around the clock for years. The doctors' report recommended ongoing monitoring of benzene levels in the air and soil, screening for indications of benzene exposure, and annual routine health screening.

Many of those living in the spill zone have been pushing state and federal agencies to give them the option of a government buyout of their homes so they can leave the area while efforts are made to clean up the spill.

GAG members found an unexpected opportunity to voice their demands the day before the meeting when Pennsylvania governor Thomas Ridge made an unannounced visit to their neighborhood.

On short notice, 50 to 60 people gathered outside the house he was visiting and held signs attacking the lack of action by federal and state officials. One sign read, "We want a buyout before we die out." Ridge stated his hands were tied. Pennsylvania law allows disaster declarations only for natural disasters.

City officials in Hazleton have applied for a grant to extend the study throughout the whole spill zone.



Militant/Tom Mailer

Alice Wilk outside her home in Hazle Township, a gas spill zone in northeast Pennsylvania. Many homes, including hers, registered dangerous levels of benzene that residents believe are from fuel that leaked from underground storage tanks 10 years ago. Results of a recent study show residents had 10 times the incidence of leukemia than the rest of the state and unusually high levels of stomach and prostate cancers.

— 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —

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

September 24, 1976

In a move totally without historical precedent, the attorney general of the United States has ordered the FBI to end its "investigation" of the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance.

Peter Camejo, the presidential candidate of the SWP, greeted the decision as a "victory for the democratic rights of all Americans."

Camejo, appearing today with his vice-presidential running-mate, Willie Mae Reid, at a news conference in Washington, said the SWP and YSA would move "full-speed ahead" with their campaign against government spying and harassment.

He said the ruling by Attorney General Edward Levi would now "accelerate the pace, scope, and impact" of the suit against the FBI and other federal police agencies, which is being heard in federal district courts in Manhattan.

The presidential candidate told reporters at the news conference that the socialists are seeking:

- "a permanent injunction to outlaw all of the techniques of spying and disruption used against us by the FBI and other political police agencies." Such an injunction would mean that no attorney general could reverse this decision on the SWP without going to court to lift the injunction;
 - "the immediate transfer to our hands of all files the government has on the SWP"; and
 - "\$40 million in damages."
- "The Levi decision is the biggest opening yet for all those determined to bring a halt to the government's program of political spying and harassment," Camejo said.

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

September 24, 1951

CHICAGO, Sept. 19: Yesterday a Cook County Grand Jury handed down indictments against the victims of the Cicero riots last July.

According to the Grand Jury, to sell or rent Cicero property to a Negro is "conspiracy to injure property," "conspiracy to injure the financial value of the real estate in the vicinity," and "inciting to riot."

However, it is legal to pass out inflammatory, anti-Negro literature, and it is legal to burn, wreck, and destroy property belonging to a Negro.

It is only illegal to have a black skin in the city of Cicero, County of Cook, Illinois.

A no-bill [failure to indict] was returned in the case of the notorious Joseph Beauharnis, head of the White Circle League, who openly distributed inflammatory, anti-Negro literature and participated in the riot. No-bills were also returned in the case of all 117 rioters arrested at the scene, and in the case of all Cicero officials except [police chief Erwin] Konowsky.

It is not only the vast Negro population of Cook County which is shaking its collective head in amazed disbelief and anger this morning. The complacency with which Chicago liberals had awaited the Grand Jury findings has changed to a dazed "They can't do this." But they have: And the time for vigorous counter-action has arrived.

So far the NAACP has placed full reliance on the courts and other official bodies. The stab in the back by the Grand Jury shows that the Negro people cannot depend on legal enforcement of their rights by Jim Crow politicians.

The capitalists politicians understand only one language—mass pressure.

Alabama Steelworkers stand firm in 10th week of strike

BY BRIAN TAYLOR

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama—"We have come too far to quit now! We don't need that 'incentive' in there," said Meadowcraft striker Barbara Rush, who has worked in the plant for 16 years.

The gloom of continuous heavy rains hanging over the city could not deter nearly 100 spirited Meadowcraft strikers and their supporters who came to the 4:30 a.m. picket line September 4 in a show of strength. The action began week 10 of the strike. Meadowcraft is a producer of lawn furniture.

Workers walked out June 30 after rejecting a concessionary contract that would cut the hourly wage of welding department workers. Under the bosses' proposed "incentive" plan, welders would have to average 104 percent production in a workweek for an 88 cent raise. If they fall short, their hourly wage would drop from between \$10-\$12 hour to only \$7-\$8.

Members of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 8285 called the mobilization after Meadowcraft bosses issued a letter to the strikers threatening to hire replacement workers.

According to strikers, the letter also encouraged any worker "harassed" by other unionists to call police or contact the company. Meadowcraft bosses ran a sizable employment ad in the Sunday issue of the

Birmingham News, four days before the mass picket.

The ad says workers can make up to \$13 an hour. Local 8285 members pointed out that the ad does not mention that a labor dispute is taking place, nor does it mention that to get \$13 an hour a worker has to make the rate.

Workers held signs reading, "Don't be a scab!" and "No incentive." One Spanish sign read, "Please don't cross the line. What they want to pay us is very low. It's not fair. Support the people of Local 8285."

About two dozen workers have crossed the line. Their names are posted on a hand-made billboard that sits on the picket line at the plant entrance.

Larry Hayes, grievance officer for Local 8285, told this reporter, "Today is particularly important because of the company letter and because production picks up after Labor Day."

July and August have usually been a slow period for the company. A layer of workers often get laid off and then called back after Labor Day. He continued, "Some people felt threatened by the letter and felt their jobs could be eliminated if they did not return to work. So we had to organize a big turn out."

A striker who asked that his name not be printed told the *Militant*, "The way the company is doing us, I'd rather see them go out of business than go back in there."

Campaign against U.S. war moves

In face of the bipartisan propaganda campaign that the employers and their government are cranking up into high gear—to prepare for U.S. military aggression abroad and to undercut the Bill of Rights and go after the political rights and organizations of working people at home—we urge you to join in distributing the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and Pathfinder books as widely as possible today. Socialist workers and Young Socialists are waging this effort on the job and on picket lines, in working-class districts, on college campuses, and elsewhere.

As part of this response, supporters of the *Militant* need to deepen their efforts to join the strikes, protests, and other struggles of workers and farmers that more and more mark the resistance to the unceasing assaults by the U.S. rulers.

Pathfinder books, the *Militant*, and *Perspectiva Mundial* explain that the root of war, racism, and the economic crisis is the system of capitalism and imperialist exploitation and oppression of the vast majority of humanity. Periodicals and books on working-class politics, such as *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution*, an excerpt of which is reprinted in this issue, point to the only way forward for toiling humanity: the possibility and necessity of working people organizing a revolutionary struggle to topple the rule of the superwealthy capitalist class in the United States and elsewhere and put in place a government of workers and farmers.

The Democrats and Republicans are seeking to turn the attacks in New York and Washington into an opportunity to bolster the course the U.S. ruling class has been pursuing for years: increased use of their military force abroad, assaults on rights of working people, expansion of secret police spying and intrusive searches of individuals, and targeting of working people—especially African Americans and immigrant workers—for police harassment and violence. The revolutionary perspectives and scien-

tific explanation of the world contained in Pathfinder books, the *Militant*, and *Perspectiva Mundial* will be given serious consideration by working people who are looking for an alternative to the war drive and attacks on their rights that Washington is mobilizing to carry out.

Responding to these events is the best way partisans of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* can win current readers to renew their subscriptions as well as gain new subscribers. The interest in the two periodicals' coverage of worker and farmer struggles—and the broader articles on questions ranging from energy and industrialization to the sharpening inter-imperialist competition and the Cuban Revolution—can be seen in the significant number of readers renewing their subscriptions. This trend parallels the growth in sales of Pathfinder books in stores and outlets around the world and by socialist workers from street tables and on the job.

This interest shows the mood of resistance and thirst for solidarity that has been developing among working people in this country today. Through their own experiences fighting the brutalities of capitalism, together with learning from socialist workers about the broader lessons of the worldwide class struggle over the past 150 years, some of these militant workers, farmers, and youth will conclude that they need to join a party that can help forge a revolutionary leadership of working people. Such a movement is needed to lead tens of millions in a revolutionary struggle to displace the capitalists from power, establish a government of their own, overturn the dog-eat-dog system of capitalism, and begin construction of a socialist society in collaboration with workers and farmers the world over.

That course is the only way out of the horrors that are bred and reproduced by capitalism and the devastation unleashed by the drive of the U.S. ruling class and their imperialist allies, who will go to any extent to salvage their outmoded profit system.

Statement by socialist candidate

Continued from front page

strictions on political rights. We must oppose the campaign by the U.S. government—Democrats and Republicans alike—to curb the constitutionally guaranteed space for political organization and activity and to legitimize the use of the U.S. armed forces at home and abroad.

During its final months in office, following several years of preparations, the Clinton administration established for the first time in U.S. history, a North American command—that is, the command structure for deployment of U.S. armed forces at home, aimed first and foremost at working people in this country. The White House appointed a commander-in-chief of this new homeland command, euphemistically called the Joint Forces Command. As part of its preparations, the U.S. government has over the past two years carried out simulated “antiterrorist” military operations—together with city, state, and federal police forces—in New Jersey, northern California, and elsewhere.

The Bush administration is now deploying these forces in their first domestic military operations. On September 11 the U.S. government placed U.S. armed forces worldwide on hair-trigger war alert. It called out an army regiment of light infantry onto the streets of Washington, D.C.; mobilized the New York National Guard; and deployed heavily armed FBI “counter-terrorism squads” and other special federal police units in Los Angeles, along the borders with Mexico and Canada, and elsewhere across the country.

In coming days, as the administration acts on Bush's vow “to hunt down and punish those responsible,” the labor movement and all democratic-minded organizations and individuals must be on the alert to protest government frame-up trials and oppose its trampling on the presumption of innocence; the right to due process; Fourth Amendment protections against arbitrary search, seizure, and wiretaps; and freedom of association without spying and harassment by government informers and agents provocateurs. The last four years of the Clinton administration, and the opening months of the Bush White House, have been marked by stepped-up bipartisan efforts to strengthen the federal death penalty, erode the rights of the accused and convicted, and increase the room for commando-style operations by the U.S. Border Patrol and other Immigration and Naturalization Service cops, the FBI, and other federal assault agencies.

Whoever may have carried out the September 11 operations, the destruction of the two World Trade Center towers, and the air attack on the Pentagon—with the resulting deaths and injuries of thousands of men, women, and children—these actions have nothing to do with the fight against

capitalist exploitation and imperialist oppression. Revolutionists and other class-conscious workers, farmers, and youth the world over reject the use of such methods.

The U.S. government and its allies for more than a century have carried out systematic terror to defend their class privilege and interests at home and abroad—from the atomic incineration of hundreds of thousands at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, to the 10-year-long slaughter in Indochina, to the war against the Iraqi people in 1990-91, to the burning to death of 80 people at Waco on its home soil, to other examples too numerous to list. In recent weeks, the White House and Congress have stood behind Tel Aviv as it escalated its campaign of both random killings and outright murders in its historically failing effort to quell the struggle by the dispossessed Palestinian people for the return of their homeland.

Half a century ago the revolutionary workers movement and other opponents of colonial outrages, racism, and anti-Semitism in all its forms warned that by waging a war of terror to drive the Palestinians from their farms, towns, and cities, the founders of the Israeli state and their imperialist backers in North America and Europe were pitting the Jewish people against those fighting for national liberation in the Middle East and worldwide; they were creating a death trap for the Jews, which Israel remains to this day. By its systematic superexploitation of the peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America; by its never-ending insults to their national and cultural dignity; by its ceaseless murderous violence in countless forms—U.S. imperialism is turning North America into a death trap for working people and all who live here.

The U.S. rulers know that as they press their assault on the living and working conditions of workers and farmers in the United States, they will meet growing resistance, as working people organize to defend their livelihoods and their rights. That's why Washington is systematically strengthening its hand against the battles it knows are coming.

The Socialist Workers Party calls on workers and farmers in the United States and worldwide to speak out in defense of the struggle of the Palestinian people, the people of Western Sahara, the Puerto Rican people, the rights of the people of Cuba, and others the world over fighting for their national rights and against all the ways in which the world capitalist order presses humanity toward fascism and war. We must oppose U.S. military intervention anywhere in the world. We must oppose efforts by Washington to escalate an assault on the political rights of working people and the organizations of our class and its oppressed and exploited allies.

Party building

Continued from Page 8

ing committee in Scotland. Those decisions can only be arrived at by integrating ourselves more deeply into the industrial proletariat, considering the differential impact of the assault of the bosses in various industries, and where these assaults are breeding resistance,” she explained.

“A decentralized approach toward industrial union fraction-building is always completely connected to a lack of revolutionary centralism and discipline in the way a branch unit functions,” Waters continued.

At the end of their discussion, delegates voted to set a two-week deadline for the incoming Central Committee to decide on which national fractions the League should now build.

Organizing committee in Scotland

Presenting the proposal on establishing an organizing committee in Scotland, Silberman noted in his report that “we need it to bring the scope and reality of the developing resistance into the party. An organizing committee isn't a small branch. It won't have a headquarters or forum series, for example. It's not necessarily a permanent institution that will grow into a branch. It's established for the purpose of following the resistance. Wherever we start, we may have to move after having some experience in the first location. But we can't build a proletarian party today without it; the League is too small to be in touch with the resistance if we are based only in a single city.”

“We're proposing the move to Scotland,” he said, “because of the vanguard role of workers in Scotland; because of what we've concluded about politics in the UK: that the crisis of British imperialism means that cracks are appearing along its national seams.” Silberman noted the high sales of the *Militant* and Pathfinder books by a series of teams fielded by the League in Scotland over the past two years. For example, two years ago at four plant-gate sales to oil rig construction workers, 120 copies of *The Militant* were sold in a period following a short dispute with the rig construction bosses. There have also been good sales to miners in Scotland.

“Recent experience has also confirmed the connection between Scotland and the Irish struggle. The recent 5,000-strong hunger strike commemoration march in Glasgow was not only the first demonstration on Ireland to have taken place in that city for 20 years. It was also the most proletarian march on Ireland to have taken place in Britain in years,” Silberman said.

Members of the League who participated in the march reported on the openness to communist literature, especially books by leaders of the Cuban Revolution. The CL leader noted that the establishment of the organizing committee in Scotland would also help the League in maintaining consistent political work among working farmers which the party had done less of in recent months.

Workers district branch

Integral to the decisions on the fractions and establishing an organizing committee was the decision by the congress to transform the functioning of the London branch to respond to the qualitatively new openings that exist to root the propaganda work of the League in the working-class district near its current headquarters.

“By concentrating a substantial percentage of the branch's weekly sales and literature tables in the district around the London headquarters we can build relations with a layer of workers, get our literature around, draw “regulars” to the weekly Militant Labour Forum, plus one or two new participants each week, and recruit to our movement,” Silberman said. “Developing that kind of stable base, which is possible today because of the political changes we've been discussing, means that our response to political opportunities citywide and nationally, as well as internationally, will be more effective.”

Another issue addressed by the congress was the irreplaceable contribution made by supporters of the communist movement to its work. One delegate strongly urged delegates to learn more about the work of supporters who are part of Pathfinder's international reprint project, and to follow their very successful efforts to increase sales of Pathfinder books and pamphlets through commercial bookshops in London, Manchester, and elsewhere throughout the UK. Following the congress, special meetings of supporters in London and Manchester were held to hear reports on the party's decisions and Pathfinder's publishing and promotion plans.

Silberman concluded his remarks by noting that the party-building course the CL was deciding on was only possible because the organization was part of an international movement. The League's congress followed and built on the accomplishments of the recent Active Workers Conference organized by the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists in the United States, a convention of the Communist League in New Zealand, and a conference of the Communist League in Australia. He added that international participation in the congress deliberations aided League delegates in coming to their decisions.

“The perspectives we're discussing at this congress are the result both of the objective conditions in the UK and of the experience of other parties in our movement,” Silberman said. “Our respective parties are at different stages of development to be sure. There's unevenness. But that doesn't mean that we're not faced by common tasks today. The objective conditions allow us to converge. We can work more closely together today as the World Festival of Youth and Students in Algiers demonstrated.”

'Mideast peace requires Israeli withdrawal'

Printed below is an excerpt from *To Speak the Truth: Why Washington's 'Cold War' against Cuba Doesn't End* by Fidel Castro and Che Guevara. This book is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for September. The excerpt is taken from the speech presented by Castro to the United Nations General Assembly on Oct. 12, 1979. Castro addressed the UN on behalf of the Movement of Nonaligned Countries, which had just held the Sixth Non-aligned Summit in Havana, Sept. 3-9, 1979. Copyright © 1992 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission.

BY FIDEL CASTRO

Mr. President, there can be no doubt that the problem of the Middle East has become one of the situations of greatest concern in today's world. The Sixth Summit Conference examined it in its twofold dimension.

On the one hand the conference reaffirmed that Israel's determination to con-

tries or settlements on Palestinian land or other Arab territories, whose immediate dismantlement is a prerequisite for a solution of the problem—are illegal, null, and void.

As I stated in my address to the Sixth Summit:

We are not fanatics. The revolutionary movement was always educated in hatred of racial discrimination and pogroms of any kind. From the bottom of our hearts, we repudiate the merciless persecution and genocide that the Nazis once unleashed on the Jews. But there is nothing in recent history that parallels it more than the dispossession, persecution, and genocide that imperialism and the Zionists are currently practicing against the Palestinian people.

Pushed off their lands, expelled from their country, scattered throughout the world, persecuted and murdered, the heroic Palestinians are a moving example of selflessness and patriotism, living symbols of the greatest crime of our era.² [Applause]

No one should be surprised that the conference, for reasons stemming not from any political prejudice, but rather from an objective analysis of the facts, was obliged to point out the role of U.S. policy in the region. The U.S. government has aligned itself with Israel, supported it, and has worked to attain partial solutions favorable to Zionist aims and to guarantee the fruits of Israel's aggression at the expense of the Palestinian Arabs and the entire Arab nation. By so doing it has played a major role in preventing the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

The facts, and only the facts, led the conference to condemn U.S. policies and maneuvers in that region.

When the heads of state or government arrived at a consensus condemning the Camp David agreement and the Egyptian-Israeli treaty of March 1979,³ their formulations had been preceded by long hours of detailed study and fruitful exchanges. This allowed the conference to consider those treaties not only as a total abandonment of the cause of the Arab countries, but also as an act of complicity with the continued occupation of Arab territories.

These words are harsh, but they are true and just.

The Egyptian people are not the ones who were judged by the Movement of Non-



Israeli soldier stands guard over Israeli settlement on West Bank. In 1979 speech, Fidel Castro called for "immediate dismantlement of settlements on Palestinian land."

aligned Countries. The Egyptian people command the respect of each and every one of our countries, and enjoy the solidarity of all our peoples. The same voices that were raised to denounce the Camp David agreements and the Egyptian-Israeli treaty praised Gamal Abdel Nasser, a founder of the Movement and an upholder of the fighting traditions of the Arab nation. No one will ever overlook Egypt's historic role in Arab culture and development, or of its merits as a founder and driving force in the Movement of Nonaligned Countries.

¹ UN General Assembly Resolution 3236, approved November 2, 1974, reaffirmed the right

of the Palestinian people to self-determination, national independence, and sovereignty.

² The text of Castro's keynote address to the Sixth Summit Conference of the Movement of Nonaligned Countries is contained in *Fidel Castro Speeches: Cuba's Internationalist Foreign Policy 1975-80* (New York: Pathfinder, 1981), pp. 162-79.

³ Following Cairo's defeat in the 1973 war with Israel, accords between Egyptian president Anwar al-Sadat and Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin were signed at the U.S. presidential resort at Camp David, Maryland, in September 1978. Under terms of a subsequent peace treaty, signed in Washington in March 1979, Cairo extended formal diplomatic recognition to the Israeli state.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

tinue its policy of aggression, expansionism, and colonial settlement in the occupied territories—with the support of the United States—constitutes a serious threat to world peace and security. At the same time the conference examined the problem from the standpoint of the rights of the Arab countries and of the Palestinian question.

For the Nonaligned countries the Palestinian question is the very crux of the problem of the Middle East. These two problems form an integral whole and neither can be settled in isolation from the other.

No just peace can be established in the region unless it is based on the total and unconditional withdrawal by Israel from all the occupied Arab territories, as well as the return to the Palestinian people of all their occupied territories and the restoration of their inalienable national rights, including the right to return to their homeland, to self-determination, and to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in accordance with Resolution 3236 of the General Assembly.¹

This means that all measures taken by Israel in the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories—including the establishment of colo-

Auto workers settle strike in South Africa

BY T.J. FIGUEROA

A three-week strike by 21,000 members of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) was settled at the end of August. NUMSA officials ended the walkout, which had shut down plants owned by Toyota, BMW, DaimlerChrysler, Volkswagen, Delta, Nissan and Ford, after a government mediation body proposed a 9 percent wage increase, backdated to July. On August 30, the union and the employers' association issued a joint statement agreeing to the settlement.

NUMSA had originally demanded a 12 percent increase, then dropped its demand to 10 percent. Inflation in South Africa is running between 6 and 7 percent. Unionists

stood firm in the face of employer threats led by DaimlerChrysler to move production out of the country if the strike was not ended.

Meanwhile, about 5,000 NUMSA members struck tire plants, demanding a 10 percent wage increase in response to the companies' offer of 7.5 percent.

CORRECTION

The Canadian Auto Workers is incorrectly listed in the September 17 *Militant* as an endorser of the Cuban Labor Solidarity Conference planned for Ontario, October 5-7. The United Food and Commercial Workers is a sponsor of the event.

LETTERS

Israel is already at war

I'm not sure I agree with some of the formulations in the editorial, "Back the Palestinian struggle" in the September 10 issue that says that "the accelerated course of the Israeli rulers is headed toward a war." It also refers to "the Israeli government's drive to war." I think it would be more accurate to say that Israel is already at war. What they are energetically preparing is a massive escalation. This is recognized implicitly by the Zionist calls for a "short war" reported elsewhere in the same issue. A "long war" is already underway. The targeted assassinations, tank attacks, air strikes, armed assaults, and other aggression are acts of war. It is only the distorted coverage of the capitalist media that dulls us to their full significance.

Imagine for a moment that this was happening somewhere else. Suppose Argentina, for some reason, began carrying out similar acts of aggression against Chile. Is there any doubt that armies would be massed across the border within days, preparing for full-scale hostilities?

This isn't an academic question. It affects the level of urgency in calls for protests now, not just "when the war starts," as antiwar forces sometimes advocate. Current protests should also feature the demand, "Stop Israel's war against the Palestinians."

Dave Morrow
Oakland, California

FBI raid

On September 5 the FBI raided the offices of InfoCom Corporation in Richardson, Texas, and closed down the web

sites of several Muslim and pro-Palestine organizations, including the Islamic Society of North America, the Muslim Students' Association, the Islamic Association for Palestine, and the Holy Lands Foundation.

The InfoCom hosts a number of different sites and is a portal for Middle East web sites. The raid was carried out by the North Texas Joint Terrorism Task Force. Agents from the Dept. of Commerce, Dept. of State Security Service, the INS, the IRS, and the Customs Service and the Secret Service also took part in the raid. It is reportedly part of a two-year investigation. FBI special Agent Lori Bailey told reporters that they were executing a search warrant. No other details on why the raid was conducted were given, the search warrant application is under seal by a federal judge.

This FBI-coordinated raid has little or nothing to do with "terrorism" or preventing "terrorism." It is intended to intimidate opponents of Zionism and to stigmatize Moslems and Arabs. It should be seen as an attack on the First Amendment rights of all people in this country and as an attack on all people around the world who oppose the actions of the U.S. ruling class and its government.

Robin Maisel
Los Angeles, California

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

Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

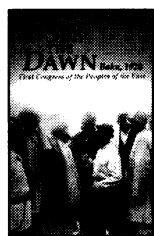
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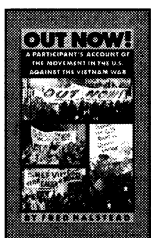
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Belfast rallies condemn loyalist attacks

BY TOM O'BRIEN

BELFAST, Northern Ireland—"It would be very, very confusing for people this week to look at the scenes they've seen in the media and try to remember that they were in Belfast 2001 and not in Arkansas in 1957," said Liz Groves, a community worker in West Belfast, to an angry rally of 500 people in Dunville Park on Falls Road, September 5. The protest was called on short notice by community groups in West Belfast to show their solidarity with the school children of Ardoyne and their families.

During the first week of school, Catholic children from the Ardoyne neighborhood and their parents were harassed and violently attacked by a loyalist mob as they walked to class at the Holy Cross School for girls. The thugs yelled "scum" and "Fenian bastards" at the children, and assaulted them and their parents with stones and bottles.

Parents have received death threats from the Red Hand Defenders, who have claimed responsibility for terrorizing the school children. The name is generally considered an alias for the loyalist paramilitary Ulster Defence Association (UDA), one of the largest groups that organizes violence against Catholics.

The terms "loyalist" or "unionist" describe people who support British rule over the six northeastern Irish counties that make up Northern Ireland. Those who defend the struggle for a united, democratic Ireland are called "nationalists." For historical reasons, most nationalists belong to the Catholic religion. "Fenian," used as a term of abuse against nationalists, refers to an Irish peasant movement against British landlordism in the late nineteenth century.

'We are not second-class citizens'

Participants at the Dunville Park rally held signs reading "Little Rock High School



Students and parents walk to school September 5 flanked by cops. Nationalists defied demands of loyalist thugs that they take the "back door."

1957—Holy Cross School 2001," a reference to attacks on Black students by white racist mobs at the Little Rock, Arkansas, Central High School in the United States in 1957. Other signs read "Holy Cross—Britain's Alabama" and "Our children are not second-class citizens." Besides Liz Groves, two Ardoyne mothers spoke.

Earlier that day, about 300 people attended a brief protest called by the Ardoyne Right to Education Group. The rally leaflet called for "a public demonstration in support of their children's right to attend school."

Sinn Féin president Gerry Adams addressed the action. "There can be no excuse or justification for the sectarian abuse and violence directed at the children and their parents as they try to make their way to school," he said. "Children have a right to

education and a right to travel to and from their school free from threat and intimidation.... The picket...is being fuelled by elements of the DUP [Democratic Unionist Party—the party of ultrarightist Ian Paisley] and the violence is from the UDA and is based on pure sectarian hatred. Sections of the media have sought to present this issue as one of 'each side as bad as the other.' This is not true," Adams said.

A working-class neighborhood

The Ardoyne is a working-class neighborhood where the green, white, and orange flag of the Irish Republic is everywhere to be seen. There are memorials to the martyrs of the 1980-81 hunger strike and murals depicting scenes from Irish history. One deals with the subject of hedge schools, which were secret, outdoor schools where

children were educated in the 18th and 19th centuries, when British laws forbade the education of Catholics.

Loyalists began the attacks at the end of the last school year in June, claiming that nationalists had knocked ladders out from under people hanging British Union Jack and unionist flags along Ardoyne Road. The loyalists called their assault a "protest" and demanded that the children enter the school from the Crumlin Road back door.

On September 3, on the morning and afternoon of the first day of the new school year, the girls and their parents were surrounded by a mob of some 200 loyalists who screamed obscenities and threw rocks and bottles. This assault continued the next day. One mother required four staples to close a head wound. On September 5 the rightists exploded a pipe bomb, injuring four RUC (Royal Ulster Constabulary) police members and a police dog. Nationalists said that they were the intended target.

At the intersection of Ardoyne Road and Alliance Avenue on September 7, where parents went to pick up their children, two British Army armored cars were parked on either side of the road. This reporter was ordered to leave by an RUC constable after attempting to join the parents. The RUC and British Army allow only parents, children, and a handful of community observers to walk up the road past the intersection. Ardoyne neighbors of the parents were also not allowed to accompany them to the school.

Capitalist politicians and the big-business media have portrayed these events as a confrontation between extreme positions. According to Liz Groves, London's Northern Ireland secretary John Reid was quoted in the press as having asked both sides to take a step back from "this bigotry and savagery."

"Savagery? Where's that coming from?" asked Groves in her speech to the Dunville Park rally. "The only savagery that was portrayed this week was from the UDA protest against young children and their mothers going into the Holy Cross School. The bomb blast didn't come from Catholics. It came from UDA residents who are protesting simply because there are Catholic children wanting an education. Our children are entitled to this education, and there's no way the Catholic community and the nationalist community are going back to the hedge schools."

In response to a suggestion from school governors that the children use the backdoor entrance demanded by the loyalist thugs, local broadcaster Brian Feeney noted the determination of nationalist supporters. "The very phrase backdoor entrance means Catholics will not accept it," he told the *Financial Times*. "They say Catholics will no longer go through back doors, up back streets, or second class anything. They are determined to go up the main road."

Toronto steelworkers show picket-line confidence

BY ANNETTE KOURI AND JOHN STEELE

TORONTO—The 200 members of Local 5338 of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) went on strike against Brake Pro September 5. They are demanding a Can\$2 an hour increase over three years (Can\$1 = US 64 cents).

The contract expired June 10 and the company first tried to impose a percentage increase but the workers refused. Workers finally voted to go on strike when the company made an offer of Can\$2.20 but over four years, paying 50 cents in the last year.

This "would mean a 25 cents increase when you take into account inflation" said one striker. Wages vary between Can\$9 an hour to start and top out at just below Can\$13.

"People that have worked here for over 12 years still don't make more than Can\$13 an hour," another striker explained. One hundred of the 150 people at the September 5 union meeting voted to go on strike that

day rather than accept the company's four-year contract offer.

Workers picket the plant 24 hours a day and seven days a week. *Militant* reporters joined the line on September 8 in the afternoon. The workers held up a yellow school bus full of management scabs for two hours under the hot sun. The picket line of about 25 yelled out "Shame on you" as they stepped back to let the bus through. Workers are especially angry because the company has refused to let them use trees on the lawn for shade.

One striker who has worked there for five years had been on the line since 6:30 a.m. He commented, "You have to have commitment." He described the conditions in the plant, especially the heat and dust. Many of the machines, which produce brake pads, operate at 300 degrees. "When it gets too hot [in the summer] they are supposed to give us extra 10-minute breaks. But they use the airport temperature. When it is 30 degrees at the airport it is 40 here. We tell them we don't work at the airport."

He also pointed out that they go for a dollar figure rather than a percentage on the wage increase because "everyone gets the same and it closes the gap between the lowest and highest paid and makes us stronger."

Workers expressed their confidence as they walked the line. They explained that many had been working seven days a week because the company has so many orders. They also expressed anger at the company's refusal to meet their wage demands.

"They hire a lot of engineers to stand around with stop watches to time our work, but they don't have money for us," said one striker. Another explained that just re-

cently the company had given everyone free pizza for lunch. "They pretended it had nothing to do with the negotiations but we know better." He added, "I'm an immigrant. Okay, I work here because I have to. But that doesn't mean that I'm ignorant or illiterate. That I don't understand what they're doing."

Nirmal Sallan, plant chairman for the union, explained, "My concern is public safety. These brakes are used on school buses, tractor trailers and other public vehicles. Who knows if these products will last? There could be a major accident."

Annette Kouri and John Steele are members of the United Food and Commercial Workers union in Toronto

Potato farmers in Australia blockade processing plant, win price boost

BY BRENDAN GLEESON

SYDNEY, Australia—Potato farmers from the southern Australian island state of Tasmania price have won price increases from the two main processing companies. With no increase for years, the farmers had demanded an immediate increase of \$30 per ton.

Following an August 1 blockade of McCain's processing plant at Smithton in northwestern Tasmania they negotiated an immediate increase of \$22 per ton for the coming season with a further boost of \$9 next year. Simplot, the other processor, agreed to the \$22 increase with further increments over the next two years taking the total rise to \$36 per ton.

Speaking to a reporter at the 400-strong Smithton blockade, Richard Bovil, a potato farmer and member of the Potato Action Committee, said, "The turnout today is pretty incredible. I think the equipment that's here is way beyond expectation. There's hundreds of tractors out there. The

factory is completely surrounded, the main street into town has got trucks and tractors from one end to the other, and it really just proves once and for all that the farmers are out to fight for a fair go.

"What we get \$200 for, the fast food chains are getting \$8,000 to \$9,000 for," he said. Farmers said they receive only 4.5 cents for a large serve of McDonalds french fries, worth more than \$2. At the protest Bovil promised wider action to win the price increase.

"Future actions will be more spontaneous," the farmer said. "There'll be very little notice and it'll take place at all factories, not just one." Tasmanian farmers subsequently addressed a meeting of potato farmers from the state of Victoria. Negotiations followed, leading to the increased prices.

Brendan Gleeson is a member of the Australasian Meat Industry Employee's Union

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By Bernadette Devlin McAliskey

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