

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Charlie Scheer: celebrating
65 years of a political man

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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JULY 29, 2002

Washington sends up trial balloon on Iraq war

BY GREG McCARTAN

U.S. president George Bush reiterated his administration's goal of overthrowing the government of Saddam Hussein in Iraq, saying Washington will "use all tools at our disposal to do so" at a July 8 press conference.

His statement came a few days after a "leaked" Pentagon document outlining U.S. war plans was reported as page one news in the big-business media. Washington's trial balloon to test bourgeois public opinion, and the reaction of wings of the U.S. ruling class and its imperialist rivals, was largely successful.

Articles entitled "The Warpath: pressures build on Iraq," "Iraq-invasion planners weigh 'midsize' strategy," and "U.S. considers Jordan as a base for staging attacks on Iraq," as well as talk of a winter or early spring war became commonplace in the major media within days of the release of the supposedly secret document.

British prime minister Anthony Blair weighed in a week later to similarly prepare public opinion in the United Kingdom for a new military adventure in the Mideast. Blair told a parliamentary committee that a "pre-emptive" military strike against the Iraqi government is needed because the threat of

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Socialists boost sales on the job in subscription drive victory

BY JACK WILLEY

Victory! We reached our *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* subscription goals! The two socialist publications welcome all new subscribers and look forward to letters, comments, and renewed subscriptions over the coming months.

Over the course of the 12-week campaign, socialist workers and young socialists sold 1,098 subscriptions to the *Militant*, 105 percent of the international goal; 482 subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial*, or 105 percent of the goal, and 543 copies of *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution*, at 87 percent of the goal.

On the job, communist workers took advantage of the two-week extension of the drive to expand the number of industrial workers who are reading the revolutionary press, laying a solid basis for deepening their political work among co-workers and fel-

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**We hope you like
our new look...**

The *Militant* is now being produced on the same presses that Pathfinder books are printed on.

Dozens of volunteers mobilized to fold this issue as it came off the press as the printshop installs folding equipment needed for newspapers. See photos and story on page 11.

Black farmers stage sit-in to demand gov't relief

Determined to keep their land and end racist discrimination

BY JAMES HARRIS
AND SAM MANUEL

ATLANTA—More than 200 farmers from across the South organized a sit-in at the offices of the Farm Services Agency in Brownsville, Tennessee, at the beginning of July. The action was a part of the fight to stop foreclosures on their land and to combat decades of racist discrimination at the hands of the U.S. government.

The farmers vowed not to leave until Ann Veneman, secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), agreed to meet to discuss their grievances. After five days Veneman agreed to hold a meeting with the farmers in Washington.

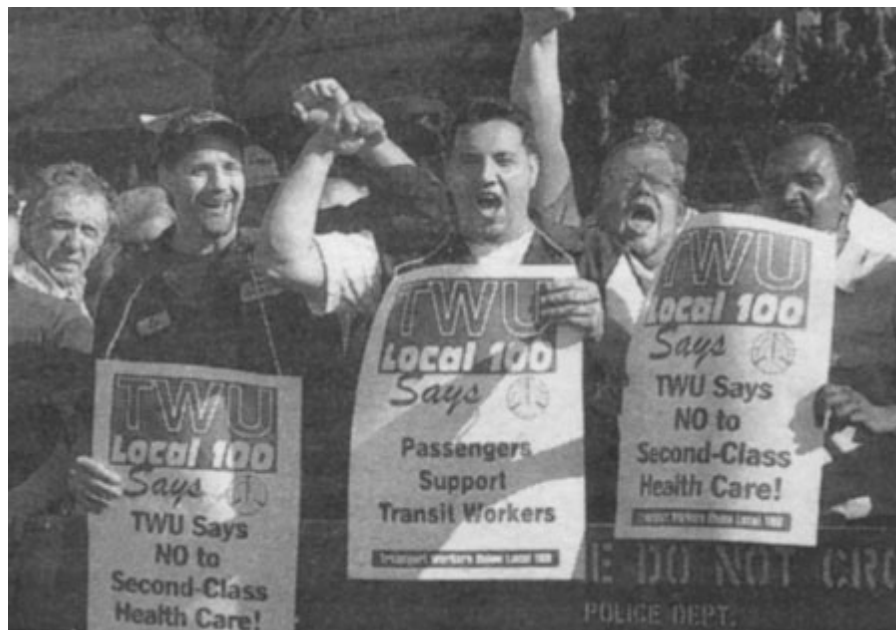
"The government thought they would just wait us out, and we would go ahead and give it up," said Charlie Lee, a peanut and cotton farmer from Montezuma, Georgia, about the sit-in. "But this fight is just beginning. We have no intention of sitting by and letting them take what little land we have left."

This is not the first time this layer of farmers has taken on the U.S. government in their struggle against the conditions of debt slavery imposed on working farmers under capitalism. They are part of a class-action lawsuit, *Pigford v. Glickman*, that forced the government to admit to long-standing discrimination by the USDA and its field offices in processing loans and providing other services. In 1999 the USDA signed a consent decree settling the lawsuit, which 22,000 Black farmers had joined. Farmers were told that if they even met minimal requirements for proving discrimination they would receive \$50,000 tax-free grants from the government.

In Brownsville, the Black Farmers and Agriculturalists Association (BFAA) released a statement noting that at "a time when corn is all but ready to harvest, cotton

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Unionists reject contract offer, keep bus lines shut down in Queens, N.Y.



Transit workers on the picket line in Queens, New York. The union turned down a proposed settlement by the city that failed to address key demands. See page 15.

As we go to press...

UPS workers win! Teamsters strengthened

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

In a victory that puts the labor movement on a stronger footing, Teamsters union officials announced July 16 that they had reached agreement on a new six-year pact with United Parcel Service (UPS) that will give 210,000 Teamsters

union members a 25 percent increase in wages and benefits. The strength of the union's gains will be looked to by tens of millions of workers across the United States.

The agreement, which covers more

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State of siege reflects instability in Paraguay

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL
AND ROMINA GREEN

SAN IGNACIO, Paraguay—The government of this country decreed a five-day state of siege July 15 as police and army troops attacked antigovernment demonstrators in several cities. The demonstrations, which blocked highways in 15 areas, were orga-

nized by supporters of retired general Lino Oviedo. Two demonstrators were killed and dozens injured; dozens more were arrested, according to the daily *Ultima Hora*. Under the state of siege all political demonstrations are banned.

In Ciudad del Este, on the border with Brazil, some 2,000 demonstrators blocked

the bridge connecting the two countries, and some protesters looted stores. By the next day, most road blockades had been cleared. The presence of heavily armed troops was higher than normal in the capital and along some highways.

The main peasant organizations, despite their opposition to the current government and its policies, said they refused to join the Oviedo-organized demonstrations. A joint statement opposing the state of siege and

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Protests condemn cops' beating of Black youth in California

BY AL DUNCAN

INGLEWOOD, California—Since the July 6 beating of 16-year-old Donovan Jackson-Chavis by Inglewood police officers and Los Angeles County sheriff's deputies, protesters have organized a number of actions and meetings to demand that the cops involved in the assault on Jackson be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

Part of the beating that Jackson received was captured on a videotape taken by Mitchell Crooks. The video shows a handcuffed Jackson being slammed against a police car, punched in the face, and choked by a police officer.

On July 12 hundreds of people demonstrated at the Inglewood city hall. The next day hundreds more assembled at the Faith United Methodist Church, which is also located in Inglewood, to plan further actions

in this fight.

Present at the July 12 rally and march were representatives of a number of community organizations, a large number of high school and college students, workers from the area, and many others. While most of the protesters were from the city of Inglewood, there were a number of people from the greater Los Angeles area present too.

Also at the demonstration were individuals and groups representing others who had been victimized by cops in Inglewood, and the nearby cities of Los Angeles, Riverside, and Long Beach.

Speaking on behalf of the newly formed Donovan Jackson-Chavis Justice Committee, Tandi Chimuringa said the coalition is demanding all charges be dropped against

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Black farmers sit in to demand relief

Continued from front page
plants are starting to set their blooms and vegetable crops are ripe for picking, many Black farmers who have applied for operating loans to plant their 2002 crops have not received their loan proceeds as of yet in Haywood and Hardeman Counties, Tennessee.”

After a meeting of several hundred farmers and their supporters, the BFAA issued nine demands to the U.S. government. In addition to meeting with Veneman, the farmers say they are seeking a moratorium on all farm foreclosures by the USDA, the immediate firing of all USDA officers who have been found guilty of discrimination, a halt to proceedings around the consent decree, and the immediate firing of Alexander Pires and Phillip Fraas as lead counsel in the lawsuit. The farmers also called for the USDA to tell them the status of loan applications by six Tennessee farmers in particular.

The demand to fire the two lawyers is in reference to another obstacle facing the farmers. According to a court ruling last month, the handling of forms by the lawyers representing claimants in the class-action suit is “bordering on legal malpractice.”



Militant/John Staggs
Farmers protest in May 2000 in Washington against decades of discrimination at hands of the U.S. government.

After receiving more than \$14 million in payments from the government, the firms failed to meet even extended deadlines for filing papers on individual cases.

In addressing the fact that many farmers have not received any remedy for past discrimination, the ruling reviewed the original findings against the government. USDA “officials had ‘effectively dismantled’ the Office for Civil Rights Enforcement—the very office charged with addressing discrimination complaints,” the court explained. “Often making matters worse, the ‘complaints processing system’ was a ‘bureaucratic nightmare’ that ‘processed [complaints] slowly, if at all,’ resulting in a huge ‘backlog,’” the ruling said. Complaints by Black farmers being handled by that office were literally packed into boxes and put away in closets, according to the lawsuit.

At the same time, “the agency ‘proceeded with farm foreclosures even when discrimination may have contributed to the farmers’ plight.’” The original government report concluded that “minority farmers lost significant amount of land and potential farm income as a result of discrimination by [USDA] programs.”

‘Farmers facing the same problems’

After meeting with Veneman July 12, Tom Burrell, a leader of the Tennessee chapter of the BFAA, said the farmers “are not going to go away just because of a meeting.” Gary Grant, the organization’s president, added, “We will meet if that’s what is needed and we will do whatever else is needed to continue to fight for farmers.”

“What happened in Brownsville shows that the consent decree only set the farmers and USDA on a collision course,” Burrell said. “It had no teeth. And farmers are facing many of the same problems of discrimination and disrespect as before.”

Burrell pointed out the problems that they were protesting over are the very abuses the *Pigford v. Glickman* decision were supposed to reverse. “It was a travesty for the courts to approve such a flawed, defective, and unworkable settlement,” he said. “It was a fraud and a farce.”

“We organized the protest in Brownsville to put a spotlight on the fact that Black farm-

Farmers force Mexico’s rulers to halt plans to build airport on their land



Above, Mexican peasants celebrate after President Vicente Fox was forced to back down from plans to use their lands to make way for a \$2.3 billion airport in the town of San Salvador Atenco, about 15 miles northeast of Mexico City.

Thousands of peasants and their supporters blocked the entrances to the town for four days and held 19 people hostage, most of them police officers, until the government announced the suspension of the project. Protests have been building for months against the 11,000-acre airport. Close to 30 agricultural communities would have been affected by this construction project.

“The land is not for sale,” said Ignacio del Valle, one of the peasants leading the protests. The peasant leaders told the press that the problem “is not the ridiculous price offered by the government for our land, but the ownership of it.”

ers there were still waiting to have loan applications processed even though the planting season had ended,” he added.

Three years after the decree the USDA says it has paid out settlements to less than half of the 22,600 claimants in the suit. “They don’t even have a plan about what to do with the 60,000 additional farmers who filed to be included in the decree during the period of notification to the class,” added Grant.

The consent decree provided that loans to Black farmers in the suit would be given priority in the future. Burrell explained that one priority loan had been processed in Georgia. And only a handful were made in a few other southern states.

“This is one of the main problems,” said Burrell. “We have two presidents, two secretaries of agriculture, and a federal judge admit that Black farmers have been discriminated against and agreed on a remedy. But nothing has changed in the local offices.”

Following the farmers’ press conference, USDA Deputy Chief of Staff Kevin Herglotz said that the secretary of agriculture had agreed to look into the possibility of setting up central offices in several states where Black farmers can submit their loan applications. He also said that the department would consider under what conditions it could establish a moratorium on foreclosure against farmers who have pending claims.

Eddie Slaughter, vice president of BFAA, said that the key to the success of the sit-in “was community support. Supporters brought us food. On July 4 we had a picnic. We left the place cleaner than when we moved in.”

Slaughter was unconvinced about the USDA officials’ assurances that reestablishing the Office of Civil Rights would address the farmers’ concerns. “They said that the local county committee loan officers should go through diversity training, but we said that by the time they finished their sensitivity training, the Black farmers who are already an endangered species, would be eradicated.”

The recently enacted federal farm legislation has “no substance for the Black farmer,” Slaughter said. “There is nothing in it for us, for other minority farmers, or women farmers. There’s nothing in there for family farmers who are also absent from the process. This bill is for the mega-farmer, the corporate farmer. That’s who got it all.”

The bipartisan “farm bill” is a measure that provides \$180 billion in subsidies over 10 years to large agribusiness and capitalist farmers. For example, between 1996 and 2000, the 1,290 of the wealthiest farmers each received more than \$1 million in subsidy payments, while working farmers, who make up 80 percent of farm sales, were paid an average of \$5,830.

In a separate news release National Black Farmers Association president John Boyd announced plans to hold a protest with tractors, trucks, and tractor-trailers in Washington starting August 22. Boyd told the press that the federal farm bill “is for the big corporate farmers, not the disadvantaged family farmer.”

James Harris is reporting from Atlanta and Sam Manuel from Washington. Arlene Rubinstein contributed to this article.

THE MILITANT

Keep up with workers resistance today

From the fight by meat packers in Omaha for a union, to workers and peasants mobilizations in Paraguay against government repression and austerity measures, the ‘Militant’ helps tie together the actions of working people, and points to the possibility for revolutionary struggle against the capitalist exploiters.



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Imperialists reject African aid proposal

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

The heads of state from more than 50 African countries met in Durban, South Africa, July 8-9 to form the African Union. In face of the grinding effects of the capitalist crisis that has devastated the lives of millions of workers and peasants throughout the continent, the new coalition focused on the need for economic development.

“We have to end the situation according to which our continent seems condemned to the increasing impoverishment of its people, continuing underdevelopment, and global marginalization,” said South African president Thabo Mbeki, chairman of the organization, who opened the two-day conference.

Mbeki urged steps toward the “further political and economic integration of our continent and, therefore, its unity. [The organization’s program] says that our peoples need democracy, good governance, the eradication of corruption, human rights, peace, and stability.”

The South African president told the conference that the “masses require human development, necessitating that we eradicate poverty and attend to such questions as food scarcity, health, education, clean water, housing, gender equality, safety and security, and a healthy environment.” Mbeki added that Africa has to “cease being merely an exporter of raw materials and an exporter

of capital to the developed world because of an unsustainable debt burden.”

According to World Bank figures, the total debt of countries in sub-Saharan Africa stands at \$170 billion, more than half their yearly gross domestic product. At the end of 1999, 33 of the 41 countries they classify as “heavily indebted poor countries” in the world are in the region. Life expectancy at birth is 47 years, with an infant mortality rate of 92 per 1,000 births. Indeed, life expectancy has fallen over the past decade in at least six countries due to the explosive spread of AIDS. Illiteracy for adult males is 31 percent of the population and 48 percent for adult women.

Since 1995 commercial energy use and electric power consumption have actually fallen across the region, as has per capita foreign aid. The latter has declined from about \$32 per person to around \$20 in just five years.

The African Union replaces the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which was founded in 1963 as anticolonial struggles swept the continent. The African Union charter reportedly marks a shift from the OAU policy of nonintervention in domestic affairs. The African Union plans to establish an African peacekeeping force with authority to intervene in member countries under the guise of halting genocide, war crimes, or supposed violations of human rights. Leaders at the meeting also agreed to work toward setting up a pan-African parliament and a court of justice, among other institutions.

In the months preceding the founding of the African Union, Mbeki crisscrossed the globe campaigning to win support for a series of proposal he and other African heads of state made at the Group of Eight conference held at the end of June in Canada. The G-8, as it is known, is comprised of the imperialist governments of Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and the United States. Russia is also an associate member.

Meat packers in Omaha build on union victory

BY LIZBETH ROBINO AND DON REED

OMAHA, Nebraska—Workers at ConAgra’s Northern States Beef plant here are fighting for their first contract after voting in the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) union two months ago. They also continue to be involved in a broad organizing drive among the 4,000 meat packers employed by the big packinghouses here.

Last May production workers voted by a decisive 252–126 margin to join the UFCW. This was the first union victory at one of the large slaughterhouses in the area since the union teamed up with Omaha Together/One Community (OTOC), a community and church group, a year earlier.

ConAgra has not reconciled itself with having a union in the plant and continues to harass and fire workers. In June, workers on the fabrication line walked off the job after the bosses dismissed a worker the day before.

“They were getting ready to fire another worker,” a union supporter said, “so the workers walked off the line and the whole department stopped running, because nothing runs without that line.” The unionists called the UFCW officials, who came to the plant and met with the bosses. The company slowed down the line speed a bit, did not fire the worker who they had threatened, and are reviewing the case of the employee who was dismissed.

“The supervisors are treating us with more respect,” the union supporter said. “It was a big success.” As word of the job action spread to the kill floor, workers responded enthusiastically to the results of the *huelguita* (mini-strike), as some called it.

U.S. unemployment hits 5.9 percent with 13 months of job losses

BY GREG McCARTAN

The unemployment rate in the United States hit 5.9 percent in June, up from 5.8 percent in April. Revising previously rosy job-creation figures for the early part of the year, the Labor Department added that April marked the 13th straight month in which a drop in the number of jobs in the country was reported. This surpasses the record 11 months hit during the 1990-91 downturn.

“Employers [are] more determined than usual to boost output per employee rather than the number of employees,” the *Wall Street Journal* dryly noted.

The bosses stretched out the workweek from 40.9 hours to 41.1 in manufacturing, and from 34.2 to 34.3 overall. Employment in manufacturing declined by 23,000 jobs during the same period.

In its revised figures the government agency said payrolls actually dropped by 165,000 in February, rather than rising by 66,000; fell by 5,000 and 21,000 in March and April instead of rising by 58,000 and 43,000 respectively; and rose by only 24,000 in May after indicating a 41,000 gain. Employment in 2001 was 340,000 below original estimates, the department reported.

“The recovery is starting to look as bad, if not worse, for workers as the ‘jobless recovery’ of 1991-92,” the big business newspaper explained.

The chief economist for Wells Fargo Bank told CNN that he estimated unemployment will continue to climb through the summer, hitting 6.5 if current trends continue.



Militant/Lizbeth Robino

Nebraska Beef worker, center, is greeted by two unionists from ConAgra as he exits the plant. Workers at ConAgra recently voted overwhelmingly to join the United Food and Commercial Workers union. An organizing drive is under way at Nebraska Beef. The sign reads in Spanish: “If we did it, you can do it too—compañeros from ConAgra.”

The following day three union officials wearing UFCW hard hats and frocks walked through the plant observing working conditions and greeting workers. “We really liked it when Donna [the local union president] walked around the plant,” said one fabrication worker.

Workers’ delegations

The in-plant Workers Committee has been organizing delegations of five to 20 workers to go to the front offices at the plant to take up cases with the bosses of workers who have been disciplined by the company or forced to perform jobs that are causing injuries. Some victories have been won this way, with the bosses agreeing to move workers to different jobs and reduce disciplinary measures.

At the same time the company has stepped up its actions against workers on the production line. It organized an “appreciation picnic” to thank workers for their “excellent” production. The bosses hung large banners throughout the plant exhorting workers to “Think and work safely!” One of the leaders of the workers committee, while making an announcement to workers in the cafeteria about the first day of negotiations, warned co-workers to be extra-attentive to safety issues so as not to give the company any pretexts for firings. A young shackler had recently been accused of not wearing the proper equipment and was fired.

A local newsweekly, *The Reader*, featured the union election victory at ConAgra as its lead story along with a large photo. Inside a two-page collage of photographs illustrated the struggle of the meat packers at various stages of the organizing drive. Workers organized to make sure stacks of the free weekly were widely available in the cafeteria and locker rooms throughout the day.

The struggle in Omaha and union organizing victory there have also been given prominent coverage in the liberal biweekly magazine *The American Prospect*. The July 1 issue features an article entitled, “The Kill-Floor Rebellion,” which details the background to the fight. It notes an “alliance of a union and a community group may have found the way to reorganize the meatpacking industry—and the Latino immigrant workers in small-town America.”

Contract negotiations began at the end of June between United Food and Commer-

cial Workers Local 271, together with an elected negotiating committee of seven workers, and company officials.

Union struggle at Nebraska Beef

Activists from the Workers Committee joined members of the Omaha Together/One Community outside the Nebraska Beef slaughterhouse July 9 to leaflet workers at the plant gate. The union lost a representation vote at the plant last August, but the National Labor Relations Board ruled that the results should be thrown out. The company has appealed that ruling. Supporters of the union in the plant have renewed their organizing drive and have begun to petition for a new election.

At the plant gate ConAgra workers held signs they had made saying in Spanish, “*Compañeros* of Nebraska Beef, We did it! You can too!” and “Onward!” Forty Nebraska Beef workers signed union authorization cards that afternoon.

Nebraska Beef has been looking for opportunities to get rid of known union supporters. Several workers have been fired on a variety of pretexts and some have not been rehired after returning to their native Mexico for a visit. The company normally rehires workers as soon as they return from Mexico.

Recently the company put union supporter David Rosenfeld on indefinite suspension from the plant. While walking to lunch, a worker fell on top of him, knocking him to the ground. One of the top bosses was conveniently standing there and asked, “What’s happening here?” as if there was a fight. The man who fell on top of Rosenfeld claimed the unionist had grabbed him.

The boss escorted Rosenfeld to the office and the union activist was then escorted off the property by plant security. The other person was allowed to walk away.

Two weeks after the provocation the company refused to allow Rosenfeld to return to work. In the days following the suspension several workers distributed a fact sheet on the incident and the Workers Committee at Nebraska Beef is discussing ways to defend workers victimized by the company.

The UFCW has filed charges with the NLRB on behalf of Rosenfeld and other workers in the plant, maintaining that the company is harassing supporters of unionization.

Proposals to imperialist governments

Mbeki, along with the presidents of Nigeria, Senegal, and Algeria, launched the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) at the conference in Canada. The main requests made of the imperialist countries were for \$64 billion in financial aid in grants instead of loans; a reduction in foreign debt; a decrease in agricultural export subsidies in major capitalist countries; and more market access for African agricultural commodities. The plan also includes development of regional infrastructure projects, such as building an electric-grid system to make energy available and less costly across southern Africa.

Largely brushing aside action on the requests, the G-8 group said it could provide only \$6 billion in yearly aid starting in 2006 to the NEPAD initiative. This response brought rapid condemnation from many organizations in Africa.

“With NEPAD, we had a lot of expectation, and as usual they talked about wanting to help Africa but no concrete commitment was given,” said Elvis Musiba, chairman of the Tanzania Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Agriculture.

The director of the South African Catholic Bishop’s Conference said the G-8 “recycled stale commitments without saying how and when they would act.” In Kenya, the *Daily Nation* said the G-8 appeared to be more interested in other issues, but what “the industrialized countries must realize is that Africa and its myriad problems cannot be wished away. There will be no globalization if a large part of the globe is left to fester in its own rot.”

U.S. treasury secretary Paul O’Neill dismissed debt relief as a solution, with the callous remark, “Even if we forgave all debts, many of these countries still couldn’t fund their own budgets and would immediately have to borrow more.”

U.S. subsidies devastate African farmers

The governments in Europe, Japan, and the United States spend some \$350 billion each year on agricultural subsidies. The head of the United Nations Development Program estimates that these subsidies cost semicolonial countries about \$50 billion a year in lost agricultural exports.

A recent article in the *Wall Street Journal* highlighted how U.S. farm subsidies depressed prices on the world market, undermining competition from farmers in Africa and elsewhere. The United States is the world’s largest exporter of cotton while West Africa is the third largest, the article stated.

“Armed with roughly \$3.4 billion in subsidy checks, U.S. farmers last year harvested a record crop of 9.74 billion pounds of cotton, aggravating a U.S. glut and pushing down prices far below the break-even price for most growers around the world,” the *Journal* noted.

With the drop in world prices the U.S. government program ensures its farmers fetch roughly 70 cents a pound of cotton, making up for any shortfall in the market with federal checks. In contrast, last year

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Labour calls early election in New Zealand

BY MICHAEL TUCKER

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—In a break with protocol, the Labour Party-led government of Helen Clark has called a general election for July 27, three months ahead of schedule.

With Labour registering over 50 percent voter support in opinion polls, party leaders hope the early poll will see it returned to office with an increased majority, enabling it to govern on its own. Throughout its past term, Labour ruled in coalition with the Alliance Party and with the support in parliament on confidence votes of the Green Party.

The early election, and the prospect of Labour governing with a stable majority, have been largely welcomed in ruling class circles. Support in the polls for the opposition National Party, the capitalist party that has governed for most of the post-World War II period, is running at a historic low, half that for Labour. National is considered to have little prospect of being able to form an alternative government.

Prior to Clark’s June 11 announcement, speculation that she would call an early election had been mounting following a split in the Alliance Party and growing conflict with the Green Party.

Schism in Alliance party

The schism in the Alliance unfolded in the wake of the imperialist intervention in Afghanistan. While the party’s members of parliament (MPs) voted with Labour to commit New Zealand military forces to the aggression, many Alliance members wanted it to take more distance. As the party’s parliamentary leader and the deputy prime minister James Anderton sought to rein the party in behind him, further conflicts emerged over whether the Alliance would campaign in the election, upholding the record of the Labour-led government or would seek to

Miami vigil demands justice for victim of police shooting

BY LAWRENCE MIKESH

MIAMI—Family members and friends of Alphaeus “Duke” Dailey organized a remembrance vigil here June 17 in protest of Dailey’s fatal shooting by police one year ago and for all victims of cop brutality.

Vowing to take the fight for justice forward, Dailey’s family filed a federal civil-rights and wrongful death lawsuit the day after the vigil after the Miami-Dade state attorney’s office cleared the cop who killed Dailey of any wrongdoing.

H.T. Smith, an attorney who filed the lawsuit, told the *Miami Herald*, “The family has waited for the system to work. Unfortunately, the system has failed them miserably.”

On June 17, 2001, Dailey, who was paralyzed from the waist down and confined to a wheelchair, was shot four times in the back with a laser-sighted gun from 15 to 20 feet away.

Several witnesses stated that Dailey was unarmed and that his hands were in the air when he was shot. Family members and community activists argue that the gun found 20 feet from Dailey’s body may have been planted, pointing to the fact that no fingerprints were found on the weapon or the bullets. A team of three prosecutors with the Miami-Dade state attorney’s office considered these claims not credible and exonerated the officer.

The public vigil was held at the entrance of St. Mary Missionary Baptist Church where Dailey was gunned down. Participants in the action held up a large banner with the names of some 60 working people and youth murdered by Miami police from 1979 to 2002.

Leon Thomas, the uncle of Alphaeus Dailey, and a main organizer of the event, stated, “When this started we thought it was an isolated event. It’s not. It’s not only about Duke anymore.”

In his closing remarks, Thomas made clear his determination to continue the fight for justice for Dailey. “We want to send a message to the youth. You’ve got to get involved. You’ve got to get involved when this killing happens. The fight is not over yet. This fight is everyone’s, and we must fight together—in every neighborhood here and around the world.”

assert a more independent image.

Anderton and fellow Alliance cabinet minister Matthew Robson split to front a new party for the election campaign, Jim Anderton’s Progressive Coalition, pledged to being part of a reelected Labour Cabinet.

The Alliance elected another outgoing Cabinet minister, Laila Harre, as its new leader. It is unlikely to win any seats in the coming election.

Government conflict with the Green Party also heightened in the wake of the imperialist assault on Afghanistan, which the party’s MPs voted to oppose. The rift sharpened in May when the Green Party declared it would refuse to continue to guarantee confidence to an incoming Labour-led government unless a moratorium banning the introduction of genetically modified food crops and other organisms into New Zealand was extended for a further three years. The moratorium is due to expire late next year.

Labour won election in 1999, following nine years of National-led governments. It pledged to break with the “free market” policies pursued by both Labour and National over the previous 15 years, under which the employers waged a deep-going assault on the working class.

Inroads against working people

In office, the Labour-Alliance government has held back from initiating major new assaults on the social wage, or similar anti-worker measures, and has implemented some modest reforms that benefit working people. These include the repeal of the anti-union Employment Contracts Act.

At the same time, the coalition government has acted to advance the interests of the New Zealand capitalist class, resisting calls for further pro-worker reforms, standing firm against union wage demands, and aggressively pursuing the interests of New Zealand imperialism abroad. The New Zealand rulers have collaborated with their traditional allies in Washington, London, and Canberra to send armed forces to intervene in East Timor and Afghanistan. The government has also made significant inroads against workers’ rights since September 11, boosting the powers of the police and spy agencies and introducing new “anti-terrorist” measures.

Labour’s course, and its popularity in the polls, reflects the fact that it has been in office during the strongest upturn in the business cycle lasting more than a decade, especially in agriculture, which is at the heart of capitalist profit-making in this country. Official unemployment is set to dip below 5 percent for the first time since 1988. “When you have a tailwind, politics is easy. The test of us all is how we respond when there’s a headwind,” noted former National Party prime minister Jennifer Shipley on her retirement speech from parliament June 13.

In part the upturn is the result of higher prices on the world market for dairy, meat, food crops, wool, timber, and other commodities exported from New Zealand, combined with a low exchange rate for the New Zealand dollar against other currencies. More fundamentally, it is built on the inroads the rulers have been able to make into the incomes, union organization, and social wage of working people over the past 15 years.

Productivity drive

An illustration of this is the large Kinleith pulp and paper mill in the central North Island town of Tokoroa. It is said by its owner, Carter Holt Harvey, a subsidiary of International Paper, to be one of the world’s lowest-cost pulp producers. In 1989 the mill employed 1,100 workers and manufactured 400,000 metric tons annually. Today it employs 545 workers and produces 575,000 metric tons. Moreover, in March, the company announced that a further 200 jobs at the mill would be scrapped and another 190 handed over to a private contractor.

The ongoing erosion of the social wage is producing mounting crises in health and education, which affect not only working people but broad sections of the middle classes also. A recent survey revealed that 30 percent of children live below the poverty line.

In response to these conditions, resistance among working people has been growing. The weeks leading to the election have seen strikes and other actions by high school teachers and students, and by nurses and other health care workers, demanding improved wages and more funding of health and education. In the Northland town of

Kaitia, thousands of angry residents took to the streets to force the government to intervene to restore hospital services cut by the local health board.

Other actions have included protests by Maori against the construction of a new prison in Northland at Ngawha. Immigrants have challenged the government’s policy, introduced after September 11, of routinely detaining asylum seekers, leading to a June 27 High Court ruling declaring the policy illegal. And prisoners have taken action through the courts to protest brutal conditions they face in jails.

Voting takes place under a system of proportional representation known as MMP that was introduced in 1996. Electors get two votes, one for a candidate to represent the electorate they are registered in and one for the party they wish to govern.

Since the 1930s governments in New Zealand have been formed outright by either National or Labour. Labour is a social democratic party formed by the unions early last century, although few unions retain formal ties to the party today. Under MMP both parties have had to negotiate coalitions with smaller parties in order to form governments.

Three other parties are likely to hold blocks of seats in the new parliament—the Green Party, the Act Party, and New Zealand First.

The Green Party is a bourgeois party which to date has cast its policies to the left of Labour. Previously part of the Alliance, it stood as a party in its own name for the first time at the last election in 1999. In addition to opposing genetic modification, the Greens advance various nationalist and protection-

ist policies and so-called “ecological” taxes.

The Act Party is a right-wing big-business party. It calls for continuing “free market” policies, proposing new inroads against the social wage and reduced taxes. It has been campaigning for tougher “anti-crime” measures and for an end to government compensation to Maori for the loss of land and resources since colonization. Maori are the indigenous people of New Zealand.

New Zealand First is a rightist party led by Winston Peters. Peters calls for slashing what he calls “out-of-control” immigration, identifying his stance with the recent rightist election campaigns waged by Pim Fortuyn in Holland and Jean-Marie Le Pen in France. He scapegoats immigrants, especially from Asia, for pressure on jobs, schools and health services, as well as for overcrowded roads and housing, and other pressures on infrastructure.

Peters is also campaigning for tougher “law-and-order” measures and against what he calls the Maori “grievance industry.”

The Communist League is standing two candidates in the election, Janet Roth, a meat worker, for the electorate of Maungakiekie in Auckland and Baskaran Appu, a sewing machinist, for Christchurch Central. For the party vote, and in other electorates, it is urging a class vote for the Labour Party, as the party founded historically by the trade unions, and against the outright capitalist and rightist parties.

Michael Tucker is a clothing worker and member of the National Distribution Union.

Maori in New Zealand demonstrate against construction of new prison



Militant/Felicity Coggan

Maori march through main street of Kaikohe, New Zealand, July 3 to protest proposed prison at nearby Ngawha.

BY FELICITY COGGAN

KAIKOHE, New Zealand—Carrying flags and banners, singing, and calling on bystanders to join in, 100 people marched in the pouring rain July 3 through the main street of this town to the Kaikohe District Court. The protest occurred outside of court hearings in the cases of 37 people who had been arrested June 4 and charged with trespass after a four-day occupation at the site of a proposed prison at nearby Ngawha.

At the courthouse, the marchers were met by 100 more people who joined in the lively gathering as they waited for the cases to be heard.

Maori have been fighting to stop the prison for years because it is to be built on a geothermal field, which includes mineral hot pools considered sacred because of their healing powers.

Opponents of the prison, which is already in the early stages of construction, have made it very clear they are determined to continue the fight. In mid-June they took their protests to the capital city, Wellington, to back an appeal they had lodged in the High Court against an Environment Court ruling allowing the prison to go ahead. A group of young people briefly occupied the head office of the Department of Corrections, calling the prison development “an act of terrorism against the people of the land.”

The High Court judge turned down the appeal. “This is not the end,” said spokesperson Toi Maihi.

A new concern has emerged for opponents of the prison, Riana WiHongi told the *Militant*. High concentrations of mercury have recently been found in waters downstream from the construction site. While the standard for drinking water is two parts per billion, the Northland Regional Council has reported levels of over eight parts per billion.

Soils at Ngawha contain high levels of mercury because it is part of a geothermal area, and a mercury mine was previously located nearby, WiHongi explained. She said that local people are worried that the mercury contamination will flow into larger waterways, affecting fish and shellfish gatherings, and recreational activities in this popular tourist region.

Felicity Coggan is a sewing machine operator and a member of the National Distribution Union.

THE MILITANT

on line

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Sub drive victory

Continued from front page

low unionists. Their efforts were reinforced by sales outside their workplaces, that if continued each week, will net more subscriptions, readers of Pathfinder books, participants in the weekly Militant Labor Forums, and workers who are interested in joining the communist movement.

In several cities socialist workers at a plant joined teams selling the two papers at the plant gate. Becky Ellis in Twin Cities, Minnesota, reports that one such team sold three subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial* over several weeks at Dakota Premium Foods, where workers recently voted in the United Food and Commercial Workers union and are fighting for a contract.

In Chicago, Joel Britton reports that in the last couple of weeks a well-known socialist worker at a UNITE-organized plant has joined the plant gate team. By adding a communist literature table to the sale the team has generated more interest from workers, including discussion in the plant that socialists inside are able to follow up on.

In New York’s garment district, socialists sold a *Militant* and six *Perspectiva Mundial* subscriptions at plant gates, as well as a copy of *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution*. In the Pennsylvania and West Virginia coalfields, several miners decided on the spot to buy a subscription after meeting socialists in front of their mine portal.

Supporters of the socialist press can now build on their successes by following up with new readers to make sure they are receiving the paper each week, find out what they think about the publications, and introduce them to books that draw on the lessons of more than 150 years of the modern class struggle and in learning more about the communist movement.

In addition to sales on the job, branches of the Socialist Workers Party and the Communist Leagues increased the readership of the two periodicals through regular literature tables and door-to-door sales in the workers districts where their headquarters are located.

One way to build on these sales is by expanding the weekly *Militant* paper routes in the workers districts, in which the periodicals are delivered rather than sent through the mail. Delivering the paper each week puts local supporters of the paper in direct contact with readers, provides a way to build the weekly forums, and expand knowledge of the Pathfinder bookstore.

Socialists in Omaha and Miami have found paper routes to be a helpful tool, especially in the garment shops and meatpacking plants they work in. In Omaha, 12 people get *Perpectiva Mundial* delivered by hand. In Miami, five get the *Militant* the same way.

On July 16, socialists from western Colorado, New York, and Birmingham converged to sell the press and books in

coal communities and mine portals in Alabama. On their first day they sold a paper at the Pittsburg and Midway North River mine and another five going door-to-door in the working-class neighborhood near the Pathfinder bookstore in Birmingham.

Each week the *Militant* has run stories of efforts to sell the socialist press. Below is a story based on work among strikers locked in a bitter battle with the antiunion Navistar International in Canada. We encourage others to write short sales articles, particularly about sales on the job and at factory plant gates.

BY ILONA GERSH

CHATHAM, Ontario

—The *Militant* was a big hit among members of the Canadian Auto Workers union on strike against Navistar International here.

The latest issue of the paper that we expected to arrive did not make it through the bureaucracy of Canadian customs in time, so supporters in Toronto printed the latest article on the strike from themilitant.com and collected together some old *Militant* issues.

Strikers on the picket lines and at the union hall snapped up the copies of the article and the half dozen two- and three-week-old issues.

“I think the *Militant* has written excellent articles on our strike,” said Ken Burke, a striker who is compiling a photo scrapbook of their fight. “I have themilitant.com on my ‘Favorites’ list.”

A small city of 40,000 people, Chatham is very polarized. The strike has a lot of strong support, but some people have bought into the company’s antiunion propaganda. *Militant* supporters took to the streets during our visit and sold two subscriptions and six copies of the paper.

ber 2001 to 323 in July.

Last December the supporters’ finances steering committee met in Seattle and discussed the opportunities and challenges facing the party. This included attending international books fairs, responding to developments in the international movement of anti-imperialist youth, and steps to transform the production and distribution of Pathfinder books. Out of this meeting, a goal of increasing the supporters’ contributions to \$25,000 per month, or \$300,000 a year by August 2002, was adopted.

Recognizing the importance of these political opportunities, SWP supporters around the country responded enthusiastically to the new campaign. Most areas were able to report their goals for increasing the amounts and number of contributions by March.

A new tool has also helped centralize and organize the supporters’ financial campaign. This is a web site on which supporters in each local area can list current contributors and their monthly payments. The web site, which was up and running in April this year, has made the record keeping of each area’s financial director and that of the national office more efficient.

Party supporters are working on a display for the upcoming SWP convention to show the progress in this campaign. They also plan to hold a workshop on organizing supporters’ finances and the use of the web site.

If you would like to become a contributor to help in this effort, please send an e-mail to Sara Gates at sjgates@attbi.com.

Stuart Crome is a member of the Seattle steering committee that organizes the monthly supporters’ contribution campaign.

AMIEU—Australasian Meat Industry Employees’ Union; MUA—Maritime Union of Australia; MWU— Meat Workers Union; NDU—National Distribution Union; UFCW—United Food and Commercial Workers; UMWA—United Mine Workers of America; UNITE—Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textiles Employees



Militant/Ignacio González

Pathfinder literature table set up on the campus at National University in Asunción, Paraguay, on July 8. Students at the school were hungry for revolutionary literature.

Supporters of Socialist Workers Party set to surpass \$300,000 yearly goal

BY STUART CROME

SEATTLE—Supporters of the Socialist Workers Party are well on their way toward the goal of raising \$300,000 in annually contributions to the party. The funds are collected in local areas and are sent to the party national office on a monthly basis and have become an integral part of how the party finances itself.

In a July 14 letter to supporters, Sara Gates, the head of the steering committee that organizes the monthly supporters contribution campaign, wrote, “Congratulations to all of us. We are heading into the party convention with the projection of \$300,000 in the SWP operating budget by the end of the year, right on target for the goal launched at the beginning of the year.

In June, Gates wrote, supporters sent in \$23,468, putting the four-month average at \$25,038. This adds up to \$300,456 a year, but with further anticipated increases the steering committee expects the total to go up even more. The number of contributors also grew from 290 in Decem-

Newspaper workers in Vancouver fight lockout

BY ANNETTE KOURI

VANCOUVER, British Columbia—On July 2 CanWest Global locked out 900 members of Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Local 2000, who put out the *Vancouver Sun* and *Province* newspapers, the two major dailies here. The locked-out workers set up picket lines at the two work sites.

The last contract expired nine months ago. The major issues are job security and benefits. Picket coordinator Murray Lamb told the *Militant* that the company had already cut out 82 jobs done by union members. This includes subscription work, which is now centralized in a call center outside the province.

“We were backed into this,” Lamb said. “We’re not on strike; we’re locked out. The talks had broken off. They didn’t even send out their top negotiator.”

On the picket line in front of the less-than-10-year-old printing facility workers said the company had installed the latest technology in the plant, making it difficult for the company to run the presses with replacement workers.

| Militant/Perspectiva Mundial Subscription Drive April 13–July 7 - Final Chart | | | | | | | |
|---|----------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Country | Militant | | | PM | | Book | |
| | Goal | Sold | % | Goal | Sold | Goal | Sold |
| Sweden | | | | | | | |
| Gothenburg* | 16 | 18 | 113% | 3 | 3 | 9 | 7 |
| Stockholm | 10 | 11 | 110% | 3 | 2 | 5 | 5 |
| Sweden Total | 26 | 29 | 112% | 6 | 5 | 14 | 12 |
| New Zealand | | | | | | | |
| Auckland | 10 | 11 | 110% | 1 | 0 | 5 | 4 |
| Christchurch | 8 | 8 | 100% | 1 | 0 | 3 | 3 |
| N.Z. total | 18 | 19 | 106% | 2 | 0 | 8 | 7 |
| Canada | | | | | | | |
| Vancouver | 30 | 39 | 130% | 6 | 7 | 20 | 20 |
| Toronto | 30 | 28 | 93% | 6 | 4 | 15 | 14 |
| Montreal | 15 | 8 | 53% | 5 | 4 | 16 | 16 |
| Other | 5 | 2 | 40% | | | | |
| Canada total | 80 | 77 | 96% | 17 | 15 | 51 | 50 |
| Australia | 20 | 20 | 100% | 4 | 6 | 12 | 8 |
| United States | | | | | | | |
| Houston | 30 | 36 | 120% | 12 | 14 | 20 | 20 |
| Cleveland | 25 | 28 | 112% | 5 | 5 | 20 | 16 |
| Los Angeles | 35 | 38 | 109% | 15 | 19 | 10 | 11 |
| Pittsburgh | 45 | 49 | 109% | 5 | 5 | 20 | 20 |
| Detroit | 40 | 43 | 108% | 13 | 13 | 20 | 20 |
| Washington | 25 | 27 | 108% | 14 | 14 | 15 | 21 |
| Boston | 30 | 32 | 107% | 15 | 25 | 20 | 25 |
| Miami | 30 | 32 | 107% | 15 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| Seattle* | 48 | 51 | 106% | 12 | 13 | 16 | 16 |
| Twin Cities | 50 | 53 | 106% | 25 | 37 | 25 | 3 |
| Birmingham | 20 | 21 | 105% | 8 | 11 | 10 | 8 |
| NY Garment Dist. | 80 | 81 | 101% | 40 | 40 | 50 | 45 |
| Atlanta | 40 | 40 | 100% | 15 | 17 | 30 | 20 |
| Brooklyn | 45 | 45 | 100% | 35 | 15 | 35 | 26 |
| Charlotte* | 20 | 20 | 100% | 7 | 7 | 10 | 10 |
| Chicago | 35 | 35 | 100% | 20 | 30 | 25 | 27 |
| Omaha* | 13 | 13 | 100% | 22 | 21 | 15 | 14 |
| Tampa | 25 | 25 | 100% | 6 | 7 | 12 | 8 |
| NE Pennsylvania* | 25 | 23 | 92% | 8 | 6 | 10 | 4 |
| Newark | 55 | 50 | 91% | 25 | 34 | 35 | 29 |
| Des Moines | 40 | 36 | 90% | 25 | 25 | 21 | 13 |
| San Francisco | 30 | 26 | 87% | 18 | 9 | 15 | 12 |
| Western Colorado | 18 | 15 | 83% | 8 | 10 | 12 | 13 |
| Upper Manhattan | 75 | 59 | 79% | 50 | 44 | 40 | 35 |
| Philadelphia | 25 | 19 | 76% | 10 | 8 | 15 | 1 |
| Brownsville | 8 | 5 | 63% | 3 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| Tucson | 5 | 3 | 60% | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| U.S. total | 917 | 905 | 99% | 432 | 444 | 516 | 436 |
| United Kingdom | | | | | | | |
| London | 35 | 36 | 103% | 12 | 12 | 20 | 26 |
| Dundee | 15 | 8 | 53% | 0 | 0 | 5 | 2 |
| UK total | 50 | 44 | 88% | 12 | 12 | 25 | 28 |
| Iceland | 6 | 4 | 67% | 1 | 0 | 4 | 2 |
| Int'l totals | 1117 | 1098 | 105% | 474 | 482 | 630 | 543 |
| Goal/Should be | 1050 | 1050 | 100% | 460 | 460 | 625 | 625 |
| IN THE UNIONS | | | | | | | |
| | Militant | | | PM | | Book | |
| | Goal | Sold | % | Goal | Sold | Goal | Sold |
| United States | | | | | | | |
| UMWA | 15 | 21 | 140% | 2 | 2 | 10 | 3 |
| UFCW | 50 | 40 | 80% | 50 | 66 | 50 | 45 |
| UNITE | 50 | 19 | 38% | 45 | 32 | 50 | 23 |
| Total | 115 | 80 | 70% | 97 | 100 | 110 | 71 |
| Australia | | | | | | | |
| MUA* | 2 | 2 | 100% | | | 3 | 0 |
| AMIEU | 3 | 2 | 67% | | | 3 | 0 |
| Total | 5 | 4 | 80% | | | 3 | 0 |
| Canada | | | | | | | |
| UFCW | 7 | 5 | 71% | 1 | 0 | 4 | 5 |
| UNITE | 3 | 0 | 0% | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 |
| Total | 10 | 5 | 50% | 3 | 1 | 7 | 6 |
| New Zealand | | | | | | | |
| NDU | 1 | 0 | 0% | | | 1 | 0 |
| MWU | 2 | 0 | 0% | | | 0 | |
| Total | 3 | 0 | 0% | | | 1 | 0 |
| raised goal* | | | | | | | |

Charlie Scheer: celebrating 65 years of a political man

BY JACK WILLEY

ST. PAUL, Minnesota—More than 100 comrades, family members, and friends, gathered here July 14 to celebrate Charles Scheer’s 65 years of revolutionary activity in building the Socialist Workers Party. Scheer died in St. Paul in June. He was 86.

Charles Scheer “was above all, a deeply political person,” said Jack Barnes, the Socialist Workers Party national secretary, in his talk at the meeting. “This is how I opened the 1998 meeting to celebrate Helen Scheer’s decades of building the communist movement,” said Barnes. Seldom can you make the same statement at two meetings like this, Barnes said, but the fact that they were deeply political is what resulted in their being active cadres in the communist movement throughout their adult lives.

Helen Scheer was Charles’s companion of 50 years.

Charles Scheer was born in Eureka, Montana, in 1915. His family moved to St. Paul when he was an infant. In his early 30s during the Great Depression Scheer worked to support his family and two children pushing heavy slabs of beef in and out of the freezers in meatpacking plants, and in a paint factory.

He first came into contact with the communist movement while working on the loading dock at a Montgomery Ward warehouse. Scheer was a member of Teamsters Local 120 at the time.

A couple of years earlier members of what was then Teamsters Local 574 waged successful strikes that defeated the trucking bosses, who were assisted by the employers of the area, the state government, and the National Guard. Members of the Communist League of America, a predecessor of the SWP, were leaders of this powerful struggle that transformed Minneapolis from an open shop city, where the bosses had a free hand to act with impunity against the workers, into a union town.

A major accomplishment of this rebellion was that Teamsters were organized for the first time on an industry-wide basis. That meant that Local 574 members were in the same union regardless of whether they drove a truck, shoveled coal, or worked on the loading dock. This was immediately attractive to other workers in the area like Scheer and his co-workers.

Scheer often recalled the positive impression Carl Skoglund, a leader of Local 574 and a longtime communist, made when he spoke to members of Scheer’s union local.

A short time later Scheer participated in a strike of Local 120, spending much time on the picket line talking to a co-worker who introduced him to Marxist literature and helped recruit him to what would become the Socialist Workers Party.

Charter member of SWP

The SWP was founded at the beginning of 1938. Its leaders were veteran revolutionists, like Skoglund, who had spent two decades constructing a communist party modeled on the Bolshevik party of V.I. Lenin that had led Russia’s workers and farmers to taking power in the 1917 revolution.

Scheer became a charter member of the party, joining within days of its founding convention. He was a delegate to the SWP’s second convention held in New York City in the summer of 1938.

Scheer was a member of the Twin Cities branch for the entire time he was in the movement. He served on the party’s National Committee as an alternate member from 1963–1973. For several months in 1960–61 he attended the party’s leadership school. Scheer worked as a switchman on the railroad from World War II until he retired in 1976.

More than a dozen members of Scheer’s family attended the event, including his three sons and daughter, as well his daughter-in-law, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. Socialist workers and young socialists came to the event from Chicago; Des Moines, Iowa; Detroit; Omaha, Nebraska; Hazelton, Pennsylvania; Toronto; New York; and other cities.

One member of the audience was Alfonse Eiden, who first met leaders of the SWP

when he was serving three years in Sandstone Penitentiary as a conscientious objector during World War II. Eighteen leaders of the SWP and the Teamsters union had been framed up by the Roosevelt administration for opposing Washington’s drive towards the war. Eiden later joined the SWP.

Another longtime comrade, Mildred Solem, from Duluth, Minnesota, who was a member of the party from the 1930s to the early 1960s, was also present, as were other former comrades of Scheer.

Samuel Farley, chairperson of the SWP branch in St. Paul which hosted the meeting, welcomed the participants to the event. He introduced Norton Sandler, a National Committee member of the SWP from New York, and Kari Sachs, the Socialist Workers Party gubernatorial candidate in Minnesota, who co-chaired the meeting. Sandler began by calling participants attention to the attractive displays at the meeting. They included several photos from the forthcoming new English-language edition of *The History of American Trotskyism, 1928–38*, which gave participants, said Sandler, “a snapshot of the world-shaking events during the years leading up to Scheer joining the party.

“Scheer was deeply affected by the Great Depression and the labor battles that forged the CIO unions,” said Sandler, “but also by the triumph of fascism in Germany and defeat of the Spanish revolution, as well as the Roosevelt administration’s march toward U.S. participation in World War II.”

Soon after he joined the SWP, said Sandler, a fight broke out over the character of the party—as a wing of the party led by James Burnham and Max Schactman collapsed under the imperialist war pressure, abandoned the defense of the Russian Revolution, and split from the party. In defending fundamental conquests of the communist movement against the political course of this petty-bourgeois opposition, Scheer and other young party cadres were forced to study Marxism. Scheer passed on this enthusiasm for studying Marxist theory and communist continuity to countless others, said Sandler.

Responding to new opportunities

Other panels in the display featured headlines, articles, and photos from the *Militant* and *International Socialist Review* showing the kind of activity the party was part of during Scheer’s life.

Barnes told the meeting that it is wrong to say that the Minneapolis branch that Barnes and several other students at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota, met in 1960 was marked by the Teamster battles of the 1930s. Like the rest of the party at the time, the Minneapolis branch was marked by the retreat of the working class under the impact of the economic boom coming out of World War II, Barnes explained.

The party was deeply affected by this retreat and, although made up of workers, was no longer able to sustain fractions of its members in the industrial unions. In the early 1960s, the strengths of the comrades in the Twin Cities branch in reaching out to new opportunities was not determined by their ability to maintain the traditions of the 1934 strikes and other social struggles of the 1930s that came afterwards, said Barnes. It was the way they successfully led the retreat during the late 1940s and 1950s.

Barnes described how the party responded in 1955–56 to a call by civil rights fighters boycotting the segregated Jim Crow bus system in Montgomery, Alabama, to bring cars to that city to help transport workers to their jobs. Scheer and others in the SWP campaigned among workers and others to raise the funds to purchase station wagons that were driven to Montgomery.

Moscow’s brutal suppression of the Hun-



Above, Charlie Scheer showing *Perspectiva Mundial* to young people in Nicaragua in the early 1980s during the workers and farmers revolution in that Central American country. Left, pickets outside Woolworth’s during the civil rights movement.



garian revolution of 1956 and Soviet Premier Nikita Krushchev’s revelations about the crimes of his predecessor, Joseph Stalin, deeply affected the ranks of the Stalinist Communist parties around the world, including the CP in this country. Under the impact of these events, for the first time in years, party leaders like V.R. Dunne in the Twin Cities were able to speak to hundreds from Communist Party and Socialist Party milieus.

The SWP also participated in public meetings protesting Washington’s nuclear tests and other related events, Barnes said.

Black struggle and Cuban Revolution

The Black struggle against Jim Crow segregation and the victory of the Cuban Revolution in 1959 brought forward a new generation of youth attracted to revolutionary politics. Betsey Stone was part of the same group of students at Carleton College who were inspired by the Cuban Revolution and the deepening struggle for Black rights in the United States.

“We found a party in Minneapolis that supported the Cuban Revolution and was determined that working people could do the same thing in the United States,” she said in addressing the meeting.

That same year students were holding sit-ins at Woolworth’s stores in the South to demand the company desegregate lunch counters. “We joined the pickets in front of Woolworth’s stores in Minneapolis, along with Charlie Scheer and other party members,” Stone said.

Barnes said in later years it has become common to only recollect the role of Ray Dunne and the Scheers when looking back at the Twin Cities branch of the early 1960s. That is not accurate memory, said Barnes, who described the many workers and the relatively young comrade who was organizer of the branch at that time.

Joel Britton, a member of the SWP National Committee from Chicago, was one of more than 20 comrades and friends who sent messages to the meeting, excerpts of several of which were read by Sandler and Sachs. Britton wrote, “Charlie and Helen hosted me the first time I visited the Twin Cities branch at the end of 1963 or early 1964, to speak at a Militant Labor Forum. Charlie shared the revolutionary enthusiasm I had expressed—after attending a mass meeting in October of ’63 in Detroit where Malcolm X had spoken. Hundreds and hun-

dreds of workers who were Black cheered when Malcolm pointed the way forward by hailing the great revolutions of the 20th century.”

“Charlie—and comrades who for me at that time were the other ‘old-timers,’ agreed wholeheartedly with the revolutionary implications of what Malcolm X was raising,” Britton said.

“Over the decades since these early memories of Charlie, my appreciation for his party patriotism and campaigning steadfastness was deepened on many occasions,” Britton wrote.

Winning new generations

John Steele, who attended the meeting representing the Communist League in Canada, joined Ma’mud Shirvani on the speakers platform. Sandler noted in introducing them that both were recruited to the revolutionary movement while students in the early and mid-1960s at the University of Minnesota. “Charlie and others were citizens of time and the world. They had acquired the ability to patiently transmit the world program for socialist revolution to a new generation of potential communists,” Steele wrote in his greetings.

Russell Johnson, from Pongaroa, New Zealand, wrote that he first met the Scheers 30 years ago. He was part of a group of revolutionary-minded youth who wanted to join and build an international movement. “There was none of the cynical and patronizing attitudes toward young rebels that I was accustomed to” from an older generation of Stalinists and social democrats in New Zealand,” he wrote. Instead, they “were eager and willing to be grilled for hours on the SWP’s history and politics, and threw open their party archives to me.”

In the message to the meeting on behalf of the Communist League of New Zealand, Janet Roth and Michael Tucker said Johnson’s experience working with the Minneapolis branch and with cadre of the caliber of Charlie helped “to deepen our knowledge and understanding of the political and organization character of the proletarian party and helped us develop from a group of young socialists toward building such a party ourselves.”

SWP leader Joe Swanson from Des Moines, described in a message read by chairperson Kari Sachs how Scheer and two other party members came to Lincoln, Nebraska, to meet with him. Swanson was struck about how, in the course of their conversation about fights with the bosses, Scheer made sure the discussion turned to international politics as well. “This helped me think more broadly about the international working class,” Swanson wrote.

Example for revolutionary youth today

Arrin Hawkins, spoke at the celebration on behalf of the YS National Leadership Council. She is the organizer of the New York chapter of the Young Socialists and works in the Pathfinder printshop. Charlie

Continued on Page 12

Palestinian toll rises with Israeli occupation

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

Patrolling the streets of seven of the eight major cities that formerly fell under the administration of the Palestinian Authority (PA), Israeli troops and tanks have imposed 24-hour curfews and suffocating travel restrictions on some three-quarters of a million Palestinians.

The Information Minister of the PA, Yasser Abed Rabbo, termed the offensive “a disguised form” of Israeli control and occupation. “We believe the Israeli army intends to reoccupy the Palestinian cities, and all of the West Bank, for a very long period,” he said.

In the three weeks of the offensive to date, Israeli troops have killed 36 Palestinians, seven of them children and at least 17 of them unarmed civilians.

By mid-July, the Israeli forces had virtually completed the military operation that they launched on June 20. After conducting systematic mass detentions and interrogations of thousands of Palestinians, the Israeli forces are holding some 1,800 people “suspected” of involvement in violent attacks.

Israeli troops have clamped a military vise on Jenin, Nablus, Qalqiliya, Ramallah, Tulkarm, Bethlehem, and Hebron. Jericho, the remaining Palestinian city, has escaped being overrun by virtue of its “flat and isolated desert location [that] makes it easy to seal off and monitor,” reported the *Financial Times*.

The curfews directly affect one-third of the 2.1 million Palestinians who live in the West Bank. Residents of villages around the cities also suffer the consequences as they find themselves unable to reach the towns to attend schools or workplaces, or to shop for needed supplies.

‘Two million people are imprisoned’

The occupation “means that 2 million Palestinian people are imprisoned,” observed the Palestine Monitor, a news organization that functions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. “Most of them live under 24 hours imposed curfew and face the hardships that this entails.”

From Ramallah, Gregory Myre of the Associated Press noted on July 13 that “as an air of semi-permanence sets in, Israeli and Palestinian officials are talking about easing the restrictions, and curfews have



Israeli soldiers, above, search car of two Palestinians as part of occupation of Bethlehem. Left, Palestinians gather around a building destroyed by Israeli rockets in Khan Yunis. Seven of eight Palestinian cities are now occupied.

been lifted more often in recent days, with troops pulling back from the city centers in the morning, and then returning in the afternoon.”

Even with occasional relaxations, the curfews impose a new burden on a people who already face the ubiquitous presence of Israeli policemen and soldiers, and are fighting against rapidly sinking levels of economic devastation.

The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics estimates that the official poverty level has risen from 25 percent before September 2000—the point at which the conflict between the Palestinians and the Israeli occupiers sharply escalated—to 60 percent today. The 130,000-strong Palestinian workforce in Israel has fallen to 30,000 undocumented workers over the same period. There are virtually no Palestinians legally employed in Israel.

“We are being choked, and we have to live. There is no work in Palestine,” said

Khaled Amriyeh, who works picking cucumbers at a prosperous kibbutz in Israel. Amriyeh sleeps in the fields to evade the Israeli police.

Official unemployment among Palestinians stands at 40 percent and rising sharply. The governor of Bethlehem told the Israeli government the occupation had caused a growing humanitarian crisis. “Thousands of residents have lost their jobs,” he said, “hundreds of others have been arrested, and about 1,500 are without shelter after destruction of their homes.”

‘Cops in olive drab’

As more reserve soldiers are called up to provide reinforcements for the open-ended occupation, the role of the vaunted Israeli army in carrying out the functions of jailer and policemen in the West Bank, as well as the Gaza Strip, is being daily reinforced.

In an eyewitness report of one military patrol “across a patch of rugged hills, can-

administrative staff and inspectors had been on strike for just one week.

At one Local 416 picketing station three days before the end of the strike, a sanitation worker said Toronto mayor Melvin Lastman “thinks after 10 days we’re starving and we’ll want to go back, but these are our jobs.” Asked about back-to-work legislation, he said, “They’re doing this because we’ve been out for a while, but I’m not in favor if it means selling ourselves out.”

The main issue in the strike for both locals was job security, given the intention of the city to contract out and privatize many of their jobs. The city’s last offer was that the job of any permanent worker with less than 10 years seniority as of July 1, 2002, could be contracted out.

Some 14,000 of the 25,000 city workers in CUPE are temporary and have no security whatsoever. Some workers have been “temporary” workers for 15 years.

Capitalist politicians hammered on the theme that the strikers wanted “jobs for life” and that under capitalism, no one has a job for life.

Union officials countered that all they were seeking was the same job protection in the recently signed contracts between the city of Toronto and its police officers and transit workers. They also argued a large majority of municipal workers across Canada have equal or better job protection compared with what they were seeking.

The back-to-work legislation was held up for a day when the New Democratic Party (NDP) objected to a clause that allowed the Conservative government to name the arbitrator who will determine the final contract in a binding decision. They threatened to use procedural barriers to hold up the legislation for up to two weeks. The final law has a list of three individuals acceptable to all three parties in the legislature—the Conservatives, Liberals and NDP that the Ontario government can choose from.

yons and picturesque Arab villages tucked between the cities of Tulkarm and Nablus in the northern West Bank,” *Newsweek* magazine commented that the troops are, “in effect...well armed cops in olive drab.”

Amid less than unanimous applause for the reoccupation among Israeli politicians and other ruling-class mouthpieces, the government of Ariel Sharon points to its “success” in pegging back the growing Israeli death toll. One Israeli soldier has been killed since June 20.

Raanan Gissin, the spokesman for Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon, said that the government can only prevent suicide bombings “when we are there...capturing them at the doorstep of their homes, not at the doorstep of the bus.”

Along with other armed Palestinian attacks that reflect the deep-going Palestinian resistance, suicide bombings have taken a heavy toll in Israeli lives—a little over one-third the losses inflicted by Tel Aviv’s military escalation. As of July 12, the death toll over the previous 22 months stood at 1,443 Palestinians and 549 Israelis.

Unease among Israeli rulers

“Until there’s a better alternative, I expect this is what we’re going to see. For Israel, it’s the least bad option right now,” said a political analyst at Tel Aviv University, in a typically lukewarm endorsement of the operation.

Noting the rapidly increasing levels of poverty and joblessness among Palestinians, the *Christian Science Monitor* reported from the Israeli city of Tamra that “Israeli authorities are growing concerned that mounting desperation could explode into unrest in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.”

In a cabinet debate over whether to issue 30,000 work permits that would allow Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza to enter Israel, minister David Levy warned that easing restrictions would open up more attacks, and “create more graves.” In the end, the cabinet agreed to issue 5,000 permits for workers from Gaza.

“Israel says it doesn’t want the burden of civil administration of Palestinian areas,” wrote AP reporter Gregory Myre, “though it’s not clear how the Palestinian government will be able to function effectively if the current restrictions remain for months.”

Palestinian officials explain that the occupying troops insist that all government offices must close by 2:00 p.m. each day.

On July 8 U.S. president George Bush gave the occupation Washington’s stamp of approval, telling a news conference that—in the words of the *New York Times* summary—“Israel was justified in occupying the West Bank until ‘security improves.’”

Five days later, PA minister Rabbo criticized Bush for “neglecting the reoccupation, the military curfew, the siege imposed on the Palestinian people.”

Several top Israeli army officers appealed to General Moshe Yahalon for a partial withdrawn of forces, Israeli public TV reported, because the curfew had left the occupied cities on the “verge of a volcanic eruption.”

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Ontario gov’t orders Toronto city workers to end strike



Picket lines surround garbage truck during city workers’ strike.

BY ROBERT SIMMS

TORONTO—The nearly 25,000 striking city workers in Locals 416 and 79 of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) were legislated back to work on July 11 after the three political parties in the Ontario legislature passed a back-to-work law

in just 45 minutes of debate and procedure.

The 6,800 members of Local 416 representing outside workers on garbage collection, parks and recreation sites, and the ferries in Toronto harbor had been on strike for 16 days. The 18,000 inside workers in Local 79 composed mostly of clerical and

EU-U.S. conflict emerges over port inspections

Moves by the Bush administration to place U.S. customs officials in ports across Europe have met with some objections from the European Commission.

Last month Washington reached agreements with the governments of Belgium, France, and the Netherlands to have U.S. inspectors start operating at the ports of Le Havre, Rotterdam, and Antwerp. The U.S. administration says the customs officials will inspect cargo on all ships bound for the United States, and that the three ports are the first of 20 in which it seeks to place its agents.

EU officials told Washington that the inspections would seriously disrupt trade

flows and add to the European exporters’ costs. The EU emphasized it supports the efforts to tighten security, but that the U.S. agreements with only some ports puts them at an advantage over others in violation of EU rules.

One U.S. customs official said the EU Commission was “very unhappy” that Washington was dealing separately with member countries. “They call it the ‘divide and conquer Yankee approach,’” he said. “We just see it a different way.”

U.S. customs commissioner Robert Bonner claimed that “it has nothing to do with trade rules or competitive advantage.”

Workers, peasants in Paraguay protest government attacks

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL
AND ROMINA GREEN

ASUNCIÓN, Paraguay—“Students in Paraguay have been involved in some of the most important political actions in the past few months. We’ve gone to the countryside to join the peasant demonstrations. We’ve opposed the ‘antiterrorist’ bill, which was modeled on the USA Patriot Act,” said Aureliano Servín, 21, a university student. Taking the floor during a forum held at the National University’s School of Philosophy in this capital city, he asked the invited speakers how students and others in the United States were responding to Washington’s war moves in the Mideast and South Asia.

The July 8 forum, sponsored by the campus student association, featured the authors of this article, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party and of the Young Socialists in United States who are visiting Paraguay at the invitation of a youth group here called Casa de la Juventud (Youth House). The two were asked to speak on the work communists in the United States are carrying out among working people and students, and to bring along with them revolutionary books

cal ferment that has been growing in Paraguay as workers, farmers, and young people search for answers on how to confront the effects of the economic and social crisis gripping the country today.

Impact of peasant mobilizations

In May and June, thousands of peasants blocked highways and marched on Asunción to protest government proposals that represented a serious attack on the living standards and political rights of working people. These included legislation, demanded by the International Monetary Fund and other imperialist financial institutions, allowing the sell-off of the national bank, telephone company, and other state-owned facilities; and a value-added tax on agricultural products that would devastate family farmers. The peasants also protested an “antiterrorist” measure introduced in Congress—and promoted by the U.S. government—that would give the government freer rein to arbitrarily arrest people.

In face of these mobilizations and a threatened general strike by the unions, the government backed down on all these measures, a victory that boosted the confidence



Thousands marched May 28 in Asunción, Paraguay, against the sell-off of the national bank, telephone company, and other state-owned facilities.

The social crisis shaking Paraguay and the resistance it is generating among working people is fueling the growing hunger for a revolutionary perspective to advance the struggles of workers and peasants, for books that contain the lessons of past battles of working people, and a communist explanation of the evolution of world politics today.

Lively exchange at campus forum

Before the forum at the National University, socialist workers from the United States set up a table with Pathfinder literature on campus. It became a magnet for students, who were drawn to titles by Marx, Engels, and Lenin as well as books and pamphlets on U.S. politics from a communist viewpoint.

One of the most popular Pathfinder titles was *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning* by SWP national secretary Jack Barnes. Some students bought a copy to get a class view of the question of education. One student who browsed through the booklet said, “I need this because it has facts on the real conditions in the United States, like the high number of on-the-job injuries and the number of people executed—it’s ammunition for my arguments with schoolmates about capitalism in the United States.”

Students were surprised to see communists from the United States visiting their campus and selling books on revolutionary politics. “I didn’t know there were revolutionaries in the U.S.,” was a common remark. The visitors were also greeted by the dean of the School of Philosophy, who came by the table with a small delegation to welcome them.

Some 35 students and a couple of professors attended the forum on campus, which was chaired by student association president Gustavo Torres Grossling. Martín Koppel and Romina Green gave presentations describing the class struggle in the United States today and the work of the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialists among fellow working people and youth. They were interested to learn about the growing mood of resistance, like the popularity of the giant inflatable rats that construction workers put up all over New York to win support for their union struggles against “rat” employers.

“Isn’t there repression against communists in the U.S.?” one student asked—one of the most common questions asked during the trip. Green explained that despite the U.S. rulers’ pressure on workers’ rights, they have not been able to close down the political space that working people have won in struggle. A garment worker, Green described how communist workers function openly on the job and gain respect for their views from co-workers.

Koppel explained how socialists have campaigned against the U.S. rulers’ war drive at home and abroad that has accelerated since September 11. Koppel is the Socialist Workers candidate for New York governor in the 2002 elections, welcomed the opportunity as part of the campaign to visit Paraguay and Argentina to meet revolutionary-minded workers and young people.

“Capitalist politicians would say Paraguay has nothing to do with the New York elections, but visiting Paraguay to learn about the rising class struggle here is part of presenting an internationalist perspective for working people in the United States,” he said.

Another student, noting that this was the first visit by communists from the United States to Paraguay in a long time, asked,

“Why couldn’t this meeting take place before?” Koppel pointed to the rise in working-class and peasant resistance—from Peru to Argentina—in response to the capitalist economic catastrophe, as well as the shattering of the Stalinist regimes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, a process that has removed enormous political obstacles that for decades had separated revolutionary fighters from each other. The Young Socialists first met Casa de la Juventud members in Cuba, at an event sponsored by the World Federation of Democratic Youth a few years ago, and the current trip to Paraguay is part of the effort to rebuild a communist movement on a world scale.

Other questions included: Why is Wash-



ington preparing to launch a war against Iraq? How did communists in the United States stand up to patriotic pressures during the Cold War? Is there a student movement in the United States today?

After the forum, students again surrounded the Pathfinder literature table to check out books recommended by the speakers and other titles. They purchased a variety of titles ranging from “U.S. Imperialism has Lost the Cold War” to *The Emancipation of Women and the African Freedom Struggle* by Thomas Sankara and *Che Guevara Talks to Young People*.

The eruption of mass protests by working people has had a politicizing effect on many young people.

Several members of Casa de la Juventud have been reading “Their Trotsky and Ours” by Jack Barnes, and “The Rise and Fall of the Nicaraguan Revolution” in *New International* no. 9, and discussing some of the key questions of revolutionary strategy that are taken up in these documents. These include: What is a workers and farmers government? How can workers and farmers forge a fighting alliance? What is the place of the fight for national liberation in an anticapitalist revolution?

A similar forum, attended by about 20 youth, took place July 14 at the Casa de la Juventud hall.

35 years of Stroessner dictatorship

The ferment in Paraguay today is part of the opening up of politics in this country since the end of the 35-year-long Stroessner regime in 1989—one of the longest-standing and most brutal dictatorships in Latin America. To appreciate the changes under way, it is worth looking at Paraguay’s unique history.

For a more than a century Paraguay has been marked by isolation, underpopulation, underdevelopment, and dictatorship. In the 1865–70 War of the Triple Alliance, the Ar-

Continued on Page 15



Militant/Ignacio González

Forum at National University in Asunción, Paraguay, July 8, featuring *Militant* reporters Romina Green and Martín Koppel. Students were eager to know about the class struggle in the United States and the work that socialists carry out there.

published by Pathfinder Press. Students at the meeting crowded around a literature table before and after the meeting to purchase books on topics ranging from the U.S. working-class movement to the Cuban Revolution to the 1991 Gulf War.

The wide-ranging discussion at the forum, and the youths’ interest in gaining an understanding of a communist world program, were a vivid expression of the politi-

of working people.

“When I saw on TV this huge crowd of peasants force the baton-wielding cops back along the highway, it was so impressive it made my eyes water. This was a big moment for us in Paraguay,” said Guillermo Verón, 21, a student who is a member of Casa de la Juventud.

These social struggles have been intertwined with an ongoing fight against the frame-up, torture, and detention of several political activists belonging to the Free Homeland Movement (Movimiento Patria Libre—MPL). In January two MPL members—Juan Arrom, the organization’s general secretary, and journalist Anuncio Martí—were kidnapped by police and tortured. The cops tried to force them to sign a statement “confessing” that they were responsible for the kidnapping under murky circumstances of María Edith Debernardi, a member of a prominent bourgeois family. A broad international campaign demanding their freedom was launched, and Arrom and Martí were found and released. Several top government officials implicated in the kidnapping of the two were forced to resign.

The cops now face prosecution for torture, but the government is continuing its frame-up campaign against Arrom, seeking to try him in connection with the Debernardi case. Three other MPL members remain in prison.

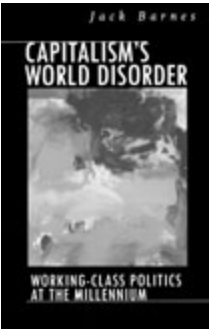
These fights are focal points in a class struggle that has accelerated in recent years. The media here reports a variety of social struggles on a daily basis. In the second week of July, for example, government workers protested to demand payment of back wages, university students in eastern Paraguay held a strike against tuition hikes, and homeless workers held actions demanding housing.

from Pathfinder

Capitalism’s World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium

BY JACK BARNES

“The capitalist rulers offer us social disaster. They offer us depression. They offer us death from curable disease. They offer us war. They offer us fascism. They offer us an unending list of horrors. But we offer ourselves the ability to prevent those horrors from becoming the final reality, the confidence that we can transform that future.” Also available in Spanish and French. \$23.95



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‘Their Trotsky and Ours’: lessons for today

Printed below is an excerpt from *Their Trotsky and Ours* by Jack Barnes. A new edition of this article, which originally appeared in *New International* no. 1 in 1983, has just been published by Pathfinder Press in a book format, with an introduction by the author. The piece below appears in the chapter titled “Marxism, Bolshevism, and the Communist International.” Copyright © 2002 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission.

BY JACK BARNES

The victory and consolidation of the Russian Soviet republic fundamentally changed the relationship of class forces in world politics. The Comintern recognized that mobilizing the international working class and its allies to defend this historic revolutionary conquest against imperialism was an integral part of extending the socialist revolution worldwide. “The struggle for Soviet Russia has become merged with the struggle against world capitalism,” the manifesto of the second Comintern congress explained in 1920. “The question of Soviet Russia has become the touchstone by which all the organizations of the working class are tested.”¹

That is more true than ever today, when this initial conquest of the world working class has been augmented by the establishment of workers states in China, Korea, Vietnam, Eastern Europe, and Cuba, with more on the way in the Caribbean and Central America.

Second, the Comintern projected a course toward a truly *world* socialist revolution for the first time. Before then, the Marxist workers movement had considered socialist revolution to be a realistic perspective only in a relatively small number of industrialized countries, primarily in western Europe and North America. In large part, this had been an accurate reflection of the uneven development of capitalism and growth of the working class on a world scale in the latter half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. Membership in the Second International was limited almost entirely to European and North American workers parties.

The international workers movement paid a big overhead for this limitation. The composition of the Second International made it harder to resist the growing cancer of racism and apologies for colonialism that wracked major components of it in those years. Lenin always combated this and told

the truth about it both while in the Second International and afterwards.

The Comintern recognized that the Russian Revolution had ushered in a new period in the world revolution. It came to the conclusion—following a report by Lenin at its Second Congress and some vigorous debate and discussion—that even the most economically backward countries could “go over to the Soviet system and, through certain stages of development, to communism, without having to pass through the capitalist stage.” This was possible if soviet power based on mass organizations and delegated bodies of workers and peasants were established, if the working class exercised leadership in the struggle for national liberation, and if the Soviet government in Russia came to the assistance of such revolutionary regimes “with all the means at its disposal.”²

No country in the world, the Comintern said, was doomed to inevitable and indefinite capitalist development with its attendant horrors. The victory of the Bolsheviks and its consequences had put the socialist revolution on the agenda, not just in the industrially advanced countries or a handful of the most developed colonial countries, but worldwide. It was possible to make the revolution—not guaranteed, not easy; in fact, very difficult. But it was possible. This could now be seen.

With that perspective in mind, the Comintern threw its energies into becoming a truly *world* communist organization. Proletarian Marxist parties could and must be built in *every* country.

Lenin pointed out in his opening speech to the second Comintern congress that this gathering “merits the title of a World Congress,” because “we have here quite a number of representatives of the revolutionary movement in the colonial and backward countries.”³ The statutes adopted by that congress proclaimed that the Comintern “breaks once and for all with the traditions of the Second International which, in reality recognized the existence only of people with white skin.” It continues, “People of white, yellow, and black skin color—the toilers of the whole earth—are fraternally united in the ranks of the Communist International.”⁴

The Comintern leaders never denied the difficulties involved in this perspective of building a world party and extending the world socialist revolution. But they had confidence in the working class, which had



Protests in Grenada at Sandino Housing Complex in March 1983 condemned U.S. threats against revolution unfolding in that Caribbean-island country in early 1980s. “The Comintern leaders,” wrote Barnes, “had confidence in the working class, which had shown what it could accomplish in October 1917. That confidence was borne out by the subsequent sixty years” and “the events in Central America and the Caribbean.”

shown what it could accomplish in October 1917. That confidence has been borne out by the subsequent sixty years of this century, as the events in Central America and the Caribbean demonstrate. The Bolshevik-led workers and peasants of Russia had opened the epoch of the world socialist revolution against imperialism—*our epoch*.

In presenting this integrated view of the world socialist revolution, the Comintern recognized and analyzed both the differences and the interrelationship between the struggle of the toilers of the colonies and oppressed nations for liberation, and that of the proletariat and its allies in the economically advanced capitalist countries.

Unless workers and their organizations in the imperialist countries gave active and unconditional support to national liberation struggles, above all those in the nations oppressed by their own governments, then revolutionary parties could not be built in those imperialist countries. The young proletariat in the oppressed nations would be hindered in coming to the fore of anti-imperialist struggles, and the world revolution could not move forward. The Bolshevik leadership of the Comintern also recognized the necessity of forging the strongest possible alliance of the new Soviet state and

the oppressed nations in the struggle against imperialism.

The Comintern leaders were convinced, as Lenin explained at the Third Congress in 1921, that “the movement of the majority of the population of the globe, initially directed towards national liberation, will turn against capitalism and imperialism and will...play a very important revolutionary part in the coming phase of the world revolution.”⁵ That expectation has certainly been confirmed by the following decades of world history.

¹ Leon Trotsky, *The First Five Years of the Communist International* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1972), vol. 1, p. 122.

² V.I. Lenin, “Report of the Commission on the National and the Colonial Questions,” in *Collected Works* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1974), vol. 31, p. 244.

³ V.I. Lenin, “Report on the International Situation and the Fundamental Tasks of the Communist International,” in *Collected Works*, vol. 31, p. 232.

⁴ *Workers of the World and Oppressed Peoples, Unite!* (New York: Pathfinder, 1991), vol. 2, p. 696.

⁵ Lenin, “Report on the Tactics of the Russian Communist Party,” in *Collected Works*, vol. 32, page 482.

About the author of ‘Their Trotsky’

Jack Barnes has been national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party since 1972. He is also a contributing editor to *New International*, a magazine of Marxist politics and theory, and the author of many books, pamphlets, and articles.

An organizer of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee and actions in defense of Black rights, Barnes joined the Young Socialist Alliance in 1960 and the Socialist Workers Party in 1961. In 1965 he was elected national chairperson of the Young Socialist Alliance and became the director of the SWP and YSA’s work in the growing movement against the Vietnam War. He has been a

member of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party since 1963 and a national officer of the party since 1969. He has carried major responsibilities for the party’s international work for almost forty years.

Beginning in the mid-1970s Barnes led the political turn of the Socialist Workers Party toward opportunities to get the overwhelming majority of its members and leaders into the industrial working class and unions. From that base, party members have built the communist movement while actively engaged with fellow workers in efforts to transform the unions into revolutionary instruments of struggle that defend not only their own membership but the interests of workers and farmers worldwide. The 1978–91 record of this work is published in *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics*.

Since 1998 Barnes has led the campaign of the SWP and fraternal organizations internationally to build on those advances, responding to openings created by the toughening resistance and actions by vanguard layers of workers and farmers standing up to the bosses’ drive to increase profits on the backs of the producers. The opening of this political effort, and of the adjustments the party is making in its organizational forms among working people engaged in these struggles, is recorded in “A Sea Change in Working-Class Politics,” the first chapter of *Capitalism’s World Disorder*. The continuity of this campaign with the struggle for a proletarian party in our time is recorded in this volume, as well as in *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* and the preface to the 2002 edition of *The History of American Trotskyism, 1928–38*.

from Pathfinder

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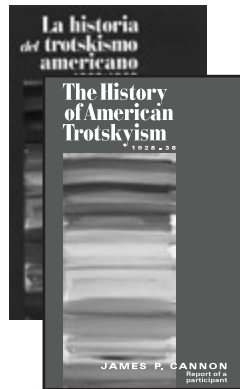
“As that happens, communist parties not only recruit many new members. They also fuse with other workers organizations moving in the same direction and grow into mass proletarian parties contesting to lead workers and farmers to power. This assumes that well beforehand their cadres have absorbed and grown comfortable with a world communist program, are proletarian in life and work, derive

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Socialist candidate demands prosecution of Inglewood cops

BY ROLLANDE GIRARD

LOS ANGELES—“My campaign joins with those who are mobilizing to condemn the police beatings of a Black man captured on videotape in Inglewood, California,” said Nan Bailey, Socialist Workers candidate for governor of California in a statement released on July 12.

“The arrogance and violence of the police, directed against working people and Blacks especially, underscore the racist nature of capitalist society and every institution of the capitalist state,” the socialist candidate said. “From New York to Miami to Cincinnati to Inglewood, these beatings and killings at the hands of the cops are not aberrations, but the police doing the job they are trained to do.” The candidate called for the immediate jailing and prosecution of all the cops involved.

Bailey, a National Committee member of the Socialist Workers Party and a garment worker from Los Angeles, was nominated as the party’s candidate for governor of California on June 29. The party is also running William Kalman, a leader of the party’s San Francisco branch and a meatpacking worker in that city, for lieutenant governor, and Olympia Newton, a leader of the Young Socialists and meatpacking worker in Los Angeles for secretary of state.

“What happened in Inglewood and Oklahoma City,” said Bailey, “are two more examples of the racist nature of class society under capitalism and every institution of the capitalist state. Every police department,

every police agency in this country is an enemy of working people.

“The ruling class and their political servants—both Democrats and Republicans—have nothing to offer except more cop violence, more racist violence, and terror as they deepen their assaults against working people at home and abroad. In the last decade thousands of working people were executed on the streets by the cops and millions more have been thrown behind bars.

“My campaign supporters will join those who will demonstrate today at city hall in Inglewood to protest the beating of 16-year-old Dorean Jackson-Chavis by Inglewood police on July 6,” said Bailey. “I urge others to participate in these demonstrations in order to advance the fight against police brutality and racism. These actions deserve the support of the entire labor movement. The road to ending racism and cop brutality is the same road as the fight for governmental power by working people,” Bailey said. “If you want to put an end to police brutality once and for all, join the Socialist Workers campaign in our work to educate and organize the working class in order to establish a workers and farmers government, which will abolish capitalism in the United States and join in the worldwide struggle for socialism.”

The Socialist Workers campaign got off to a strong start the June 29–30 weekend. Socialist workers and young socialists kicked off the campaign by setting up literature tables and knocking on doors in



Militant/Elizabeth Lariscy

Socialist Workers candidate Nan Bailey, with sign, at demonstration in defense of immigrant rights. Campaign supporters have joined actions against police brutality as well.

SWP campaigns announce candidates in Florida, New York, and Washington

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The Socialist Workers campaign has announced statewide candidates for office in Florida, New York, and Washington, D.C.

Running for governor of New York on the SWP ticket is Martin Koppel, editor of *Perspectiva Mundial* and the party’s candidate for mayor of New York City in the 2001 election. As one of his first campaign engagements, Koppel, together with Young Socialists leader Romina Green, is on a fact-finding trip to Paraguay and Argentina.

Describing one of the themes of his campaign, Koppel stated, “As the U.S. rulers accelerate their war plans against Iraq and increase their attacks on workers’ rights here at home, the Socialist Workers campaign will be presenting a fighting, working-class alternative to the parties of the ruling rich—the Democrats, Republicans, and other pro-capitalist parties.”

The other announced Socialist Workers candidates in New York are: Jack Willey, a staff writer for the *Militant*, for comptroller; and Arrin Hawkins, a leader of the Young Socialists, for lieutenant governor. Congressional candidates include Margaret Trowe, William Estrada, and Paul Pederson, also a UFCW meat packer.

The New York Socialist campaign is planning an intensive two-week petitioning effort July 29–August 11 to gather 7,000 signatures—double the requirement—to place Trowe on the November ballot. Those interested in participating in this effort can contact the campaign at (212) 695-7358.

The Florida statewide campaign effort was launched at a Militant Labor Forum held July 13 in Miami. The Socialist Workers candidates there are meatpacking worker Rachele Fruit for governor; Lawrence Mikesch, a member of the Young Socialists, for lieutenant governor; farmer Karl Butts for Commissioner of Agriculture; and Michael Italie for U.S. congress in the 17th C.D. More than \$600 was raised at the forum toward funding campaign activities.

And in Washington, D.C., socialist workers have kicked off a petitioning drive to collect more than 3,000 signatures to put Sam Manuel on the ballot for mayor. The campaign is appealing for volunteers in the effort and anyone interested can call (202) 387-1590 for more information.

Among those talking with SWP congressional candidate Estrada at a July 14 cam-

paigned table were two Haitians, who were both attracted to the *Militant* because of coverage in the strike by bus drivers in Queens. After looking through its pages, they explained that they enjoyed the international perspective it lays out and said that they plan to visit the nearby Pathfinder bookstore to check out titles in French.

Protests condemn police beating of Black youth

Continued from front page

Donovan and his father; that criminal charges be filed against all officers involved in the beating; that all officers and deputies who witnessed it and failed to stop it be punished; and for the election of a civilian police review board.

Some of the other speakers at the rally were Dick Gregory, a longtime opponent of racist discrimination; Martin Luther King Jr. III, the son of slain civil-rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.; and Alex Sanchez, an El Salvadoran immigrant and community organizer who had just won the right to political asylum after being held in an Immigration and Naturalization Service jail for many months.

On the day of the beating Jackson and his father, Coby Chavis, were at an Inglewood gas station when two sheriff’s deputies claimed that they had stopped Jackson’s father to investigate expired vehicle registration tags on his car. Jackson was leaving the station’s market, holding a bag of potato chips, when he saw the deputies talking to his father.

“He sees the four officers running towards him [by this time Inglewood police had also appeared on the scene],” Joe Hopkins, an attorney for Jackson’s family said. “He stands up. He is grabbed by the throat to hold him back, and the other four officers take turns hitting him. When the officers threw him to the ground, Hopkins said, they continued to beat him, pulling him by a necklace he wore and kneeling him.

At least two of the cops have admitted striking Jackson. Besides Police Officer Jeremy Morse—who slammed Jackson against the patrol car, hit him with his fist, and choked him captured in the video—his partner, Bijan Darvish, has now admitted punching Jackson two times in the face prior to the taking of the video by Mitchell Crooks.

working-class neighborhoods in the city.

Thirty-seven people attended a public launching of the campaign in Los Angeles June 29 featuring the three candidates. Newton said the socialists “will use this campaign to reach out to workers and youth who are resisting the attacks of imperialism. This campaign will help us build the world communist movement.” Newton announced that her first act as the party’s candidate for California secretary of state will be to travel to Venezuela as part of a reporting team for the *Militant*.

“We mean it when we say that this campaign, though based in California, is a campaign that begins with the world and a real internationalist perspective,” said Newton.

Over the past week the candidates joined a protest opposing moves by the state government to start putting a stamp on the drivers licenses of immigrant workers, some-

Thus far the only person in jail is Crooks, a fact that was noted by many at the July 12 rally. Crooks was arrested July 11 outside CNN studios in Hollywood on outstanding warrants for burglary and a five-year-old hit-and-run accident. He has since been transferred from Los Angeles to Placer County, where the warrants originated.

After the speeches, those attending the rally held a spirited march around the city

thing that would make an entire section of the working class more vulnerable to police harassment and deportation.

Supporters of the socialist campaign also participated in a picket line of garment workers who worked for the Forever 21 clothing manufacturer. They are demanding payment of wages they were denied when the company suddenly shut down.

“We’ve done all this already and we’ve just gotten started with this campaign,” said candidate Kalman. He said the candidates and their supporters will be taking the campaign to their workplaces both on the job and at plant-gate campaign teams in front of garment shops, meatpacking factories, and mine portals in the West.

The socialist candidates and their supporters also launched the statewide campaign in San Francisco at a public meeting July 14 where Bailey and Kalman spoke.

hall plaza which was warmly greeted by passersby, while many in their cars honked as a show of solidarity for the action.

The next day at a meeting called by the justice committee, nearly 500 people rallied at the church and committed themselves to continue the fight until justice is won. As a step in that direction it was decided to hold daily demonstrations at the city hall to keep the pressure on.

Socialist Workers in Minnesota near goal in gubernatorial ballot drive

BY TOM FISKE

Supporters of the Socialist Workers Party candidates in Minnesota have collected 1,300 of 2,000 signatures needed to put their candidates for governor and lieutenant governor, Kari Sachs and Samuel Farley, on the ballot.

Two co-workers of Sachs at the GFI meatpacking plant are among the supporters of the socialist campaign. At a July 6 candidates forum at the Pathfinder bookstore one said he agrees with the “demands of the socialist candidates. I come from a country in Africa. We need radical measures to stop the intervention of imperialism in Africa. It is imperialism which is the main cause of our problems. But we also have to stop the attacks on workers in the United States.”

“Our campaign got a good hearing when supporters distributed leaflets outside the plant gate where I work,” said Farley. The candidate for lieutenant governor has been active in the fight to organize a union at Dakota Premium Foods, a beef slaughterhouse in South St. Paul. “Almost everybody took the leaflet. Two people in one car bought copies of *Perspectiva Mundial*. The

following day there was lots of discussion inside the plant.”

Also running on the SWP slate of candidates is Rose Engstrom. She is running for U.S. Congress, 5th C.D., centered in Minneapolis. Engstrom, 31, is also a meat packer. She has been active for a number of years in labor struggles and fights against police brutality and racism.

Gov. Jesse Ventura, who leads the Independence Party, has announced he will not run for a second term. But the party’s candidate for the top state office, along with that of the Green Party, is being given “major party” status in the big-business media and by the state government.

At the public forum announcing the campaign, Samuel Farley explained, “The SWP campaign is the only campaign independent of the capitalist political setup. Our campaign is part of the resistance to the capitalist offensive against working people. We call upon workers and working farmers to begin recognizing, discussing, and especially acting in their own independent interests, which have nothing in common with the ruling capitalist class.”

First ‘Militant’ issue on new press

BY GREG McCARTAN

This beautiful new issue of the *Militant* is the first to be run on the same presses that produce Pathfinder books. The sheetfed presses and higher quality of paper make for better type, photos, graphics, and color in the paper.

With press runs of around 4,000, printing the *Militant* on a sheetfed press is more economical and efficient than on a web press, which the paper has been printed on since 1970. Press runs at that time shot up from around 10,000 in 1968 to 20,000 two years later. The communist movement at the time organized to raise the funds to purchase a web press, which is designed for long-running jobs. With much shorter press runs today, the sheetfed presses can meet the needs of the weekly *Militant* and monthly *Perspectiva Mundial*. The presses print on both sides of a page in one pass, meaning four pages of the paper can be completed in one color quite quickly.

For a week or so supporters of the two publications in New York and New Jersey are stepping forward to help fold and collate the paper. The shop is organizing to purchase folding equipment that will eliminate much of this labor-intensive work.

The first four pages of the *Militant* rolled off the presses Tuesday afternoon this week, marking a new schedule for the editorial production of the paper each week. Four additional pages are printed on Wednesday, and the remaining eight on Thursday.

Another first with this issue is the organization of the weekly mailing by all three branches of the Socialist Workers Party in New York on Friday before the Militant Labor Forums. For the past few months the mailing has been done by volunteers out of the Garment District branch headquarters on Thursday evenings.

The switch to Fridays will allow socialist workers and young socialists to join sales teams out on street corners and at plant gates on Thursday with the new issue. The mailing on Friday is being divided up so part of the job can be done by volunteers in the Brooklyn and Upper Manhattan branch headquarters as well. Socialists plan on integrating this as part of the evening’s activities with pre-forum dinners and the weekly forum series. All bundles to distributors and subscriptions will be sent out by 6:30 p.m. or so each week on Friday.

Volunteers are also organizing to make cars available to get boxes of the paper to the mailing locations, and bags of subscription copies to the Post Office. This will save thousands of dollars a year in charges previously paid to delivery services.

UPS workers win!

Continued from front page

workers than any other private-sector union contract in the nation, will also convert 10,000 part-time jobs to full-time and provide raises of more than 50 percent to many of the company’s 110,000 part-time employees. The pact provides a \$5-an-hour raise over six years to full-time drivers and warehouse workers. For part-timers, the deal offers raises of \$6 an hour over the life of the contract.

“These negotiations have taken place in an economic climate in which millions of American workers are seeing their health benefits cut and their retirement savings wiped out,” said James Hoffa, president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. “We have shown the nation that job and benefit cuts are not inevitable.”

As the August 1 contract expiration neared, the company was under tremendous pressure to reach a settlement with the Teamsters without an interruption of service. Many companies, fearing a repetition of widespread disruption in package delivery during the effective three-week strike in 1997 that shut the company down, shifted business elsewhere.

Ken Hall, cochairman of Hoffa’s negotiating team who five years ago headed talks under former president Ron Carey, noted that a contract settlement nearly fell apart several days earlier because the company was refusing to convert any part-time jobs to full-time.

Teamster members around the nation will vote on the proposed agreement over the course of the next month.

This new production schedule will necessitate a few changes in the times distributors and worker-correspondents send in articles and bundle request information each week. The *Militant* asks that distributors place bundle increases by 9:00 a.m. each Tuesday.

The deadline for Militant Labor Forum and other calendar announcements remains noon on Tuesday. For articles in the new issue of the *Militant*, worker-correspondents should send in their copy and sources by the end of the day on Friday at the latest, unless other arrangements are made with the editor. Information on how to send in articles, pictures, and bundle orders can be found at themilitant.com.



Militant/Greg McCartan
Above, press operators Emily Fitzsimmons, front, and Arrin Hawkins inspect the first four pages of the new issue of the *Militant*. Right, staff writers Jack Willey and Róger Calero take a look at the new pages.



U.S. floats trial balloon for new Iraq war

Continued from front page

weapons of mass destruction is “growing, not diminishing.”

Although he acknowledged there was no connection between Iraq and the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the prime minister said, “What we should learn from that is that if there is a gathering threat or danger, let us deal with it before it materializes rather than afterwards.”

British military officials announced five days earlier that they are withdrawing most of their 2,400 troops from Kosova, who are there as part of an imperialist occupation force. London’s *Financial Times* wrote that the move is “fueling speculation it is preparing to provide support to any US military attack against Iraq.”

The Bush administration, with bipartisan backing, has declared the countries of Iran, Iraq, and north Korea to be an “axis of evil” and legitimate targets of “preemptive” military strikes by Washington. All three countries have the technical capacity to build long-range missiles and rudimentary nuclear or biological weapons capable of threatening the United States, and are at odds with U.S. imperialism.

Buildup of U.S. forces

The new plans outline a massive assault by land, air, and sea that would involve up to 250,000 troops and a punishing bombing campaign by U.S. warplanes based in Jordan, Qatar, Turkey, and other countries in the region. “None of the countries identified in the document as possible staging areas have been formally consulted about playing such a role,” the *New York Times* reported. Jordan’s foreign minister told the paper that his government’s “public position is the same as our private position. Jordan will not be used as a launching pad, and we do not have any U.S. forces in Jordan.” In the late 1990s U.S. warplanes flew missions out of Jordanian air bases to enforce the “no fly zone” over southern Iraq. This zone, together with another over northern Iraq, has been imposed by Washington and London on that country following the 1990–91 Gulf War.

U.S. deputy defense secretary Paul Wolfowitz met with Turkish government officials in mid-July. Despite the collapse of the coalition government in the country, Wolfowitz said Iraqi president Hussein “presents a danger we cannot live with indefinitely.” He emphasized possible trade and investment gains the Turkish rulers might receive if Washington succeeded in toppling the government in Baghdad.

Washington has been building up its military forces in the region and stepping up production of precision-guided bombs depleted during the recent imperialist assault on Afghanistan. It has built a 15,000 foot runway in Qatar, the longest in the Middle East. Some 3,000 troops are stationed there. The U.S. military launched air raids against Afghanistan from that base. A massive set of 27 warehouses contain tanks and other armored vehicles that could be used in a war on Iraq.

A total of 20,000 soldiers are stationed in Qatar, Oman, Bahrain, and Kuwait, plus another 5,000 in Saudi Arabia. In Bahrain, the Navy’s Fifth Fleet has a headquarters on a 60-acre complex that houses a U.S. colony of 4,000 sailors, officers, and their families.

In addition to installing a protectorate in

Baghdad that could help police the region on behalf of its imperialist masters in Washington, the U.S. rulers sought through its 1990–91 war against Iraq to deal blows to its imperialist rivals in Europe and Japan. This inter-imperialist conflict continues to play out today and is part of what is pushing Washington to use its military force once again.

German, French, and other companies are biting at Washington’s heels by winning business contracts with Iraq and seeking greater economic ties with Iran. The latest example is interest in Iran’s first foreign bond sale since 1979. The prospect of earning between 8 percent and 9 percent on five-year bonds issued by the Iranian government “is attracting interest from Deutsche Bank AG, Pictet & Cie, and other banks outside the United States that are not put off by its place in President George W. Bush’s ‘axis of evil,’” reported Bloomberg News.

In June the European Union foreign ministers “gave the green light to launch formal trade relations with Iran despite heavy pressure from the US and Israel, which lobbied hard to delay negotiations or impose strict conditions,” the *Financial Times* reported. The agreement “could increase European companies’ advantage over their US counterparts once talks are concluded,” the paper noted.

And in Iraq, a number of companies outside the United States are quietly dropping financial damage claims against Baghdad in order to sign up for lucrative contracts through the UN’s “food-for-oil” program.

Groups oppose state of siege

Continued from front page

how the government is using it to attack democratic rights was issued July 15 by the Free Homeland Movement (MPL), Revolutionary Socialist Nucleus, and Paraguayan Communist Party. The organizations condemned the regime’s measure as “another pretext to continue with its policy of state terrorism and persecution” of opponents of government policies. They also rejected the protests by the pro-Oviedo forces as reactionary.

Oviedo leads a faction of the Colorado Party that is opposed to the ruling Colorado faction, headed by President Luis González Macchi. In 1996 Oviedo, then head of the armed forces, launched a failed coup against then-president Juan Antonio Wasmosy.

Bourgeois politics in Paraguay has been marked by sometimes violent conflicts between rival factions of the Colorado Party, the party under which dictator Alfredo Stroessner ruled the country with an iron fist for 35 years, until his overthrow in a 1989 military coup.

Oviedo supporters, who have blocked with Vice President Julio César Franco of the Liberal Party, are demanding the resignation of President Macchi, accusing him of corruption. Oviedo, who is wanted by Paraguayan authorities for his role in the 1996 coup attempt, remains in exile in Brazil.

Oviedo is a capitalist politician who uses an element of demagoguery to win support, posing as a defender of peasants and others devastated by the economic crisis. The antigovernment demonstrations involved not only traditional Oviedo supporters such as

DaimlerChrysler dismissed \$30 million in damages in order to win six contracts for trucks and spare parts, and put itself in the position for further orders from Iraq. The Austrian construction company Voest-Alpine MCE even sent back earlier claim payments in order to “save our chances for future contracts and for future business relations.” Between April and June alone companies forgave \$100 million in liability claims against the Iraqi government.

‘Preemptive’ strikes at home

Hand in hand with these war preparations, the U.S. rulers are continuing their assault on workers’ rights and constitutional liberties at home. The U.S. Justice Department asked the Fourth Circuit court to rule that courts are powerless to “second-guess the military’s determination that an individual is an enemy combatant and should be detained as such.” The appeal came in the case of Yasser Esam Hamdi, a U.S. citizen being held by federal authorities. A lower court ordered the government to allow a lawyer to meet with Hamdi.

The three judges on the Fourth Circuit court declined to rule on the Justice Department claim, and sent the issue back to the lower court. In their decision the judges wrote that the government claim is “a sweeping proposition—namely that, with no meaningful judicial review, any American citizen alleged to be an enemy combatant could be detained indefinitely without charges or counsel on the government’s say-so.”

army veterans and police, but peasants demanding measures to protect them from dropping prices of agricultural commodities and other aspects of the crisis.

According to a recently released United Nations report, more than 1 million working people in Paraguay are unemployed or underemployed in a country of 6 million inhabitants. About one-third of the population are living below the official poverty line. A growing number of peasants are landless.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

NEW JERSEY

Newark

Legacy of the 1967 Newark Rebellion and the Fight for Black Rights Today. Speakers: Earl Williams, father of Earl Faison who was killed by cops in April 1999; Moses Williams, member of SEIU Local 1199; Maurice Williams, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., July 19, 7:30 p.m. Dinner at 6:30 p.m. 168 Bloomfield., 2nd Floor. Donation: \$5 dinner, \$5 program. Tel: (973) 481-0077.

NEW YORK

Upper Manhattan

The Social Roots of the Crisis in the Catholic Church. Speaker: Angel Lariscy, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., July 19, 7:30 p.m. Dinner at 6:30 p.m. 599 W. 187th Street, 2nd Floor. Donation: \$5 dinner, \$5 program. Tel: (212) 740-4611.

African economic demands

It's not surprising that the imperialist heads of state at the G-8 summit rejected the economic demands made by African leaders. Washington and its allies, which represent a tiny minority of billionaire families, have nothing to offer humanity except wars and economic devastation.

The capitalist crisis facing working people in Africa has sharpened over the past several years. Two years of droughts and floods have ravaged vast regions of the continent and millions face starvation and famine conditions. Added to this misery is the AIDS crisis, where at least 7 million farmers in Africa have been killed by the virus over the past two decades. These conditions are tearing apart the social fabric in rural areas where farming skills are being lost and the capacity to work the land is eroding.

Far from a natural disaster, this is a social crisis emanating from the normal workings of finance capital. Imperialism warps the economic structure of semicolonial countries and keeps them tied down with the chains of underdevelopment.

The predatory trade policies of Washington and its imperialist rivals reproduce and exacerbate the unequal economic relations between the advanced capitalist countries and the rest of the world. For example, the agricultural subsidy programs of the governments in Europe, Japan, and the United States—a guaranteed source of income for the capitalist exploiters—robs semicolonial countries of some \$50 billion a year in farm exports. Under the impact of such policies sub-Saharan Africa's share of world trade has dropped to 1.3 percent, one-third of its level 20 years ago.

The modest demands by African heads of state that the

G-8 countries slash agricultural export subsidies to agribusinesses deserve the support of workers and farmers the world over. The proposal to cancel foreign debts is also crucial in addressing the devastating conditions the imperialists have foisted on the continent.

And the proposal for grants to construct an electrical power grid to provide energy across southern Africa is one step that would help transform the conditions of life for millions of people.

Today, sub-Saharan Africa, with 9 percent of the world's population, uses only 1 percent of the electricity. The imperialist countries, with 14 percent of the world's population, consume nearly 60 percent. These figures are just one example of the vast disparities in social and cultural development in the world today.

The imperialist rulers, however, have no intention of trimming their profits or forgiving debts to improve the lives of workers and farmers in African or other Third World countries. And despite their hand-wringing about AIDS, the chief concern for international finance capital is how to squeeze more and more wealth from the toilers in Africa, Asia, and Latin America to bolster their sagging profit rates.

It is in the interest of working people in the United States and other imperialist countries to back demands to cancel the Third World debt and to eliminate all tariffs and nontariff barriers erected by Washington and its main competitors in Paris, Tokyo, and elsewhere. Opposing these measures, which are used by the propertied classes to maintain their wealth and power, can strengthen our struggles against the superwealthy ruling minority, the common enemy of workers and farmers around the world.

Support the socialist campaigns

With the launching of Socialist Workers election campaigns in a number of states, workers and farmers have an important opportunity to join with a fighting, working-class alternative in the political arena to the capitalist rulers and their parties.

In response to the deepening attacks by the bosses and their government against the rights and living standard of working people in this country and around the world, the Socialist Workers candidates point to the only road forward for ending capitalism's growing worldwide disorder. That is through a revolutionary struggle led by workers and farmers to take power out of the hands of the superwealthy ruling class and to replace it with a government of our own.

The socialist campaigns are part of the resistance to the capitalist offensive against working people. They raise immediate, concrete demands on the government as part of the fight to defend workers and farmers from the ravages of the dog-eat-dog system of capitalism. They help promote books that explain these perspectives, such as *Capitalism's World Disorder* and *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution*.

The candidates and their supporters will be deepening their involvement in the important struggles being waged by working people, from carpenters, garment workers, meat packers, bus drivers, and others standing up against union busting, to protests in defense of immigrant rights. In addition, the socialist candidates will be speaking out in opposition to Washington's war preparations against Iraq; in support of the Cuban Revolution and for self-determination of the Palestinian people; and for the inde-

pendence of Puerto Rico and an end to Washington's military occupation of the island of Vieques.

Socialist campaigners will be in the streets alongside those protesting police brutality, like in Inglewood, California, where the cop beating of a Black youth was once again captured on videotape; and those in New York and New Jersey demanding justice and jail time for the cops who killed garment worker Santiago Villanueva.

The socialist candidates begin with an international perspective. That's why Martin Koppel, the SWP candidate for governor of New York, is visiting Paraguay and Argentina: to meet and exchange experiences with revolutionary-minded youth and working people involved in mounting struggles in these countries. And he will be making the lessons of these fights an important part of his election campaign.

Important petitioning drives are already under way or will soon be launched to win ballot spots for the SWP candidates. In Washington, D.C., supporters there are in the midst of collecting 3,000 signatures to place SWP candidate Sam Manuel on the ballot for mayor. And during the first two weeks of August an intensive petitioning effort will be undertaken in New York to gather 7,000 signatures to win a ballot spot for Margaret Trowe in her race for Congress. Those wanting to help in these efforts should contact the socialist campaign offices at the numbers listed in the article on page 10.

The *Militant* endorses the Socialist Workers campaigns, and we urge all our readers to pitch in to make the petitioning drives and all the other campaign events organized for the socialist candidates over the coming months a success.

Help fund reporting teams

This issue of the *Militant* brings to readers the first coverage from the reporting team in Paraguay. Coming issues will feature news from Argentina, Cuba, and Venezuela. We hope you can contribute generously to our fund that helps make these reporting teams possible.

The articles from Paraguay help working people around the world get facts on the growing resistance in that country, including peasant mobilizations against the government assault on their standard of living and other social struggles.

A highlight of the visit to Paraguay is the wide-ranging discussions with young people who are eager to discuss central questions in world politics, communist perspectives on the fight for power by workers and farmers, and the class struggle in the United States and the political work carried out by communists on the job and in working-class districts. Widespread interests in books and pamphlets published by Pathfinder Press reflect the desire to find a revolutionary perspective on how to respond to the effects of the economic and social crisis that is wracking the country.

Upcoming issues of the *Militant* will also feature firsthand reports from Argentina where the capitalist economic crisis continues to shake that country, and Venezuela where a showdown between U.S.-backed reactionary forces and the government of Hugo Chávez is building up again.

Working-class mobilizations foiled the pro-imperialist

coup in Venezuela in April, restoring Chávez to power two days after he was jailed. During that time Caracas was the site of an extraordinary sharp social conflict between the wealthy coup plotters and the working class. *Militant* reporters are on the scene in Venezuela talking with young people, workers, peasants, and others to get a firsthand view of the latest political developments, including the contradictions and conflicts among the various social classes.

In Argentina, where revolutionary journalists have landed, thousands marched through the streets of Buenos Aires, the capital city, last month to demand unemployment benefits. Since the country's economic collapse last December, which touched off a political explosion, the Argentine economy has shriveled by more than 16 percent, and more than half the country's 37 million people are living below the government's official poverty line.

These international reporting trips are a valuable avenue of exchange between workers and farmers across the globe. The teams bring information to working people in many countries who read the *Militant* and information on struggles inside the imperialist countries and elsewhere.

The *Militant* has received several welcome contributions already, including \$500 from one reader. Please send checks or money orders, earmarked "Travel Fund," to: The Militant, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014.

Charlie Scheer

Continued from Page 6

Scheer was a young worker no different than the youth that socialists are meeting today, she said. Worker-bolsheviks took him seriously and recruited him to the SWP, just as he took youth seriously and worked hard to convince them to give their lives to the revolutionary struggle. She said Scheer's life is an important example for young people today considering joining the communist movement.

"Charlie organized his life to build the party, to put the party at the center," said Tom Fiske, a member of the Twin Cities branch. Scheer was a stalwart of sales to industrial workers in front of plant gates, he said. "For years, he sold the *Militant* to auto workers every week in front of the Ford credit union; and it didn't matter what type of weather," Fiske said.

Jacquie Henderson, from Houston, wrote that the Scheers "had on their desk piles of names to 'call back' for *Militant* subscriptions organized with notes on when to call, and so forth.... It was like a military operation. They realized how much working people needed the *Militant*."

Paul Pederson, who joined the Young Socialists in 1996, said in a letter to the celebration that Scheer was one of the first communists he met. "I learned from comrades like Charlie that in the communist movement regardless of our age you act and are counted on as a political equal. Charlie impressed me because he was an active communist, not a retired communist."

Charles and Helen Scheer spent several years between the mid-1980s and early 1990s maintaining the party's leadership school in upstate New York.

Sigurlaug Gunnlaugsdóttir, a Central Committee member of the newly formed Communist League in Iceland, described in her message first meeting Charlie Scheer at the leadership school in 1986. "Myself and others who had become interested in politics in the 1970s and joined a radical Marxist group in Europe had not had a conversation with, let alone worked with, comrades from Helen and Charlie's generation. It was striking to me at the time that the SWP had members so different from what I was familiar with; they were cadres with a long history. They were real people, not legendary people."

Zeal in propaganda

In addition to drafting the *Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels also helped draft the statutes in 1850 for the first Communist League, Barnes explained. "Membership was open to those who 'show ability and zeal in propaganda, unswerving devotion to convictions and revolutionary energy,'" Charlie Scheer embodied these statutes, he said.

There is no such thing as a "communist type"—the movement includes a glorious variety of human material, Barnes said. "The peculiarity of proletarian revolutionaries is that the only way they do their work is together with others," he said. "They have no capital, no ownership of the mass media. A proletarian revolutionist can live only by conviction, not force," said Barnes.

"From 1937 to 2002 Charles Scheer never hesitated as a communist," Barnes said. "He understood and didn't blanch from the fact that it will take a mighty struggle to confront the resistance by the exploiters to giving up their prerogatives. He knew that injustice, if not fought against, would spread."

Barnes read from the back cover text of the forthcoming *Their Trotsky and Ours*, which was drafted days before Scheer's death. "History shows that small revolutionary organizations will face not only the stern test of wars and repression, but also the potentially shattering opportunities that emerge unexpectedly when strikes and social struggles explode," it states.

"As that happens, communist parties not only recruit many new members. They also fuse with other workers organizations moving in the same direction and grow into mass proletarian parties contesting to lead workers and farmers to power. This assumes that well beforehand their cadres have absorbed and grown comfortable with a world communist program, are proletarian in life and work, derive deep satisfaction from doing politics, and have forged a leadership with an acute sense of what to do next," Barnes read.

Their Trotsky and Ours is a tribute to Charles, and also to Helen Scheer, Barnes said. Barnes called the crowd's attention to photos on the display of Charlie and Helen Scheer on a trip to Nicaragua in the early 1980s. In one of these photos, said Barnes, Charles is introducing *Perspectiva Mundial* to youth in Nicaragua.

Among those attending the meeting were workers born in Africa and Latin America employed at area packing-houses who took advantage of the translation from English that other participants provided of the meeting. Charles would have loved to know that this meeting was translated into Spanish and French, Barnes said.

The meeting launched the Charles Scheer Memorial Fund to go toward the purchase of a piece of equipment that will help advance the communist movement's publishing program. Some \$4,100 in pledges and contributions were made at the event. (Those wishing to contribute can send their checks to the Charles Scheer Memorial Fund, c/o Pathfinder Press, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.)

Norton Sandler contributed to this article.

Woosh!—Dazzle the neighborhood with one of the European super-luxury cars coming on the market soon. Like the Maybach, which



Harry Ring

was slated for presentation in New York July 2. (“Half the world’s billionaires live in the U.S,” notes the sales manager.)

But actually it’s a bottom line item among the biggies—a tad under \$300,000. Somewhat pricier is

the Bugatti. It will do as much as 254 miles per hour, with a sticker price of \$700,000 to \$900,000.—*Los Angeles Times*.

On the iffy side—Observes the *Los Angeles Times* reporter: “Whether or not they [the big-time cars] make money is another question.” Adds Susan Jacobs, whose consulting company tracks the luxury car market, “as for making a profit, it depends how much of a boom economy materializes.”

P.S.—“Plummeting stock market prices across the world are sounding the death knell for generous [?!] workers’ pension schemes [plans] in Britain, according to research published today.”—*The Times*, London, June 17.

Cure-all—According to the *Wall Street Journal*, industrial safety posters are being outpaced by allegedly humorous ones intended to boost the sagging morale of office workers. A survey found nearly a third of “lower level” office workers were “somewhat,” “quite,” or “extremely” angry about their job. The figures were more than double the previous year.

The glorious ‘homeland’—“The punch clocks in West Seneca, New York, are destined for the dump.... The new system matches their hands with a collection of hand images on file.... They make an efficient, paperless way to track employee hours. They also eliminate ‘buddy punching,’ an industry term for workers who clock absent friends in and out.”—*Arizona Daily Star*.

Hearts big as rocks—“Quest Communications, the dominant local phone company in 14 states, said that it will allow some employees to take unpaid time off during July 1 through September to cut costs. Quest is the target of an ongoing Security and Exchange Commission inquiry into accounting practices.”—News item.

It ain’t funny—Responding to a state program, some 1,500 people in the state of Idaho have taken sessions on how to spot the symptoms of teen-age depression. Experts guesstimate 38,000 teenagers are hit by the affliction and only a quarter are getting treatment. Meanwhile, in Tempe, Arizona, the city and the university there will launch a program aimed at combating teen sui-

cides. Since 1985, Arizona has been in the top 10 states for teen suicides.

Mind your own business—“Breakdown Seen in Audit Oversight—As reports of bookkeeping irregularities mount, many observers are asking why checks and balances did not work.”—News headline.

Security jobs—The Transportation Security Administration, created in response to the 9/11 attacks, has a staff of lawyers—79 percent of them “earning” over \$101,000. According to *USA Today* columnist Walter Shapiro, “this is not an aberration”—51 percent of the agency’s initial hires are in the six-figure wage bracket—excluding baggage screeners.

Tenant farmers in Scotland organize, speak out

Continued from Page 16
dearly love to see changed.”

About 50 percent of the tenant farmers are members of the National Farmers Union of Scotland (NFUS), the main farming organization in the country. Many, like McCall, who is president of the NFUS’s Sutherland branch, concluded that another kind of organization is necessary to put forward the interests of tenant farmers today. Many tenant farmers “think that the NFUS is more of a landlords’ organization. It isn’t a union like a trade union. It is more of an amalgamation,” said McCall.

After the Land Reform Bill was published, there was a move by some tenant farmers to push for a right to buy outright, rather than waiting for the landlord to offer it for sale. In response, the NFUS organized a referendum of its membership on the question. Almost 60 percent of secure farm tenants voted for the right to buy.

Discussion in farmers’ organization

The NFUS’s official position is in favor of tenant farmers getting the first chance to buy land offered for sale and against the right to buy whether or not the landlord wants to sell. In response to the activity in favor of the right to buy, it has organized meetings around the country to put forward its view to tenant farmers.

Ross Finnie, the Environment and Rural Development Minister for the Scottish Executive, the government body, also has ruled out including the right to buy in the new legislation.

A document produced by the tenant farmers’ organization presents the views of farmers such as Duncan McAlister, from the island of Bute. Ninety-five percent of Bute is owned by Bute Estates, “so the chances of anyone being able to buy their own farm on the island are slim,” he points out, echoing a major concern of STFAG. Twenty-five percent of estates over 1,000 acres have been owned by the same families for over 400 years, so many tenants would never be able to exercise a preemptive right to buy the land.

For McAlister the “real value” of the right to buy the land they farm “lies in the effect it would have on the balance of power between landlord and tenant.” Many others make the same point: the landowner could not be so dismissive in their relations if they knew the farmer could buy the land from them.

Restrictions on tenancy

At present, secure tenancy agreements can be very restrictive. “A lot of small tenant farmers are struggling, and living in miserable housing because the landowner won’t fix the houses up,” McCall explained. Any improvements to the land or buildings have to be agreed to by the landowner and the value of a tenant’s investment is written down by the landowner over 10 years or so.

If the tenant ends the tenancy—either by leaving the industry or because there isn’t anyone to take over when they retire—all buildings and improvements revert to the landowner, regardless of the investment made by the tenant. “A farmer’s family can have worked a small farm for 100 years and he can still go out with nothing,” McCall said.

The governments of Scotland and the United Kingdom have both told farmers that the way to survive the economic crisis is to diversify their production. But in the case of secure tenant farmers, McCall points out, “the landowner has power of veto” over

what they do, whether setting up a turf farm, as he has considered, or renting out spare housing on a farm, as other farmers interviewed would like to do.

McCall said his tenancy also explicitly prohibits him from taking a job off the farm to get extra income, something not uncommon for tenancies. Landowners have a certain interest in whether secure tenants survive. “You don’t get secure tenancies now, because landowners are desperate to get tenants out,” he said. “Land is worth 50 percent less with a tenant on it.” Most landowners now impose limited duration tenancies.

McCall contrasts the situation facing tenant farmers to that of crofters, who over the years have engaged in struggles to gain security on the land they work. Since 1976 they have had the uncontested right to buy their own crofts. McCall said most crofters at a nearby community had bought their crofts under the 1976 legislation, built new houses, and are doing much better than many tenant farmers.

Landowners’ counteroffensive

Meanwhile, landowners have launched a countercampaign against giving tenant farmers any right to buy. Robert Balfour, convener of the Scottish Landowners Federation, described the proposed preemptive right to buy as “a virulent virus which is already eating away at our existing landlord/tenant sector.” He claims there is “a huge fear among owners of land that this was just the first step towards tenants having an absolute right to buy.”

Landowners have threatened to stop renting land on any terms if the proposals go ahead. “But what will they do with it?” asks McCall. “You can’t switch the land off until you want to use it again.”

In some cases tenants have been removed from farms and replaced by contract farm-

ing firms. “Moray Estates bought out five tenants and got in a contract firm to work the land. But they got £59 per [metric ton] cereals that it cost £65 per [metric ton] to grow, so they can’t make money.”

Landowners have also threatened to take the Scottish Executive to the European Court

of Human Rights if the legislation is passed. McCall said that tenant farmers would welcome going to court because of “the abuses we’ve seen of people’s human rights.” Whatever happens with the current legislation, McCall sees the dynamic of the new tenant farmers’ organization will continue.

Rally condemns cuts in health care services in Los Angeles County



Militant/Elizabeth Lariscy

Some 1,000 people held a protest outside Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors meeting June 27 against planned drastic cuts in health care services. The officials later voted unanimously to lay off 5,000 of 23,000 workers, close 11 of 18 public health clinics, and end inpatient services at one hospital. More cutbacks are planned next fall. The county health-care system provides services for 800,000 mostly uninsured people annually.

LETTERS

Vouchers I

In spite of Milwaukee’s voucher program being the oldest and biggest in the U.S. with 10,000 students, no credible research has shown that voucher students in Milwaukee fare any better than those who stay in the public schools. Voucher schools are not required to hire accredited teachers or regularly test their students, as are public schools.

Voucher schemes have been championed by right-wing forces out to destroy public education. A lesser-known role in their promotion has been played by figures who couch their support for vouchers in the language of “self-determination for the Black community.”

In Wisconsin, these include Annette Polly Williams, a Democratic Party state Assembly member who moved the original voucher legislation in 1990; Mike Holt, editor of the *Milwaukee Community Journal*, a newspaper oriented to the Black community; and Howard Fuller, who was prominent in the Revolutionary Workers League and in the early 1980s led a movement against police brutality in Milwaukee that managed to remove our “police chief for life” Harold Breier.

David Altman
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Vouchers II

In regard to the article on the voucher de-

cision, I feel that your correspondent has overlooked an important fact. He points out that [NAACP president] Kweisi Mfume states vouchers “mean fewer dollars for public schools...”

However most public schools receive between \$6,000 and \$9,000 per student per year. The voucher sum being offered by the Cleveland school system in the court decision was \$2,250. The balance of the per-student allocation remains with the public school system! This important fact should not be lost in the polemics.

M.W.
Long Beach, California

Support for five Cubans

Over 60 people packed a meeting room at the offices of the local government trade union, UNISON, here to hear Paul McKenna, lawyer for Gerardo Hernández, one of the “Miami 5” Cubans imprisoned in the United States for the “crime” of combating terrorism against their country.

McKenna gave a detailed account of the Cuban patriots’ trial, and of the injustices in that trial. In particular, he gave a powerful explanation of why it was a travesty to hold the trial in Miami, where intimidation by right-wing Cuban exiles was bound to impact upon the jury. He also gave a moving account of how his involvement in the defense of Hernández and the other defen-

dants had swayed his own views on Cuba, especially through his visits to that country, where he witnessed the deep commitment of the Cuban people to their revolution.

Father Geoff Bottoms, a Catholic priest from Blackpool, also spoke. He had just returned from Cuba, where he met with the wives and mothers of the Miami 5. He told of the movement in Cuba for their release, as well as the resolve of their families.

Helen Colley
Manchester, England

Keeping Marxism alive

Thank you for supporting workers in Latin America. Your reporting from Venezuela and Argentina are excellent.

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N.V.
La Antigua, Guatemala

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

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‘Capitalism has exploited women most brazenly’

Printed below is an excerpt from *Women’s Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle* by Thomas Sankara, a leader of the revolution in Burkina Faso 1983-87. The Spanish version of this pamphlet, *La emancipación de la mujer y la lucha africana por la libertad*, is one of Pathfinder’s Books of the Month for July. The item quoted is from the chapter “The revolution cannot triumph without the emancipation of women.” Sankara pre-

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

sented this speech to a rally of several thousand women held in the capital city of Ouagadougou on March 8, 1987, commemorating International Women’s Day. Copyright ©1990, reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

BY THOMAS SANKARA


We undoubtedly owe it to dialectical materialism for having shed the greatest light on the problem of the conditions women face, allowing us to understand the exploitation of women as part of a general system of exploitation.

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Dialectical materialism defines human society not as a natural, unchangeable fact, but as something working on nature. Human-kind does not submit passively to the power of nature. It takes control over this power. This process is not an internal or subjective one. It takes place objectively in practice, once women cease to be viewed as mere sexual beings and we look beyond their biological functions and become conscious of their weight as an active social force.

What is more, woman’s consciousness of herself is not only a product of her sexuality. It reflects her position as determined by the economic structure of society, which in turn expresses the level reached by human-kind in technological development and relations between classes. The importance of dialectical materialism lies in having gone beyond essential biological limits and simplistic theories about our being slaves to nature and having laid out the facts in their social and economic context.

Mastering of nature

From the first beginnings of human history, man’s mastering of nature has never been accomplished with his bare hands alone. The hand with the opposable thumb reaches out for the tool, which increases the hand’s power. It was thus not physical attributes alone—musculature or the capacity to give birth, for example—that determined the unequal status of men and women. Nor was it technological progress as such that institutionalized this inequality. In certain cases, in certain parts of the globe, women were able to eliminate the physical difference that separated them from men.

It was rather the transition from one form of society to another that served to institutionalize women’s inequality. This inequality was produced by our own minds and intelligence in order to develop a concrete form of domination and exploitation. The social function and role to which women have been relegated ever since is a living reflection of this fact. Today, her child-bearing functions and the social obligation to conform to models of elegance determined by men prevent any woman who might want to from developing a so-called male musculature.

For millennia, from the Paleolithic to the Bronze Age, relations between the sexes were, in the opinion of the most skilled pa-

leontologists, positive and complementary in character. So it was for eight millennia! As Frederick Engels explained to us, relations were based on collaboration and interaction, in contrast to the patriarchy, where women’s exclusion was a generalized characteristic of the epoch. Engels not only traced the evolution of technology but also of the historic enslavement of women, which occurred with the appearance of private property, when one mode of production gave way to another, and when one form of social organization replaced another.

With the intensive labor required to clear the forests, cultivate the fields, and put the natural resources to best use, a division of labor developed. Self-interest, laziness, indolence—in short, taking the most for oneself with the least effort—emerged from the depths of the human spirit and become elevated into principles.

The protective tenderness of the woman toward the family and the clan became a trap that delivered her up to domination by the male. Innocence and generosity fell victim to deceit and base motives. Love was made a mockery of and human dignity scorned. All genuine human feelings were transformed into objects of barter. From this moment on, women’s hospitality and desire to share were overpowered by cunning and treachery.

Though conscious of this treachery, which imposed on her an unequal share of the burdens, the woman followed the man in order to care for all that she loved. For his part, the man exploited her great self-sacrifice to the hilt. Later, this seed of criminal exploitation was set in terrible social imperatives, going far beyond the conscious concessions made by the woman, historically betrayed.

Humankind first knew slavery with the advent of private property. Man, master of his slaves and of the land, became in addition the woman’s master. This was the historic defeat of the female sex. It came about with the upheaval in the division of labor and as a result of new modes of production and a revolution in the means of production. In this way, paternal right replaced maternal right. Property was now handed down from father to son, rather than as before from the woman to her clan. The patriarchal family made its appearance, founded on the sole and personal property of the father, who had become head of the family. Within this family the woman was op-

pressed. Reigning supreme, the man satisfied his sexual whims by mating with his slaves or courtesans.

Women became his booty, his conquest in trade. He profited from their labor power and took his fill from the myriad of pleasures they afforded him. For their part, as soon as the masters gave them the chance, women took revenge in infidelity. Thus adultery became the natural counterpart to marriage. It was the woman’s only form of self-defense against the domestic slavery to which she was subjected. Her social oppression was a direct reflection of her economic oppression.

Class exploitation and status of women

Given this cycle of violence, inequality can be done away with only by establishing a new society, where men and women will enjoy equal rights, resulting from an upheaval in the means of production and in all social relations. Thus, the status of women will improve only with the elimination of the system that exploits them. In fact, throughout the ages and wherever the patriarchy has triumphed, there has been a close parallel between class exploitation and women’s inferior status. Of course, there were brighter periods where women, priestesses or female warriors, broke out of their oppressive chains....

Her status overturned by private property, banished from her very self, relegated to the role of child raiser and servant, written out of history by philosophy (Aristotle, Pythagoras, and others) and the most entrenched religions, stripped of all worth by mythology, woman shared the lot of a slave, who in slave society was nothing more than a beast of burden with a human face.

So it is not surprising that in its phase of conquest the capitalist system, for which human beings are just so many numbers, should be the economic system that has exploited women the most brazenly and with the most sophistication. So, we are told, manufacturers in those days employed only women on their mechanized looms. They gave preference to women who were married and, among them, to those with a family at home to support. These women paid greater attention to their work than single women and were more docile, having no choice but to work to the point of exhaustion to earn the barest subsistence for their families.

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14 The Militant July 29, 2002

Strikers shut down bus lines in New York

BY DOUG NELSON
AND OLGA RODRIGUEZ

FLUSHING, New York—Chanting, “No contract, no work!” and “No protection, no work!” several hundred striking bus drivers, mechanics, and cleaners—members of Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100—poured out of an emergency union meeting here July 14.

The meeting was called to hear a proposed deal to end the five-week walkout by workers at three private bus companies in this borough. Brokered by Queens Borough president Helen Marshall, several city council members, and the administration of New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg, the deal was designed to get the buses rolling on Monday, despite the lack of a hammered out agreement. Marshall unilaterally declared the strike settled and that the buses would be rolling again the following day.

“We have already been back a couple of times, and it’s the same thing—they want us to go back with promises,” said Sam Connolly, a striker who was attending the

meeting with his father, a retired union bus driver. “We say unless we have a contract that’s signed, sealed, and delivered, we have no deal!”

Echoing the sentiment of most of those who walked out, John Mantione, a mechanic at Queens Surface, said, “Politicians, once again, came to us with promises. You know how they say talk is cheap? Well, promises are cheaper than talk.”

The 1,500 unionists, who work for three bus companies—Queens Surface Corporation, Jamaica Buses Inc., and Triboro Coach Corporation—struck on June 17 for guarantees in wages, health and welfare, and job security. The bus routes, although run by private companies, are integrated into the New York Metropolitan Transit System.

The strikers have been without a contract since January 2001. Union members organized two brief walkouts in January and February of this year. The latest strike was sparked by the Bloomberg administration’s decision to renege on a March pledge to increase city payments to Local 100’s health



Militant
Members of Transport Workers Union in New York leave emergency meeting called July 14 to hear proposed deal to end five-week strike by workers at three bus companies.

benefit fund by 19 percent, the same increase pledged to the public workers union. Instead, the city government said they would provide 3.5 percent over two years.

The contract offer, presented several days earlier by Marshall, would provide increases

in health benefits funded by a \$2 million city loan, to be repaid by “productivity increases,” which many workers took to mean speedup and layoffs. And the deal did not address the question of what will happen to the workers and their union once the private bus companies’ contracts with the city expire next year. Union members are demanding contract language stipulating that their jobs and union contract will continue if a new company or the city takes over the routes.

“We have always had a much better productivity rate than the MTA [Metropolitan Transit Authority], but now they want more,” Teddy, a mechanic for 10 years at Queens Surface, told the *Militant*. “I don’t know where that can come from except from cutting back on safety. Productivity is a safety issue.”

At the contract meeting, a third of the more than 600 unionists present, according to *Newsday* reporter Bobby Cuza, had walked out of the meeting, just minutes after Marshall and City Council members from Queens had held a news conference outside to declare the strike virtually settled.

The workers made it clear that job security was of great concern to them. Michael Curran, TWU Local 100 division chairman for the Queens lines employees, told the press, “We are not going back to work until we have employee protection, and that means they have to guarantee our wages and our health and welfare and protection plans.” Responding to the Bloomberg administration’s charge that the union “has changed its tune” in raising the job security issue, Curran said, “From Day 1, it was brought up quite clear that it had to do with employee protection.”

Workers protest government in Paraguay

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gentine, Brazilian, and Uruguayan governments defeated Paraguay—until then the most advanced Latin American country in social policy—in a bloody conflict where most of the male population was wiped out, the country lost a large part of its territory, and British imperialism strengthened its domination in the region. The 1932 “Chaco War” with Bolivia regained some territory but brought further devastation.

After years of instability following a 1947 civil war between bourgeois factions, Gen. Alfredo Stroessner seized power in a 1954 coup. For 35 years, unions and political organizations were brutally suppressed. The Paraguayan Communist Party and other political currents were savagely suppressed. Stroessner maintained the rule of the Colorado Party through a combination of repression and patronage.

Paraguay today remains one of the least industrialized and most agricultural countries in Latin America—where in the 1960s there were still few telephones or electrical service in the capital city of Asunción. Unlike any other nation in the Western Hemisphere, most people speak both Spanish and Guaraní despite being an overwhelmingly mestizo population. In the rural areas today, many peasants speak only Guaraní.

In the 1970s and ’80s, capitalist development accelerated and the population grew in Paraguay. By the 1980s the world economic crisis began to be felt, sparking initial waves of protests against the regime. Eventually, the capitalist rulers, including Washington, decided Stroessner had outlived his usefulness and he was overthrown in a 1989 coup by Gen. Andrés Rodríguez, who became president. Because of the continuing weakness of

the bourgeoisie, however, the two ruling parties—Colorado and Liberal—remain riven by internal factions. On July 15, for example, the government of President Luis González Macchi declared a five-day state of siege in face of violent confrontations between police and supporters of Colorado Party politician and former general Lino Oviedo, who has mobilized his supporters to demand the president’s resignation.

Meanwhile, the class struggle has sharpened in city and countryside, and an entire generation of radicalizing youth, not weighed down by previous defeats, has grown up in the post-Stroessner period. With the end of the dictatorship and as working people fought to open up new political space, the small Communist Party went into crisis and continued to decline. The union officialdom has also become fragmented. On the other hand, the peasant movement has grown significantly in response to the effects of the economic crisis and farmers’ demand for land.

Because of the decades of dictatorship, it is still difficult for revolutionary-minded workers and youth to find books on communist politics in Paraguay. One member of Casa de la Juventud described how he searched for a long time for a set of Lenin’s *Collected Works* in Spanish, but could not find it anywhere he looked—bookstores, libraries, and even private collections of old CP members. Finally, two years ago, he was delighted to discover a set in a used bookstore and purchased it on installments. He just paid his final installment last month.

The eruption of mass peasant protests has had a politicizing effect on many youth looking for a way forward. The response to the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist delegation, as well as Pathfinder books, is one

example of that search for clear explanations. Several members of Casa de la Juventud, for example, have been reading “Their Trotsky and Ours” by Jack Barnes, or “The Rise and Fall of the Nicaraguan Revolution” in *New Internationalist* no. 9, and discussing some of the key questions of revolutionary strategy that are taken up in these documents. These include: What is a workers and farmers government? How can workers and farmers forge a fighting alliance? What is the place of the fight for national liberation in an anticapitalist revolution?

Casa de la Juventud and MPL members took the visiting socialists from the United States to the rural town of Caaguazú, a focal point of the recent peasant mobilizations, and to Ciudad del Este, on the border with Brazil—an area, known as the Triple Border, where Washington has taken its “anti-terrorist” campaign to harass members of the large Lebanese-Paraguayan community and to increase the U.S. military presence in the region. In each place, farmers, unionists, and political activists gave the U.S. communists a warm welcome, were eager to learn about political developments in the United States and exchange experiences, and purchased piles of Pathfinder books.

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—



July 29, 1977

NEW YORK—“They ripped us off every day. People here just thought they’d get a little even,” explained a young Puerto Rican couple, pointing to the remains of a supermarket on East Tremont Avenue in the Bronx.

A Black man who was passing by overheard their conversation with Catarino Garza, Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of New York City, and stopped.

“We’re pushed around by the cops, ripped off at the stores and can’t find no jobs,” he said. “I’ve been unemployed for three years.

“All it took was for the lights to go out this time. What next time?”

Just five days earlier, hundreds of thousands of people—mostly Blacks and Puerto Ricans—had taken to the streets when the city’s lights went out.

For twenty-five hours they opened steel shuttered shops—grocery stores, clothing stores, shoe stores, furniture, and appliance stores, jewelers—and entered by the thousands, as one participant put it, to “shop for free.”

Cops swept through the ghettos rounding up close to 4,500 prisoners—mostly on charges of “looting.” Jail cells were overcrowded, sometimes filled to many times their capacity, with lack of food, water, and medical attention the norm.

Having branded the thousands who participated in the explosion as “animals,” the city administration proceeded to treat them as such.



July 28, 1952

NEW YORK—Farrell Dobbs, National Chairman of the Socialist Workers Party, was named as the party’s candidate for President of the United States at its four-day 15th National Convention, which concluded its sessions here late this afternoon.

The convention also nominated Mrs. Myra Tanner Weiss, Los Angeles party organizer, as the SWP candidate for U.S. Vice-President.

A series of national television and radio broadcasts of their acceptance speeches and other talks by the candidates highlighted the convention events.

The candidates both pledged a vigorous fighting campaign to bring the emancipating program of socialism to the American people who are hounded by fear of war, insecurity and destruction of civil rights.

The two SWP banner-bearers called on the working people, racial minorities and all exploited layers of the population to join with the Socialist Workers Party in its militant struggle to break the grip of the capitalist political monopoly and to place a party of the American workers and farmers in office in Washington.

In the face of the terrible witch-hunt and repressions which have been growing in this country over the past years of capitalist war preparations, the convention gave a remarkable demonstration of high party morale, enthusiasm and revolutionary optimism.

Imperialists reject African aid demands

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farmers in Mali received 13 cents a pound after expenses, and this season they are estimated to receive about 11 cents. They harvested a record crop but the state-owned cotton company, which runs Mali’s cotton industry, incurred losses.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the average net worth of cotton farmers in the United States is about \$800,000. Many of these wealthy farmers will receive half their income from government subsidies this year. Farmers in Mali live in one of the least developed regions in the world where there is generally no electricity, no telephone service, and no running water.

Meanwhile, severe hunger is ravaging millions of toilers in Africa while Washington’s farm subsidies are plundering the economies of countries throughout the continent. African farm leaders and other government officials have been speaking out against the effects of the imperialist trade assault on semicolonial countries.

“The Americans know that with their subsidies they are killing so many economies in the developing world,” said Mody Diallo,

a leader of the farmers’ union in the regional center of Bougouni in Mali. “This is where America is heading. It wants to dominate the world economically and militarily.”

At the World Food Summit held in Italy this past June, Algerian president Abdelaziz Bouteflika called for the “removal of restrictions to foreign markets and the practices which distort trade.”

Harvests in southern Africa have been devastated for the past two years by alternating droughts and floods. According to a UN report 13 million people in six southern African countries—Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe—are facing famine unless they receive food aid. Officials in the region say 20 million people are suffering from hunger and malnutrition.

The UN-sponsored food conference in Rome noted that Africa’s food crisis was worsened by the AIDS virus, which has killed 7 million farmers in the past 20 years. Of the 40 million people around the world who are infected by the HIV virus that causes AIDS, more than 70 percent or 28.5 million live in Africa.

Workers stand up to Navistar’s threats

BY ILONA GERSH
AND JOHN STEELE

CHATHAM, Ontario—The Navistar truck company won a court injunction July 9 limiting pickets by 650 auto workers, who have been on strike here for six weeks. The workers are fighting a company drive to impose \$28 million in pay and benefits cuts. Amidst a campaign by the bosses, city officials, and local press to tar the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) union with violence, the court ruling allows only 50 pickets at the plant, all of whom must be members of CAW Local 127, and bars the union from delaying vehicles or people from entering or leaving the plant. The order also bans the union from blocking buses of replacement workers anywhere in Ontario.

The strikers have kept the plant shut down in face of attempts by the company to bring in replacement workers. Union picket lines have turned away buses of scabs, stopping them before they were able to get close to the plant.

Strikers run down by security guard

On June 24 one worker was critically injured and two more hospitalized after a van driven by a company security guard hit them outside the plant.

Antiunion forces have turned the situation on its head, using the attack as justification for limiting pickets. In an article about the injunction, the *Toronto Globe and Mail* said the strike has included “one serious incident of violence that left one Canadian Auto Workers member in critical condition.” City lawyer James Cooke told the press if a court order was not issued, “the city of Chatham is going to be hostage to the CAW.”

In the days leading up to the court ruling several strikers spoke with the *Militant* about their fight.

“Is the judge going to say where we can walk or drive in Chatham?” Alveana Willder said. “They might as well barricade all the streets.”

“I testified on Friday,” said Ken Burke, a striker who is compiling a scrapbook of strike photos. “They wanted to make a case that I was violating the personal right to privacy of the scabs, security guards, and managers because they are in some of my pictures. They are trying to make us look like the villains. What about our rights?”

A strike activist, Owen Bray, told *Militant* reporters, “I have followed the buses with scabs. The security guards follow us and try to drive us off the road. They take videos of us following the scab buses.

“They talk about rights,” said another striker. “What about Don’s right?” she said, referring to Don Milner who is still in critical condition at the hospital after being struck by the security van. He has massive internal injuries and multiple fractures.

Stakes for the labor movement

Navistar’s drive to restart production with replacement workers is seen by workers as a challenge to the labor movement. Legislation passed in 1995 by the Ontario Conservative government legalized the use of scabs. No major corporation has yet attempted to use scabs to break a strike in auto or truck assembly since 1945.

The July 4 *Chatham Daily News* ran an article reporting on a meeting between company officials, local police, and Ontario Provincial Police. The paper received a summary of the meeting, which was prepared by the cops in support of the request for the injunction.

Chatham-Kent police Inspector Tim Mifflin wrote, “The topic of the meeting was to address how the plaintiff (company)

would be able to meet their goal to run their plant. The key issue was the use of temporary workers.”

“Ultimately,” Mifflin continued, “the action of bringing temporary workers into the plaintiff’s facility will cause the CAW to bring workers into Chatham from around the province. This would bring traffic to a standstill on every major road in the area. If the temporary workers did reach the plant the danger would increase dramatically.”

The report to the Superior Court judge explains company officials then asked if the National Guard could be brought in to protect the replacement workers. The police told the officials that Canada does not have a National Guard, only an army, which can be deployed only on authorization of top federal government officials.

The provincial police at the meeting assured Navistar bosses that they could handle any “potential breach of the peace.”

About one-third of the current members of Local 127 participated in the last big strike at Navistar International in 1974. “It was quiet. It wasn’t like this,” said Don Duquette, who is a stockman. “The violence by the company is escalating like a snow-ball.”

Assessing the events, union member Florence Schaafsma said the company doesn’t want to settle. “They’re trying to provoke us. They want to drive the union out. But I don’t think the company expected the support the strike has won,” she said. “We’ve gotten a lot of support from the other unions. They know they’re next.”

“A lot of us didn’t know what to expect, either,” she added. “This is my first strike. But we’re doing what has to be done. We have to stick together.”

Cost-cutting drive

Cutbacks the company is seeking to impose include a \$4-an-hour wage reduction for assembly workers and a \$6-an-hour for workers in the skilled trades. Navistar is pushing to increase co-payments for medical care, lengthen the workweek from 40 hours to a compulsory 56 hours, reduce paid vacation time, use temporary workers, and contract out work. In addition, it is demanding the union sign a seven-year contract.

“In 1982 we gave them concessions on vacation time, Christmas bonuses, holidays, and wages. They said they were close to

Tenant farmers organize, speak out in Scotland

BY ANNE MACDONALD

SUTHERLAND, Scotland—Tenant farmers in Scotland are pressing their fight for land by getting organized and speaking out. The 2,000 to 3,000 farmers who scratch out a living on some of the largest estates in the country are demanding the right to buy the land they farm, whether or not the landlord wishes to sell.

This movement is growing as the Agricultural Holdings Bill is being discussed in the Scottish parliament. Recently the government enacted the Land Reform Bill, which grants crofting [small farming] communities the right to buy their land.

This struggle by working farmers is meeting resistance from the wealthy landed families in Scotland, who have maintained one of the most concentrated patterns of land ownership in the world. Only 1,252 people own 66 percent of all private land here. Some 47 percent of the country is owned by individuals whose estates are at least 5,000 acres.

Support for land reform reflects the deep desire of many in Scotland for redress in the archaic land ownership system. The land question is deeply tied into the national oppression of the country. Both the rising sentiment against the national oppression of Scotland and the crisis facing working farmers are bringing the question of land ownership to the fore.

Many farmers are struggling for survival, with the price farmers can sell their products having fallen below the cost of produc-

Workers fight for union in Australia



Militant/Ron Poulsen

Unionists in Sydney, Australia, picket Dayson, a subsidiary of the U.S.-based Trane corporation. The 11 strikers, who are on individual contracts, are demanding recognition of the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union and the right to collectively bargain for an enterprise agreement. The bosses have kept the plant, which refurbishes large air-conditioning units, running with strikebreakers.

Chapter 11 bankruptcy. Then they gave bonuses to management,” said Phil Jeremias, an assembly worker. “We make \$17 an hour less than [Harvester International] workers in the United States. They are not going to get concessions now. No way.”

In 1999 there were 2,500 workers in the Chatham factory. The company built a new plant in Escobedo, Mexico, and slashed the workforce to about 600. Now the company is threatening to move all the work to Mexico unless the union agrees to the concessions.

The strikers are proud of their union. “It’s not too often we have to use our union to fight. This is one of them,” said assembly worker Scott Brodie, who is assigned to the wood crew for the picket lines. He delivers wood to each gate for the nighttime fire cans.

In the United States Navistar International’s engine production plant in Melrose Park, Illinois, and a truck assembly plant in Springfield, Ohio, are both organized by the United Auto Workers (UAW). The union’s contract at the Springfield plant expires in October. Negotiations are slated to begin after the annual plant shutdown, which ends July 21.

Strikers told the *Militant* that representatives of the UAW visit the CAW in Chatham to learn about the strike and the issues involved.

Ilona Gersh is a member of United Auto Workers Local 174 in Michigan. John Steele is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 175 in Toronto,

tion. According to Scottish government figures, for example, the average net income of all cereal farms in Scotland last year was £743 (£1=US\$1.50), with 61 percent of small cereal farms, and 42 percent of all farms losing money.

To press their campaign for the right to buy, tenants have set up the Scottish Tenant Farmers Action Group (STFAG). Malcolm McCall is one of four tenant farmers on the Sutherland Estate, the fourth largest estate in Scotland. In an interview, he said that the organization was set up in February in response to the new bill, and represents the first time tenant farmers have had an independent voice of their own.

Growing support

The group has 350 members and is growing, McCall said. It is based mostly in the Highlands but has support in other parts of the country as well. The STFAG is organizing meetings around the country and winning press coverage on the situation facing tenant farmers.

McCall and other farmers are called “secure tenants” because they are able to pass down to family members the land they rent. Many secure tenants farm land that has been worked by their families for three or four generations. Some have been in the same family for 400 years. “The input to the land has been by them. Who really owns the land?” McCall asked.

McCall took over the farm from his father in 1965. He has 600 breeding ewes and

100 suckling cows, which he sells as store to other farmers to finish.

Long history of landlord domination

The estate is dominated by a 100-foot statue of the 1st Duke of Sutherland, George Granville-Leveson Gower, which looks down on the lands and villages below. According to the inscription, the monument was erected by “a mourning and grateful tenantry [to]...a judicious, kind and liberal landlord...[who would] open his hands to the distress of the widow, the sick, and the traveller.”

The Sutherland Estate extends more than 123,500 acres and is still run by the duke’s descendants. In the 19th century the owners forcibly evicted thousands of tenant farmers to make way for the more profitable raising of sheep and deer. McCall’s farmhouse, like other buildings in the area, has the Sutherland coat of arms above the door.

Stuart Black farms with his wife and daughter on the Seafeld Estate, the second largest in Scotland. “As my wife and I get older, we may want to sublet the farm but stay on in the house,” Black explained. “At the moment we would have to go cap in hand to the estate to ask for their agreement to this, and more than likely the idea would simply be dismissed.” The right to buy would strengthen their hand. “The system as it currently stands creates a culture of social subservience in this area that I would

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As we go to press...

Navistar truck assembly workers voted July 15 to accept a new contract, without any of the draconian concessions on wages, benefits, and working conditions demanded by the company. The pact is for two years instead of the seven the bosses wanted.