

THE MILITANT

EXCLUSIVE

October 1962: The 'Missile' Crisis as Seen from Cuba

— PAGES 8-9

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California farm workers march for union rights

BY ROLLANDE GIRARD

MODESTO, California—Building towards an August 25 rally at the state capital of Sacramento, hundreds of farm workers and their supporters are in the middle of a 10-day, 150-mile march through the San Joaquin Valley. Organized by the United Farm Workers (UFW), the main goal of the action is for Gov. Gray Davis to sign legislation mandating binding arbitration between any farm workers union and the growers if contract talks come to an impasse.

María Ramirez and Gonzalo Picazo arrived here with a busload of workers from Salinas and Watsonville, a longtime center of union struggles. The two work at D'Arrigo Brothers in Salinas. The 1,400 workers at this vegetable company voted for the union in 1975 but the owner has refused to sign a contract since 1987.

"This means that there is no raise," Ramirez said. "They pay overtime only af-

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Militant/Rollande Girard
Members and supporters of United Farm Workers march across bridge in Modesto during 10-day, 150-mile march.

Socialist campaign joins strikers, opposes war drive

BY JACK WILLEY

NEW YORK—The Socialist Workers campaign in New York State is picking up steam. Supporters of gubernatorial candidate Martin Koppel, Arrin Hawkins, the candidate for lieutenant governor, and the other socialist candidates have been hitting the streets with soap-box street meetings, plant-gate leafleting, and joining with other workers in struggle.

Paul Pederson, a packinghouse worker who is the Socialist Workers candidate for

U.S. Congress in the 12th district, visited striking members of the International Longshoremen's Association on the Brooklyn waterfront August 21. He and campaign supporter Sara Lobman extended their solidarity to the 50 dockworkers, who had walked out the previous day to oppose the company's cutthroat concession demands. A group of workers gathered to talk about their fight. Many learned for the first time from the *Militant* about the West Coast longshore union battle, and were outraged

at the U.S. government's union-busting intervention in it. One striker, originally from Cuba, warmly shook Pederson's hand and urged him to come back to continue the discussion.

Each Sunday campaigners have fanned out to working-class neighborhoods around the city. On August 18, Hawkins and Pederson soap-boxed with supporters in Brooklyn. Several workers and others signed up for more information about the campaign and 11 purchased the *Militant* or Pathfinder books.

Pederson campaigned in front of a union-organized meatpacking plant where he had previously worked. "I spoke to many workers I knew, who gave us a very friendly re-

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6,000 sign to put socialist worker on ballot for mayor in U.S. capital

BY JANICE LYNN

WASHINGTON—Supporters of the Socialist Workers campaign have collected more than 6,000 signatures, double the number required, to place Sam Manuel on the November ballot for mayor of this city. The petitions will be filed the week of August 26.

Manuel, a garment worker and longtime activist in the Black and labor movements, has been campaigning, along with campaign volunteers, throughout working-class neighborhoods in the city.

Manuel and a team of supporters began the day at a Health Fair held on the grounds of the now closed D.C. General Hospital. Shut down last year, it was the last public hospital in the city, and had been widely used by working people.

The city refused to keep the facility open despite numerous picket lines, meetings, and rallies by the hospital workers and others. The current mayor, Democrat Anthony Williams, is widely hated by workers for his role in leading the campaign to close D.C. General. He was also scheduled to be campaigning at the Health Fair but many workers there doubted he would appear.

"My campaign presents a program around which working people in this city and around the world can unite, and, through the fights we conduct today, begin to construct a revolutionary party that can lead working people to power and replace the rule of the wealthy with a government of workers and farmers," Manuel explained as

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Hotel workers mark 75 days on strike



Militant/Bernie Senter

Marking the 75th day of their strike against the Courtyard Marriott Hotel at San Francisco's Fisherman's Wharf, 45 members of Local 2 of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees and Bartenders Union led a picket of 100 people outside the hotel on August 15. See page 10 for Chicago hotel workers' contract fight.

Dockworkers: gov't intervention aids bosses

BY FRANK FORRESTAL

LOS ANGELES—Members of the longshore union on the West Coast are united in their determination to prevent the government from intervening in their struggle to stop the shipping bosses from imposing concessions on the workforce.

Following a coast-wide day of action by thousands of longshore workers August 12,

members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) have continued to show their opposition to the shipping companies' antiunion drive and threats by the White House to use strikebreaking legislation against their struggle.

The *Los Angeles Times* reported last week that Washington justifies its intervention under the guise of national security in wartime and quoted one official who said "any means necessary" be used to get supplies to "our troops."

Washington's threats have failed to undermine the dockworkers' resolve, however. One thousand marched here August 15 during the official opening of Maersk Sealand's new terminal. Maersk is a Dutch-owned shipping company, the largest in the world. The action was called on two-days' notice.

The AFL-CIO has assigned officials from the national trade union federation to help the ILWU win support on the West Coast.

The longshore workers are fighting for a new contract. The previous agreement, covering more than 10,500 dockworkers at 29 ports on the West Coast, expired July 1. The ports of Long Beach and of Los Angeles

are the largest on the coast, employing about 6,000 ILWU members between them.

With the White House threatening to intervene
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Atlanta: Labor Day Weekend Aug. 31-Sept. 2 Join a weekend of volunteer work

Over Labor Day weekend volunteers crews will be setting up Pathfinder's new distribution center in Atlanta, Georgia. Over three days, teams will help fix up the facilities, put up shelves, and stock books.

A feature of the weekend will be a public meeting Saturday evening, August 31, that will include presentations by Socialist Workers Party leaders Jack Barnes and Mary-Alice Waters. Dinner will be served beforehand, followed by a party.

Saturday evening, August 31: 5:30 Dinner, 7:00 Program
Brady/Conley Recreational Center, 3636 College St., College Park

For more information call Atlanta Pathfinder Bookstore: (404) 763-2900. Or see page 14 for contact information nearest you.

Farm workers in California march for union rights

Continued from front page

ter a 10-hour day and six-day week. Everything is expensive. We need to eat. It's important that the governor sign this bill. That's why we are marching," said Ramirez, who works a job packaging lettuce.

"The wages are low compared to the cost of living. They made themselves rich thanks to farm workers," added Picazo.

Other workers arriving on the bus work at the strawberry grower Coastal Berry. After a hard-fought organizing drive, workers lost the vote for the UFW in 1999 as the company mounted a campaign of threats and intimidation against union supporters. Coastal Berry also started a company union in order to get rid of the UFW, explained Francisco Cerritos. "But now there is a lot of interest" for a real union among the 1,200 workers now employed with the company.

Jésus Corona, who is an organizer for the UFW, added that "the vote was lost because of the violence, firings, blackmail, and lies of the company. But now more people are coming to talk to the union. It's not only about wages but about respect and dignity."

Arcadio Pasos came with co-workers from Ventura county in southern California. He works at Pictsweet Mushroom Farms, where workers are also fighting for a contract. They have initiated a campaign to encourage people to boycott the company's mushrooms until it signs a union contract, which they have been fighting for since 1987.

Francisco García has says this is his third march with the union. In the 1950s he traveled from Mexico and labored in the fields under the U.S. government's "bracero" program. "I walked in 1966, in 1994, and I hope to finish this one," said García who is now in his 70s.

As part of the movement to build the union, he has been on strike several times and campaigned to extend a grape boycott the union organized to put pressure on the growers to improve the working conditions. "With the union we won unemployment and disabilities benefits," García said. "The

struggle is big, and it doesn't end."

At its height, the union had 100,000 members, now it has 27,000. Some half a million workers are employed in the fields of California's growers.

A group of workers from the Charles Krug Winery in Napa Valley joined the march. "The union has been there for 20 years," said Jorge De Haro. "But sometimes the company waits three or even eight years before they sign the contract. During that time there is no raise." There are only three grapes companies that have a union in the Napa Valley, De Haro explained.

Housing is a serious problems farm workers are facing. "We make \$1,200 per month and the rent is \$1,000 per month," he said. "This is why we have to live two or three families together." Another worker from Salinas said he lives with 20 men in a house.

Growers oppose binding arbitration bill

The National Labor Relations Act, adopted by the U.S. Congress in the 1930s as a concession to the big labor struggles of that decade, allows workers to bargain collectively with employers; but this federal legislation does not apply to farm workers.

Struggles by farm workers in California forced the state to adopt legislation recognizing bargaining rights for farm workers with the Agricultural Labor Relations Act of 1975. But there is no remedy for the union if the employer refused to negotiate. For example, the UFW has won 428 elections in the past 27 years but employers at only 185 of these workplaces have ever signed a contract. The union argues the legislation, Senate Bill 1736, will put pressure on the employers to come to agreements with the union.

Manuel Cunhe, president of the Nisei Farmers League, an organization of 1,000 growers based in Fresno, told the press that the legislation would "destroy California's economy because all the services that rely on agriculture will dry up."

The California Farm Bureau Federation says the new bill is not needed because the 1975 law already provides remedies in case



Militant/Bernie Senter

Farm workers rally in Modesto, California, August 17 as part of 10-day march building upcoming demonstration in state capital to demand growers sign union contracts.

of an impasse in negotiations. Tom Nassif of the Western Growers Association, whose 3,500 members own farms on which 90 percent of California's vegetables are grown, said the measure would increase prices. "It's going to raise the cost of food to the consumer because," he said, "the agricultural community cannot bear all these increases in costs."

Answering this campaign by the growers against the bill, UFW organizer Jesús Corona said the "the growers can't tell the truth to the public; it would come out of their pockets. The bosses also want to keep their power of being able to fire and discipline workers."

UFW president Arturo Rodríguez and union co-foundervice president Dolores Huerta are leading the march, which is being greeted with support along the way.

Several high school and college students have joined the march. Juan Carlos, a junior at Turlock high school, said he is there "because it's the right thing to do. People in the fields earned the right to get a union contract."

Ismael and Teresa have jobs at a company in Salinas where workers recently began signing union cards. They are helping to win co-workers to become part of the organizing drive.

William Kalman, the Socialist Workers candidate for lieutenant governor of California, said he joined the march to "support the

extension to workers in the countryside the minimal safeguards and protection that unionized workers in the city have won. The Socialist Workers campaign backs farmworker organizing as part of the fight to win union wages, full unemployment benefits, workers' compensation and social security, decent housing, and protection from pesticides and other on-the-job hazards."

Several members of the Service Employees International Union, Teamsters, and United Food and Commercial Workers joined the action.

UFW president Rodríguez announced to the crowd that the union is expecting 150 buses to converge on Sacramento from all over California August 25. He invited all of the participants to come to the capital that day with co-workers and friends.

Rollande Girard is a sewing machine operator in San Francisco. Bill Kalman contributed to this article.

THE MILITANT

Dockworkers resist union busting

Longshore workers at West Coast ports are standing up to the shipping bosses' concession demands and union-busting drive, which is receiving support from the government. Read the 'Militant' to get the facts about the stakes involved in this battle against speedup, job cuts, and dangerous working conditions.



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UMWA calls for inquiry at Queecreek mine

BY TONY LANE

PITTSBURGH—Joe Main, health and safety administrator for the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), has called for a public inquiry into the July 24 Queecreek mine disaster. Eighteen miners narrowly escaped with their lives after 50 million to 60 million gallons of water flooded the mine in Somerset, Pennsylvania. One nine-person crew was trapped for 78 hours before being rescued through the efforts of fellow workers.

Main said such an inquiry is the best way to ensure a full accounting of the events. It would give Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) investigators the power to subpoena documents and witnesses. Main explained that “each year for the last three years, the number of miners killed on the job has increased. This year started out worse than last year and we came as close as you can to another disaster at Queecreek. It has to raise questions about what’s going on in coal mine safety in this country.”

Main’s call for a public inquiry was joined by J. Davitt McAteer, who headed MSHA for seven years under the Clinton administration.

At the state level there have been calls for a grand jury to investigate the disaster. A grand jury would be able to file charges of criminal misconduct against state and company officials. These calls came after it was made public that state and company officials knew of unmapped mine voids and water in

test wells when a permit for the mine was issued in 1999. An examination of the safety record of Queecreek’s parent company, PBS Coals, revealed other flooding incidents, and above-average accident and violation rates. Pennsylvania’s Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) did not order further tests before issuing the permit.

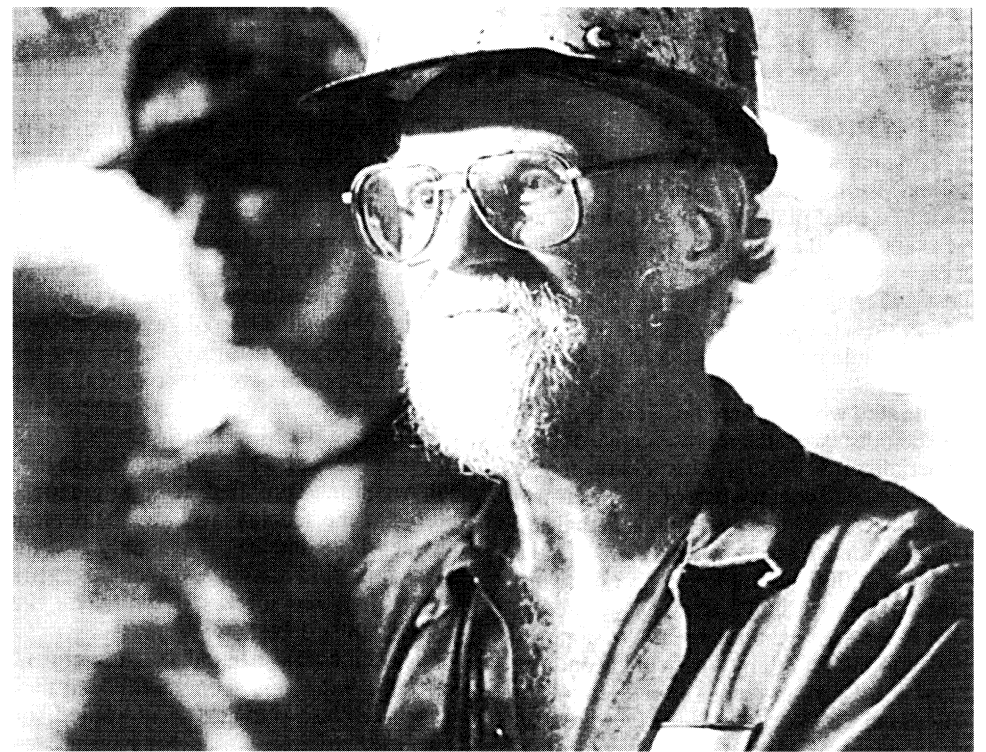
Pennsylvania attorney general and 2002 Republican gubernatorial candidate Michael Fisher has not commented on the call for a grand jury. The Pittsburgh *Tribune Review* reported that Fisher did not respond to repeated telephone calls.

MSHA rejects call for hearing

MSHA chief David Lauriski rejected the calls for a public hearing, stating that such an inquiry would not yield anything more than the investigations conducted by MSHA. He added that the number of injuries and fatal accidents in mines across the United States reached a low in 2001.

While the number of fatalities among all types of mining has been declining, deaths of coal miners have risen the last three years from 29 in 1998 to 42 in 2001.

MSHA does not have a reputation for quickly issuing reports on major accidents. For example, there is yet to be a report on the Brookwood mine explosion last September that claimed the lives of 13 miners. It was the worst U.S. mine disaster in nearly two decades. The UMWA has said MSHA cited the mine’s operator for 31 violations,



Miner applauds rescue workers during operation at flooded Queecreek mine

but never followed them up.

A report on the October 2000 slurry spillage at Martin County Coal, a Massey Energy-owned mine in Inez, Kentucky, was released a full year after the disaster. This flooding occurred when 300 million gallons

of slurry broke into old workings beneath a massive containment pond, and then poured out into valleys and streams below. Investigations showed that the solid rock barrier between the pond and the mine below was less than the company claimed and that inaccurate mine maps played a major role in the accident. MSHA fines for the spillage totaled \$110,000 while Massey’s cleanup bill was \$40 million.

Penn State professor Raja Ramani, appointed to head a state commission of inquiry into the Queecreek disaster, was interviewed by the *Associated Press*. Under the headline “United States world leader in mine safety, expert says,” Ramani was quoted as applauding mine safety in this country. He said “high productivity rates...have helped ensure that not as many miners are exposed” to the dangers of mining.

In a statement on the successful rescue at Queecreek, Jack Gerard, president of the National Mining Association, spoke of the industry’s “innovative and effective safety programs.” His statement claimed that there had been “a 42 percent decline in coal mine fatalities in the last decade.”

The decline in fatalities pointed to by Gerard ignores the fact that a declining number of coal miners are producing more and more coal. The rate of fatalities for coal miners has not changed over the last 10 years. Between 1990 and the present, this rate has been between three and four miners killed for every 10,000 miners. The only years it dropped below three was in 1997 and 1998. Since then, the rate has been increasing.

Two more miners killed

In early August two more coal miners lost their lives, bringing to 19 the number killed this year. By this time last year 13 miners had died in mining accidents.

Jason Moore, a 23-year-old contract miner at the Laurel Creek mine in southern West Virginia, was killed August 12 when he was crushed between the boom of a mining machine and the roof of the mine. The mine is owned by Arch Coal, the second largest coal corporation in the country. Moore was employed by Titan Mining, which operated the mine as a contractor for Catenary Coal, one of Arch’s nonunion arms. An MSHA study showed that contractors account for 30 percent of all mine fatalities and injuries.

In Pennsylvania, Edward Schall, 66, was killed August 13 at a strip mine in Armstrong County, northeast of Pittsburgh, when he fell 24 feet from a highwall onto rocks below. He was walking through the stripped mine area to his work site in the early morning hours, traversing the highwall to avoid water holes when he fell.

Tony Lane is a member of United Mine Workers of America Local 1248 in southwestern Pennsylvania.

Judge won’t ‘rubber stamp’ illegal gov’t jailings

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

The case of Yaser Esam Hamdi, dubbed an “unlawful enemy combatant” by the Bush administration, remains in dispute between the Justice Department and the U.S. District Court in Norfolk, Virginia. It “has become a test case on the limits of government power to hold its citizens indefinitely without a trial and without a lawyer,” reported an Associated Press dispatch.

Federal judge Robert Doumar said he would not be a “rubber stamp” for the government in denying the U.S. citizen his constitutional rights. “I have no desire to interfere with the military,” he said. “I do have a desire to see that people are treated like human beings.”

Doumar ruled August 16 that a nine-paragraph declaration by a Defense Department special adviser was insufficient to justify holding Hamdi indefinitely without charges. It was the second time that the judge had demanded the government provide him with more information about the capture and imprisonment of Hamdi.

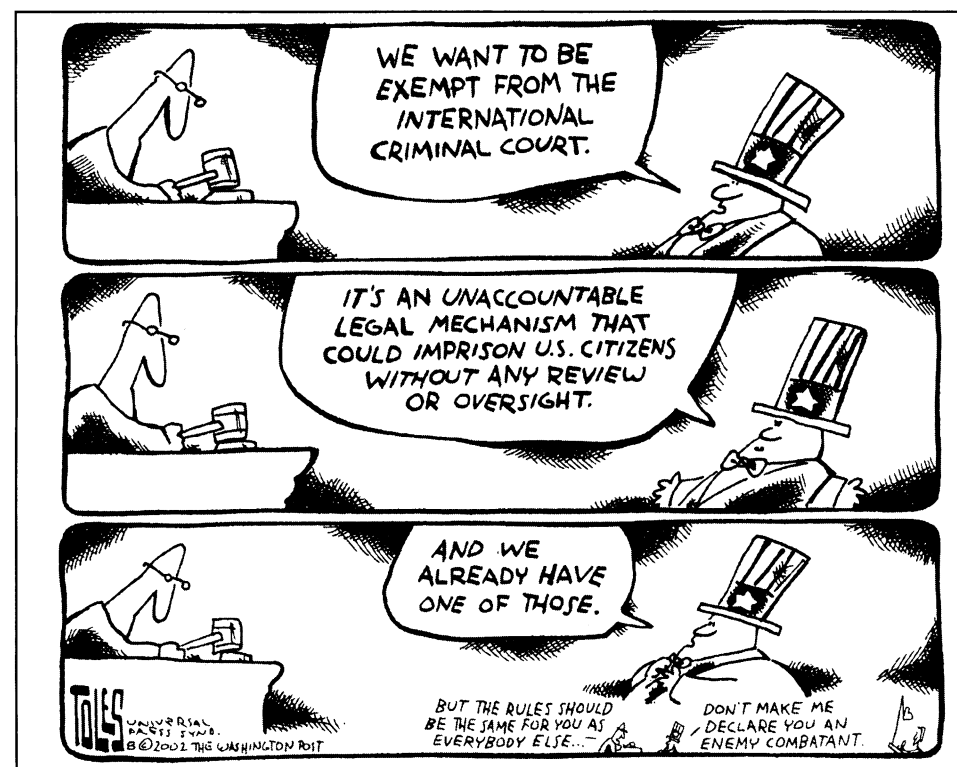
The adviser, Michael Mobbs, claimed that Hamdi had affiliated with a Taliban military unit in Afghanistan that surrendered to Northern Alliance forces in late 2001. According to the *Washington Post*, Mobbs said that a U.S. military “screening team” determined that Hamdi “met the criteria for enemy combatants.”

Doumar said Mobbs’s document “leads to more questions than it answers.” The judge noted that it did not have “substantial” details, such as whether Hamdi shot anyone or why he was transferred to the military prison in Norfolk. He added that “a close inspection of the declaration reveals that Mr. Mobbs never claims that Hamdi was fighting for the Taliban.”

“If the Court were to accept the Mobbs Declaration as sufficient justification for detaining Hamdi,” Doumar wrote, “this Court would be acting as little more than a rubber stamp.” The due process, he stated, requires more than a “basic assertion by someone named Mobbs that they have looked at some papers and therefore they have determined that he should be held incommunicado.”

Hamdi was captured in Afghanistan during Washington’s bombing raids last November and taken to the U.S. prison camp in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, along with hundreds of others. After informing prison authorities about his citizenship he was moved to the military prison in Norfolk, where he has been in solitary confinement since April 5.

Both a federal public defender assigned to the case and Hamdi’s father have sought to meet with the 21-year-old youth. The judge has twice granted requests to visit Hamdi, but the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Richmond intervened on behalf



of the Justice Department to prevent the visits from taking place.

‘Ten years? A lifetime?’

Doumar noted that it seemed too easy for the government to label someone an enemy combatant and use it to arrest and imprison someone indefinitely. He said the document by Mobbs doesn’t state how long Hamdi should be in jail and for what purpose. “How long does it take to question a man?” He asked. “A year? Two years? Ten years? A lifetime?”

Hamdi’s incarceration, he remarked, “sets the most interesting precedent in relation to that which has ever existed in Anglo-American jurisprudence since the days of the Star Chamber,” referring to the English kings’ secret court from the 1400s to the 1600s.

“If the government succeeds in this case, if its arguments are upheld it would mean that anybody, anytime could be labeled an enemy combatant by the attorney general and arrested in the middle of the night and locked away in a military brig,” said Stephen Dycus, a national security law specialist at Vermont Law School.

In a related development, the Bush administration has rebuked another challenge about its use of “antiterrorism powers,” this time from the judiciary committees of the House and Senate seeking information about broader domestic spying operations approved under the U.S.A. Patriot Act.

According to the *New York Times*, the House committee sent a list of 50 questions to U.S. attorney general John Ashcroft requesting information about “roving” sur-

veillance; FBI snooping into bookstore, library, and newspaper records; and subpoenas under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) served on U.S. citizens and immigrants with legal documentation. The Senate committee reportedly sent 27 unanswered letters seeking similar information.

Instead of answering the questions, U.S. assistant attorney general Daniel Bryant sent a letter saying that the information on roving surveillance is “classified” as “provided in Section 206 of the U.S. Patriot Act.” He stated that under FISA, the information would be “provided to the intelligence committees in an appropriate channel.”

By placing the government’s domestic spying under the umbrella of “foreign intelligence surveillance,” the Justice Department makes it more difficult “to continue the traditional Congressional process of oversight of law enforcement activities,” noted Harold Koh, former assistant secretary of state in the Clinton administration.

Congressman John Conyers, the ranking Democrat on the House Judiciary Committee, called the move “another shot in this administration’s ongoing war against open and accountable government.”

Despite Conyers’s statement, not much has been heard from the House of Representatives or the Senate on the White House moves to erode civil liberties, since both legislative bodies approved the U.S.A. Patriot Act. That law built on the Star Chamber provisions of the 1996 Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, allowing “preventive” detention on the basis of “secret evidence.”

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Protests greet U.S. official's visit as depression grips Argentina

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

Threatening to walk out in protest if U.S. official Paul O'Neill carried out a planned visit to a Ford plant in Buenos Aires, auto workers forced a last-minute change in the treasury secretary's itinerary during his August 6-7 visit to Argentina. In light of the threat, the visit was canceled for "security and schedule reasons," said a Ford spokesman.

The auto workers were not alone in showing their distaste at the representative of U.S. imperialism. O'Neill's whistle-stop in the crisis-wracked country, part of a four-day trip to South America that also took in Brazil and Uruguay, drew protests wherever he surfaced.

Some 3,000 unemployed workers and others rallied in the Plaza de Mayo on August 6, the city's central square, to demand Washington and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) stop their "interference" in Argentina's affairs. This and other protests went ahead in spite of a massive police mobilization in the capital.

One stop at a Buenos Aires soup kitchen funded by the World Bank, the imperialist agency touted as specializing in "development assistance," was designed to allow O'Neill to "meet some of the victims of the recession in person," reported Reuters. "But tight security did not allow much contact with the public and his cavalcade sped past buildings sprayed with slogans like 'O'Neill stay away' and 'Get the hell out IMF.'"

In his talks with Argentine officials, O'Neill offered no promises of loans or other financial assistance. "There was an emphasis on the resolution by the government to move forward quickly in the discussions with the IMF," he said of his discussions with Economy Minister Roberto Lavagna.

As Argentina's crisis has deepened and depression conditions have become generalized, IMF officials have refused to provide new loans until the government of President Eduardo Duhalde draws up a "sustainable" plan to their satisfaction. "Reining in public spending" would be part of such an approach, noted the *Washington Post*.

In contrast, O'Neill declared Washington's support for a \$1.5 billion IMF loan to Uruguay, and a \$30 billion loan package by the agency to Brazil.

"Every country is different...even countries that are very close together can be very different," said O'Neill, the man who last year described Argentina—an exporter of

beef and other products for more than a century—as a "laid-back" place with "no export industry to speak of."

In contrast to O'Neill's statement, Joseph Stiglitz, a former chief economist at the World Bank, has emphasized that through the 1990s Argentine governments followed policies of privatization of government services and other "reforms," including the currency peg, that were recommended by the IMF and other imperialist agencies.

Writing in the May 12 *Washington Post*, Stiglitz observed, "The IMF said make cuts and Argentina complied, trimming expenditures at the federal level...by 10 percent between 1999 and 2001." The only government spending that wasn't cut, Stiglitz noted, involved interest payouts on the government's debt.

"The cuts exacerbated the downturn," wrote the bourgeois economist. "Had they been as ruthless as the IMF had wanted, the economic collapse would have been even faster. Social unrest would have come earlier."

Protests for jobs, payment of wages

In frequent protests, strikes, and workplace occupations, working people in Argentina are demanding jobs, the payment of back wages, and a measure of government protection against the impact of the crisis.

On August 7, 70 unemployed workers occupied a Repsol-YPF oil distribution fa-

cility in Comodoro Rivadavia, a coastal city on the southern plains of Patagonia. "We are prepared to resist until we win our objective of jobs for 800 laid-off comrades," said Carlos Vargas, of the Comodoro Rivadavia Federation for Land and Housing. The federation is affiliated with the Argentine Workers Federation (CTA), one of three national union federations. "We demand real jobs." One option, said Vargas, "is that all the workers at Repsol work for eight hours only, without losing any wages. In this way 1,200 jobs would be generated."

Faced with threats of eviction by the police, the workers threatened to set the place on fire. Meanwhile, the company cut off water to the plant and the occupiers, who have won solidarity from broader layers of working people in the region.

On the next day 5,000 workers from around the province of Entre Ríos marched in Paraná, to protest the privatization of the state bank and energy enterprises.

Argentine news agencies reported on August 16 that state workers in the city of San Juan, near the country's border with Chile, occupied the "majority of public buildings" as they stepped up their fight to force the government to pay wages owed to them from February through July.

Depression conditions

As the IMF officials and representatives of the imperialist governments insist on fur-



ther restrictions in government spending, rising unemployment and inflation are driving the living standards of millions of Argentines down to unprecedented levels. More than 40 percent of the working-age

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Workers protest thallium poisoning of 65

BY BEVERLY BERNARDO

TRAIL, British Columbia—Two former contract construction workers at Teck Cominco's lead and zinc smelter here, Craig Koivisto and Rick Popoff—among 65 workers onsite found to have high levels of thallium—have recently died. The others who were poisoned by the highly toxic metal, a banned substance that was at one time used in rat poison, are anxiously awaiting the results of the coroner's report. Both workers were in their 40s.

Since then, tests have revealed the subsequent exposure of 15 more workers to high thallium levels. A Canadian Broadcasting news bulletin indicates that this time the workers—who were performing the same operation as their poisoned co-workers—

knew about the thallium but weren't adequately protected by their safety equipment.

A byproduct of the lead smelting process, thallium can cause serious nerve damage, kidney failure, and blindness. In August of last year carpenters and welders working at the smelter, located some 250 miles east of Vancouver, complained of flu-like symptoms, including diarrhea, sore throat, and nausea. At first officials of the company and the Workers Compensation Board (WCB) told the workers their problems were unrelated to the worksite. But when the symptoms persisted, about 200 men were tested for thallium poisoning.

The 65 who tested positive had been doing repair and maintenance work on a boiler and furnace. The urine samples of many

showed amounts of thallium 20 times the level considered acceptable. At least two workers—Dean Moon and Carey Bagg, who had worked on the same crew—are still too sick to return to work. At 27 times the allowable level, Bagg had the highest thallium concentrations of any of those tested.

The metal was released into the air when pipes in the smelter were heated, Moon told the *Militant*. Concentrations of between half a percent and 1.2 percent are considered to be within the bounds of safety, he said, but tests on the walls showed levels of between 21 and 29 percent. Concentrations were even higher, he explained, where the pipes were thinnest and needed most work.

The company did not warn the workers about the presence of thallium, let alone the fact that it can be absorbed through the skin. Teck Cominco was fined \$270,000 for allowing the men to work in highly contaminated areas and for not disclosing the presence of thallium to the workers.

David Thompson, the company CEO, admitted at a September 7 press conference last year that although pre-work tests had been done on the air inside the boiler, no samples of the material being worked with had been analyzed. When it was finally tested, the latter showed much higher levels of the substance.

Moon, who is 24 years old, said that he still suffers from fatigue, short term memory loss, and pains in his hands and legs. Numerous doctors have told him that he'll never be fit to work as a carpenter again.

Union backing

For his part, Carey Bagg, along with his wife Nancy, is fighting to get the WCB to restore the benefits that it cut off in March on the alleged grounds that there was no "objective evidence" that he could not return to work. Bagg still suffers from insomnia, muscle spasms, abdominal pain and many other symptoms. "He's not getting any worse, but he's not getting any better, either," said Bagg's wife to the Canadian Press news agency.

"There's been no follow-up by either the WCB or the company. If we didn't have the union fighting for us I don't think we'd have the energy to deal with them," she told the *Militant*. Both the Steelworkers and Carpenters unions have been working to see that the workers get the treatment they need and that the company and WCB meet their obligations to the injured workers.

Both Carey and Nancy Bagg stressed that they are anxious to make the facts of the thallium poisoning more widely known.

Beverly Bernardo is a meat packer.

Who are the Cuban revolutionaries framed and jailed by Washington?

Fernando González

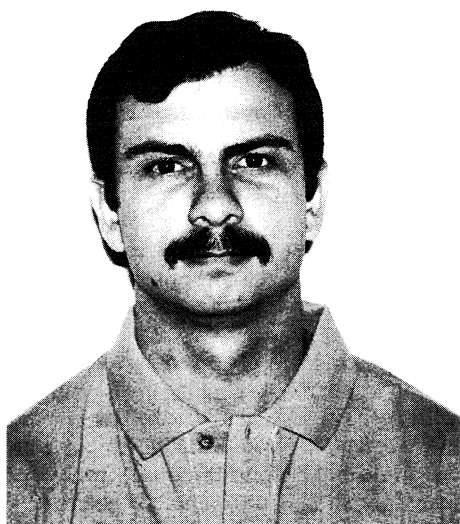
Five Cuban revolutionaries are currently serving prison terms of between 15 years and a double life sentence after being framed up and convicted in June 2001 in a U.S. federal court. They are René González, Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, and Fernando González.

The five revolutionaries were in the United States on an internationalist mission to defend the sovereignty of their country and the Cuban Revolution. They gathered information on the activities of counterrevolutionary groups in Florida—organizations with a history of launching violent attacks on Cuba from U.S. soil. The groups have been able to operate with impunity from Florida, often with the assistance of, training by, and funding from the U.S. government.

Unable to prove any illegal acts by the five men, the federal government pushed through convictions on a series of conspiracy charges, including conspiracy to act as an unregistered agent of a foreign power, to commit espionage, and to commit murder.

An international campaign is being waged by various organizations to explain the truth about the cases of the five Cubans and to demand they be released from prison. Extensive information on this fight can be found at themilitant.com.

The *Militant* is running short biographi-



Fernando González

cal sketches of each of the five. The biographies of Gerardo Hernández and René González appeared in the August 19 and 26 issues respectively. Following is the biography of Fernando González.

"I restate my pride in being part of the Cuban people and of their revolution," wrote Fernando González Llorca in a letter to Cuba, before being sentenced to 19 years in a U.S. jail in December, 2001.

González was born in Havana on August 18, 1963. During the period of his school-

ing, he took on leadership responsibilities in his high school and university students organizations, as well as the Union of Young Communists.

In 1987 González graduated from the Raúl Roa García Higher Institute of International Relations.

From 1987 to 1989, González, like hundreds of thousands of other volunteers, joined the Cuban military contingent fighting alongside the armed forces of newly independent Angola. The young Cuban served in a tank battalion during the defeat of the invading army of the South African apartheid regime—an outcome in which the Cuban volunteers played a decisive role. González was awarded medals of honor for his part in the fighting. In 1988, during his tour of duty in Angola, he was taken into membership of the Cuban Communist Party.

In the mid-1990s González left Cuba for the United States and a new revolutionary mission. His principal task, reports Prensa Latina, was to keep Orlando Bosch, a known counterrevolutionary terrorist, under surveillance. Bosch is accused in Cuba of the October 1976 bombing of an Air Cubana jet off the coast of Barbados. The attack killed all 73 passengers and crew.

González's mother, Magali Llorca, describes her son as "a typical Cuban," who "tries to dance" and "likes to play baseball, participated in every voluntary work effort, and loves music." He is not an extraordinary human being, she said, but "a normal individual."

Longshore workers rally

Continued from front page

tervene in the negotiations and use the Taft-Hartley law, ILWU members interviewed here say the stakes have gone up for the union and for the entire labor movement. Due to publicity about the struggle over the past several weeks, many more working people know about the Pacific Maritime Association's (PMA) assault on the union and the ILWU's moves to defend itself. The PMA represents nearly 80 shipping companies and stevedore operators.

Workers at ports from San Diego to Seattle move about \$300 billion worth of goods in a year, accounting for about 7 percent of the U.S. gross domestic product. A dock strike could cost the employers as much as \$1 billion a day.

Adjacent to large oil refineries and other industries, the port here is a shipping, trucking, and rail center where tens of thousands of workers are employed. The sheer size of the operation, including thousands of stacked containers, massive cranes, thousands of truck drivers weaving their way through the ports, and large intermodal rail yards, are a good indication of the employers' stake in the outcome of the fight.

Public hearings on the dispute

The day after the rally at Maersk, the California state legislature sponsored a public meeting on the contract dispute on the waterfront at Banning's Landing Community Center. The hearings were conducted by Democratic politicians who say they are opposed to federal intervention.

At least 500 dockworkers came out in force, quickly filling the 300 seats and jamming the aislesways and back of the room. Their disciplined presence put a noticeable stamp on the hearings. Many refused to take off their white union caps.

On labor's side, several ILWU negotiators described the tense talks with the bosses. Peter Peyton, from the ILWU Coast Legislative Action Committee, explained that the PMA had been planning its assault for two years. He reviewed how the PMA has been active in Washington, D.C., lobbying the government to intervene. The union official said the PMA had hired a battery of public relations firms, lawyers, and academics.

Peyton said union officials went into the negotiations willing to offer concessions, particularly on the issue of technology. But they were "stunned" when the PMA rejected their offer. He said the officials were further "stunned" when the government said it would intervene in the negotiations. Peyton said Thomas Ridge, director of the Office of Homeland Security, has raised putting language in national security legislation aimed at curtailing dockworkers' ability to strike.

Another official, David Arian, former ILWU president and a negotiator, said several government agencies have been until recently in almost daily contact with the union. He said the union was told "over and over again" that the government would intervene, that they were considering using

Taft-Hartley legislation, militarizing the ports by using the Navy, putting an end to coast-wide bargaining, and imposing other antistrike legislation. Arian also said the union had gotten calls from the Department of Defense.

Support from other unions

The hearings also included statements of support from other unions. Gary Smith, who works for the Port Division of the Teamsters, said the Teamsters would honor all picket lines should there be a strike. He also noted that his union is trying to organize the 18,000 drivers at the ports who do not have union representation. These drivers, the majority of whom are of Mexican descent, have waged important struggles in the past for union representation. He also explained that government intervention weakens unions, citing the fact that the government has intervened in the Teamsters for years.

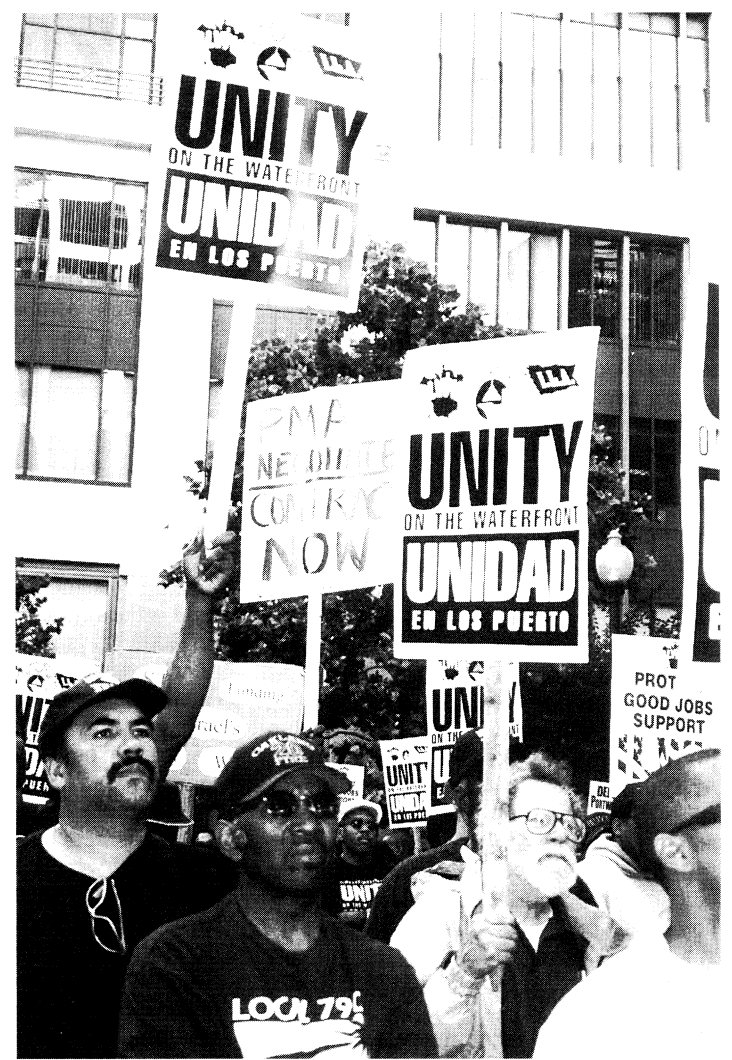
Miguel Contreras, executive secretary-treasurer of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO, said the government intends to "take away the right to strike." The PMA's moves to involve the White House are part of a "planned attack" on the union. He said the ILWU had the support of the AFL-CIO.

For the most part, the bosses boycotted the hearings. Joseph Miniace, president of PMA, was a no-show. The West Coast Waterfront Coalition (WCWC) decided not to attend, saying that it did not consider itself

"part of management." When this was announced, the crowd responded with laughs of disbelief and boos.

The WCWC, a coalition of such giant corporations as Wal-Mart, Home Depot, and Target, was created to support the PMA.

The only spokesman for the bosses was Jack Suite, a leading PMA negotiator. He echoed the Department of Labor's position, which claims the government is "neutral" in the talks. At the hearings Suite deflected most questions that the threat of government intervention was "speculative." When he said that the PMA had not been in contact with the Waterfront Coalition, yells of "bullshit" rang out from the audience.



Militant/Shirley Peña
Dockworkers rally August 12 in Oakland, California.

Turned into temps, cannery workers start fight for a union at Snokist

BY ERNEST MAILHOT

YAKIMA, Washington—"Last year some of us tried to organize a union at Snokist but we didn't get support from other workers," said Petra Nuñez. "Now just about everybody is talking about the union."

Nuñez, a worker at Snokist Growers, said in an interview that workers at the canning company decided they needed a union after their wages were slashed and their jobs were turned over to an employment agency. She had just finished addressing an August 11 farmworkers rally of 250 people in Yakima, Washington, where she and other Snokist workers had come to express their solidarity and win support for their fight.

A week and a half earlier 200 workers at Snokist met in the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Park in Yakima to begin an organizing drive with the United Farm Workers union. They have since organized two other meetings, one of more than one hundred and another of several hundred workers.

The union drive was sparked by outrage over the announcement by Snokist at the end of July that some 450 workers were no longer employed by the company and could reapply for their jobs at the Skills Resource Training Center. Snokist is one of the larg-

est fruit canning companies, with four plants in Washington State.

When workers were filling out applications at the private employment agency they found out they would now be making from \$1.05 to \$3.35 an hour less than before. Nuñez, a fruit packer at Snokist for 16 years, said her pay was cut from \$10.12 an hour to \$7.50, the standard wage doled out by the employment agency.

The company cans different fruits at different times of the year. Workers said that when they finished with Snokist's summer cherry-canning operation, they knew nothing of the company's plans.

"They never told us anything until we called in to find out when we were starting on pears," said Nuñez. "In fact, only a few weeks before, during the cherry canning, I had been given a dollar raise. We aren't being treated like human beings. A lot of workers in the plant are husband and wife. For some this means \$400 less a month for each of them."

Faced with layoffs, most workers filled out the six-page application for work through Skills Resource. The application refers to workers as "contractors," claims Snokist has no responsibility to them, and states that the agency can fire the workers whenever they want.

This latest attack on Snokist workers comes only a few months after the company cut all medical and dental benefits for nearly

every one of its employees.

According to the *Yakima Herald-Republic*, Snokist vice president of marketing and sales Frank McCarthy said the company's moves would potentially save hundreds of thousands of dollars. McCarthy said the company's savings on wages were needed due to low prices caused by an "oversupply" of apples and foreign competition. Indicating possible further attacks on the workers he said, "We're examining every aspect of the business to see how we can operate more efficiently and survive, and save these people's jobs."

Gonzalo Guillen, who has worked at the company for 14 years, scorned the company's claims of concern for saving people's jobs. "Last year when there was talk of a union, the president of the company had meetings to convince people to oppose it. Now that we want to talk to her she won't even meet with us."

Nuñez said that most workers had no choice but to go back to work at the lower wages, but indicated the fight is not over. "We're not going to give up," she said. "We know we're taking a chance joining the union and fighting for our rights, but I believe we're up to it. We'll go for it all the way"

Ernest Mailhot is a meat packer and a member of Local 81 of the United Food and Commercial Workers Local 81 in Seattle.

Protests greet U.S. official in Argentina

Continued from Page 4

population is unemployed or underemployed, while the government admits that more than half the population of 36 million falls below the official poverty line. According to official figures, more than 11,000 people fall daily into that number, defined by a daily income of less than \$3.

The average per capita income—a figure that obscures the deep class divisions and inequalities that mark all capitalist societies—stands today at \$2,500, and falling. Before the country's long-lasting recession began in 1999, it was almost \$9,000.

The government predicts that the economy will shrink by 15 percent this year, making for a total decline of 21 percent since 1999, a retraction 50 percent greater than occurred during the Great Depression years of 1930-33.

Meanwhile, the collapse in the value of the peso, which went from a one-to-one peg last year to some 30 cents today, has helped to generate inflation of some 33 percent. Subject to profiteering by merchants and other capitalists, food staples have risen by much more, with the price of flour up by 166 percent and canned tomatoes by 118

percent over the last six months.

"I could buy rice for 30 cents a kilo last year," said Beatriz Orresta, 20, to reporters. "It's more than 1 peso 50 now." Orresta lives in the agricultural province of Tucuman, where health workers say that cases of malnutrition have risen by up to 30 percent over the past year.

On August 16 Economy Minister Lavagna appealed for new assistance in a "letter of intent" to the IMF. A key point in the letter, he said, was that "when an agreement is signed, we'll begin the process of renegotiation with our creditors." The government's failure to pay the interest at the end of 2001 on the majority of its \$141 billion national debt, much of which is owned to foreign private banks as well as the IMF, is the biggest such default in history.

In late July, the Telecom Argentina, a French-Argentine company that together with a Spanish firm dominates Argentina's telecommunications market, stopped interest payments on its \$3.2 billion debt. As such companies slashed spending on installations and maintenance, some 400,000 fixed telephone lines—one in 20—were taken out of service in the first six months of this year.



Militant/Ernest Mailhot
Snokist workers speak at farm workers support rally in Yakima, Washington, August 11. Gonzalo Guillen, above with microphone, describes their struggle for a union.

Team in Venezuela finds thirst for revolutionary literature

BY CARLOS CORNEJO
AND ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

CARACAS, Venezuela—An international team of leaders of the Young Socialists and Socialist Workers Party in the United States and of the Communist League in Canada was in Venezuela July 14–23. They came to report on political developments in this country for the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* and help build the world communist movement.

The team included YS leader Olympia Newton from Los Angeles, Argiris Malapanis from Miami, and this reporter from Vancouver, British Columbia.

"We underestimated the thirst for revolutionary literature," said Malapanis at the conclusion of the visit. "We ran out of many titles before the trip was over." The team sold 61 Pathfinder books and pamphlets to students, factory workers, peasants, fishermen, and others during its 10-day stay here. The trip included visits to Valencia, Maracaibo, Cumaná, and San Carlos. They also sold 20 copies of *Perspectiva Mundial* and three *PM* subscriptions.

Best sellers

The top-selling pamphlet was *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning: The Fraud of Education Reform Under Capitalism* by SWP national secretary Jack Barnes, with five copies sold. Runner-up, with four copies sold, was *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* also by Barnes. The team sold three copies each of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics* and *Capitalism's World Disorder* both by Barnes; *Peru's Shining Path: Evolution of a Stalinist Sect* by Martin Koppel; *Puerto Rico: Independence Is a Necessity* by Rafael Cancel Miranda; and *50 años de guerra encubierta* by Larry Seigle.

The five issues of *Nueva Internacional*, the Spanish-language sister publication of the Marxist magazine *New International*, were also popular. All but one of the 10 copies of *Nueva* that the socialist workers from North America brought with them were sold.

The team also met workers at the plant

gates of the large Ford, GM, and Chrysler auto assembly plants, and a Hyundai car distribution company in Valencia, the third largest city and biggest industrial center of the country. Workers purchased two copies of *Perspectiva Mundial* and one copy of *The Transformation of Learning* pamphlet.

Problem is capitalism

Wilmer Mejias, a truck driver recently laid off from GM, described the deepening economic crisis in the country. This includes unemployment reaching 20 percent this year and inflation expected to reach 25 percent in 2002. "It's capitalism that's leaving us and our families on the streets," Mejias commented, "not [Venezuelan president Hugo] Chávez or individual capitalists simply taking capital out the country to undermine his government."

He pointed to a previous bust of the capitalist business cycle in 1988–89 that led to the *Caracazo*, a working-class rebellion against government austerity measures at that time. He bought a copy of *The Transformation of Learning* pamphlet after finding out it's about a scientific explanation of how capitalism works and the need to build a communist movement.

Later that afternoon the team set up a display of literature on the floor in one of the high-traffic areas at the University of Carabobo, Valencia. The socialists sold an additional three pamphlets and four copies of *PM* in 20 minutes. A leader of the Fifth Republic Revolutionary Youth (JVR) who had studied at the college accompanied them, and helped introduce the socialists and the books to students there. The JVR is affiliated to the party of President Chávez.

Members of the reporting team were able to make several presentations to meetings and found a real interest in what they do as part of the working-class movement in North America. Olympia Newton and Carlos Cornejo, for example, gave greetings to 400 participants at a regional conference of the Bolivarian Circles in Maracaibo, Venezuela's second-largest city, July 20.

In their brief remarks they pointed to the

struggles the communist movement is part of in North America; what they are doing to build proletarian parties that, as battles unfold, can fuse with other forces and lead toilers to form a workers and farmers government; and why in this struggle they start from the world, recognizing that it is the imperialists who are the originators of class violence and have never allowed any peaceful road towards a social revolution.

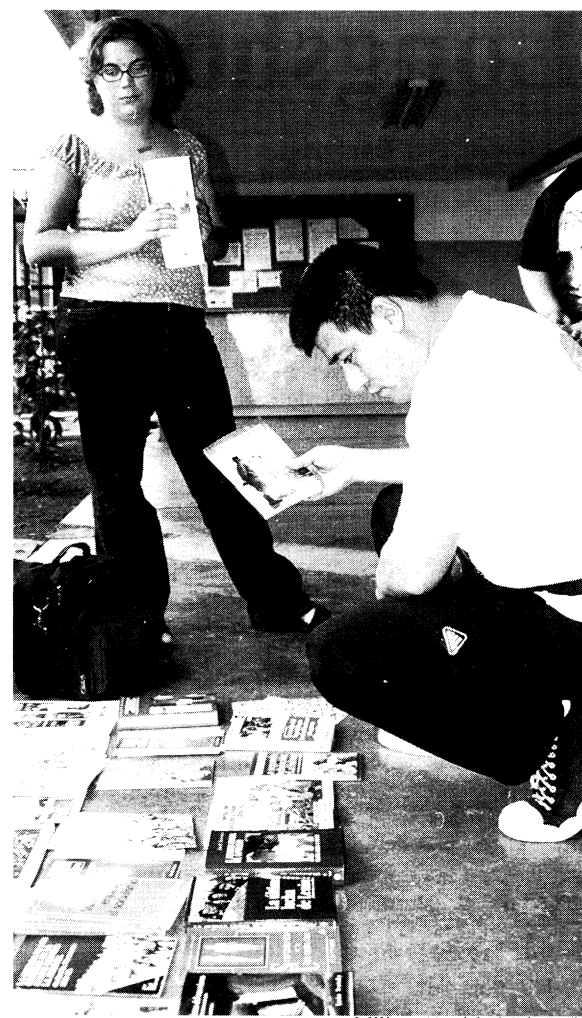
Many people approached Newton and Cornejo at the end of this gathering to ask for magazines and books. They sold virtually everything they had with them. Newton was also interviewed on local TV as a socialist candidate for secretary of state in California.

North American class struggle

There was similar interest in the class struggle in the United States and Canada during an impromptu forum organized by the local branch of the JVR. About 30 youth attended, many of them students.

Some of the questions asked were about the socialists' response to last year's September 11 events, such as whether or not George Bush was an illegitimate president in the United States, and how communists can function in the United States. They were also interested in learning about why the Quebecois want to separate from Canada.

Newton said socialist workers and young socialists recognized the U.S. rulers simply used the September 11 attacks to accelerate the assaults they were already carrying out against working people at home and abroad. Communist workers and young socialists sold the *Militant*, with a front-page statement issued September 11 by Socialist Workers candidate for New York mayor Martín Koppel, along with Pathfinder books. They explained these issues on the job, on



Militant/Argiris Malapanis
Young Socialists leader Olympia Newton, standing, staffs a Pathfinder literature display at Carabobo University in Valencia, Venezuela.

college campuses, and at street corner tables. The statement pointed out that by its systematic superexploitation of peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America; its never-ending insults to the cultural dignity of oppressed peoples; and its ceaseless murderous violence, including the atomic bombing of Japan in World War II and the more recent war against the Iraqi people, U.S. imperialism is turning North America into a death trap for working people and others who live there, just like Israel has become a death trap for the Jews.

Finding out about Cuban Revolution

At the end of this meeting, several young people stayed around to look at Pathfinder books. Renata, a college student, was particularly struck by a picture in the photo section of *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* showing thousands of Cuban students mobilized in 1961 to go to the countryside to teach workers and peasants how to read and write two years after the triumph of the revolution that overthrew the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship. "Why can't we do this here?" she asked, pointing to the high levels of illiteracy in Venezuela today, especially in the countryside. This led to more discussion on the Cuban Revolution. At the end, Renata bought *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution*, *Nueva* no. 5, which contains the article "U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War," and a subscription to *Perspectiva Mundial*.

There was similar interest in learning about the Cuban Revolution among many young people. One high school student, who purchased *Che Guevara Talks to Young People*, said that many youth sport T-shirts with Che.

Numerous murals with his well-known figure can also be seen now around Caracas, especially in working-class areas like the January 23 barrio or Catia. But the real Che, what he did as a leader of the Cuban Revolution and expressed in many of his speeches and writings, is not known.

During an impromptu debate at Bolivar Square in central Caracas, July 15, Newton and Malapanis explained why they disagreed with views expressed by supporters of the Tupamaros, a Maoist organization that claims the Cuban Revolution degenerated when Che allegedly split with Fidel Castro and the central leadership of the Cuban Revolution over the guerrilla struggles in Latin America in the 1960s. A number of youth present later bought Pathfinder books on the Cuban Revolution as a result of that discussion.

'Missile' crisis book is lead title in sales effort

BY JIM ALTENBERG
AND RUTH CHENEY

SAN FRANCISCO—Pathfinder Reprint Project volunteers are mapping out an ambitious campaign to sell thousands of copies of *October 1962: The "Missile" Crisis as Seen from Cuba*, set for publication October 15 by Pathfinder Press. They are proposing that supporters of Pathfinder around the world organize to visit 200 bookstores and libraries between now and October 15 when the new title will be shipped.

Forty years ago, the Cuban "missile crisis" brought the world to the brink of nuclear war. *October 1962: The "Missile" Crisis as Seen from Cuba* offers, for the first time in English, the Cuban perspective on these historic events. Author Tomás Diez draws on Cuban sources, as well as recently declassified CIA and Pentagon files, to explain that the roots of the crisis lay in Washington's unrelenting attempts to overthrow the Cuban Revolution.

Reprint Project volunteers have designed an attractive promotional flyer for the new book. A press release is being prepared, and volunteers plan to follow up with efforts to secure articles and book reviews in major newspapers as well as publications oriented to the book industry. Plans are being put together to contact professors and teachers whose courses in politics, history, and Latin American studies would be enhanced by a book detailing Cuba's actions in what revolutionary leader Ernesto Che Guevara called the "brilliant yet sad" days of October 1962.

Volunteers also plan to use the opportunity to promote other titles recently published by Pathfinder, including *From the Escambray to the Congo: In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution*, an interview with Cuban revolutionary leader Victor Dreke; and English, French, and Spanish editions of *The History of American Trotskyism, 1928–38: Report of a Participant* by James P. Cannon; and *Their Trotsky and Ours* by Jack Barnes.

Over the past four years, volunteers in



Militant/Shirley Peña
Participants in recent march by United Farm Workers in California look over Pathfinder books and *Militant*. Supporters of Pathfinder have launched a major sales drive to sell books to commercial outlets so many more working people and youth can have access to the revolutionary books and pamphlets distributed by the publishing house.

several countries organized by the Pathfinder Reprint Project have been working to put the entire catalogue of revolutionary literature published by Pathfinder Press into digital form, enabling the publisher to respond to political developments with the books that fighting workers need. As volunteers' competence and skills have grown, they have taken on the technical production of Pathfinder's new titles as well.

As the Reprint Project volunteers gear up to assume responsibility for the major task of organizing international sales of Pathfinder literature, a national sales steering committee is being established, along with sales directors or steering committees in each area. A new section of the Reprint Project's web-based database has been added for the use of these leadership bodies

and individuals, and all volunteers will be able to use it to post local activities, and access regular sales reports and other information that will add to the organization of the international sales force.

Volunteers currently working on the Reprint Project's production teams will produce all the promotional materials needed for the sales effort, including Advance Book Information notices, flyers, and press releases. As each new book is published, Pathfinder sales representatives will be able to quickly get out promotional information in their local areas.

The first meeting of the new national steering committee will take place during the Red Weekend to be held in Atlanta August 30–September 2, as crews set up the new Pathfinder Distribution Center there.

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Pathfinder on line
pathfinderpress.com

Miami forum debates response to firing of socialist candidate

BY NORTON SANDLER

MIAMI—“A forum sponsored by the American Civil Liberties Union in this city last month registered both the progress we made in clarifying why defending workers’ rights was central to fighting my firing as a sewing machine operator from Goodwill Industries, but also the ongoing debate here about this.”

Michael Italie made these comments during an interview here August 19. The Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Miami in the 2001 elections, Italie was fired by his employer last October after appearing in a televised debate with other mayoral candidates. During the program Italie spoke out against the U.S. war in Afghanistan, in defense of the Cuban Revolution, and in support of union organizing efforts.

Goodwill chief executive officer Dennis Pastrana later acknowledged that Italie had been fired because of his political statements, telling the *Miami Herald* October 30 that “we cannot have anyone who is attempting to subvert America.”

“The right of a worker to hold and advocate views contrary to the policies of the U.S. government won a considerable hearing in Miami and around the country,” explained Italie, who spent several months speaking in numerous cities at forums, to campus groups, and to workers and farmers about his fight.

The ACLU-sponsored forum held here on July 18 at Books and Books, a popular shopping outlet, was attended by 75 people. “The program was chaired by Florida International University (FIU) professor Max Castro. I spoke along with Nova University Law Professor Mike Masinter, and Fred Frost from the South Florida Labor Council,” said Italie.

“In my presentation I explained that my firing was part of the so-called ‘war on terrorism’ waged by the U.S. government in Afghanistan, as part of expanding imperialist domination of the region. The corol-

lary to this at home was an attack on workers’ rights, like singling out Arab immigrants to be rounded up and jailed without charges.”

Attacks on workers’ rights

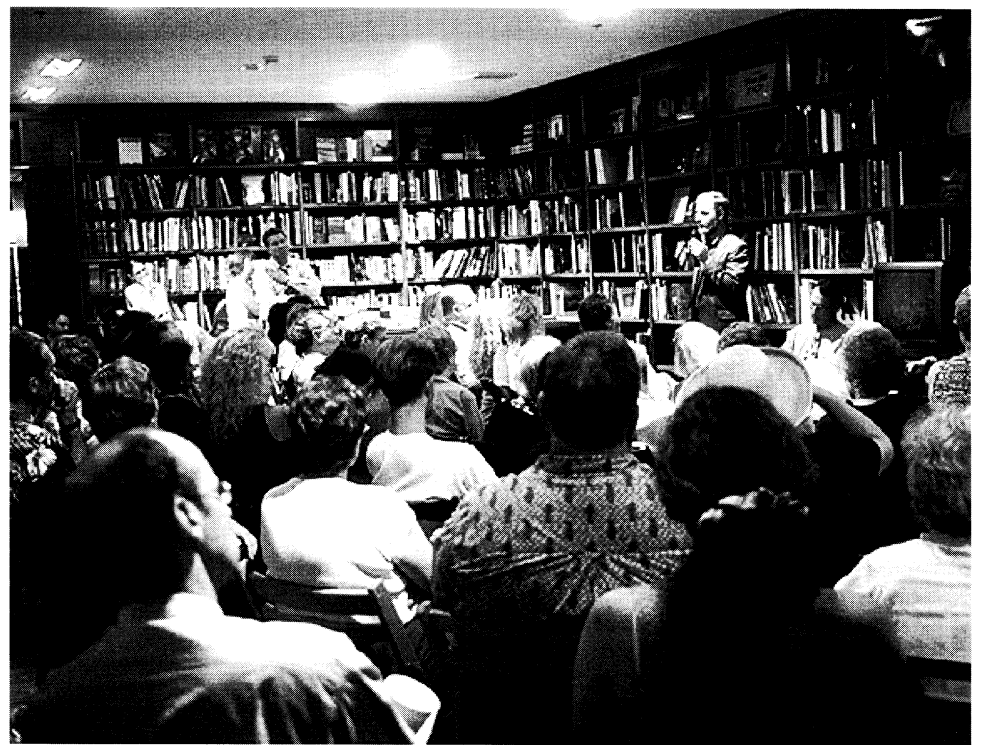
The attacks on workers’ rights did not begin with September 11, continued Italie. The Bush administration intensified the attacks begun under the previous administration of William Clinton. This included arrests of immigrants without charges, the doubling of the prison population during the Democratic administration, and the openly pro-death penalty character of the 1996 Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act.

“Now the Bush administration has arrested even some U.S. citizens and is trying to deny them access to a lawyer and other due process,” Italie said. “In this city alone the INS is holding over 200 Haitian refugees who are seeking asylum. In a blatant case of discrimination, the INS openly says it is keeping these refugees in maximum security prison in order to discourage other Haitians from coming to this country,” Italie stated.

“The fight against my firing was a part of the resistance of working people to these attacks on workers’ rights,” he emphasized.

I asked Italie about the significance of the ACLU sponsoring the forum. “The forum was very important from that point of view,” said Italie. “The ACLU declined to take up the case last fall and Greater Miami ACLU president Lida Rodriguez-Taseff was quoted in the *Miami Herald* on October 31 as saying, ‘Employees don’t have a First Amendment right to express their political views if they work for private employers. Employers have a First Amendment right to associate with people who have political opinions they approve of.’”

“Many in the ACLU disagreed with this official position,” said Italie, “and their sponsorship of the forum was a significant example of this. I think the ACLU made a big mistake in not taking up the fight against



Militant/Eric Simpson

Seventy-five people pack the room of ACLU-sponsored forum in July to discuss Michael Italie’s fight against his political firing from Goodwill. Participants debated whether bosses have the “right” to fire people they politically disagree with.

my firing. Though the courts have ruled consistently against workers who have been fired for expressing political ideas, I don’t agree that the Constitution gives employers a green light to fire people for speaking out publicly. In this instance a worker running for office was denied employment, which is designed to have a chilling effect on other workers who may want to run for office who oppose one or another aspect of U.S. government policy.

“I believe the fact that the ACLU did not take on this clear violation of freedom of speech was a blow to workers’ rights.”

Debate at public forum

This issue was at the center of the debate at the forum, Italie said.

Panel speaker Masinter from Nova University Law School, while expressing concern over what he described as the injustice of my firing, told the crowd that he was concerned that the right to association be maintained and that this extends to private employers like Goodwill. Otherwise, he said, organizations like the ACLU could be forced to hire Nazis if the right to association was violated. Masinter said that workers needed the protection of unions to make sure their

rights aren’t trampled on.

“Rodriguez-Taseff spoke from the floor,” said Italie. She too expressed regret about the ACLU not taking up the fight, but stated that if they did they would be subject to employers winning damages against the ACLU for filing frivolous lawsuits.

Others in the audience strongly disagreed with this approach, continued Italie. John Due, legal counsel for the NAACP here, told the crowd that the problem was that more people didn’t take up this fight when it began last year. Due said the ACLU and others should have rallied to the fight because a clear violation of rights had taken place.

ACLU Board member Walter Williams said the ACLU shied away from taking up the fight of \$5.15-an-hour workers.

In concluding the interview Italie summarized what was accomplished during the struggle against Goodwill.

“My fight has scored an important victory in making Goodwill pay a political price for my firing,” he said. “My national tour helped to deepen the understanding of the importance of defending workers’ rights and brought together workers and young people fighting the imperialist war drive and the deepening economic crisis.

“In October I will be joining the staff of the *Militant* newspaper,” Italie reported enthusiastically.

Cuban trade unionists speak in Canada about steps to confront economic challenges on island

BY PAM OWEN

WINDSOR, Ontario—How the revolutionary government of Cuba and the country’s trade unions are responding to a sharpening economic situation was one of the central topics of the Cuba Labor Conference here July 26–28. Four leaders of the Confederation of Cuban Workers (CTC) were featured speakers at the event.

Two hundred people from Canada and the United States participated in the meeting, organized by the U.S./Cuba Labor Exchange and Worker to Worker Canada/Cuba Labour Solidarity Committee. The conference took place at the hall of Canadian Auto Workers Local 444.

Pedro Ross Leal, the CTC’s general secretary, said the trade unions in Cuba are part of the restructuring of the sugar industry that is under way. “Not a single sugar worker will be left without a job,” he said.

Facing a continued decline in the price of sugar on the world market, and saddled with many inefficient plants that are decades old, the Cuban government recently announced it will close 71 sugar mills and cut back cane production.

Leonel González González, the director of foreign relations for the CTC, said that in addition to sugar, the world market prices for coffee and nickel have also sharply declined over the past two years. Cuba has the world’s second largest nickel reserves. He also pointed out that fewer tourists are visiting Cuba, affecting one of the country’s major ways of earning foreign currency.

“Today the price of sugar is five cents a pound on the world market,” said González. “So, we cannot cover the costs of production. A small country like Cuba can’t subsidize the production of sugar and compete

against the protectionist policies of the United States and Europe.”

In addition to tariffs and sugar quotas Washington imposes on semicolonial countries such as Mexico, Cuba is barred from exporting to the U.S. market under the embargo put in place by Washington four decades ago. Corn syrup and sugar produced in the United States are massively subsidized by Washington, giving food monopolies the ability to flood markets in Mexico and elsewhere, undercutting local production.

“At one point Cuba produced 8 million tons of sugar a year,” González said. “We’re now not in a position to sell it on the world market. We had to decide to restructure the sugar industry. This has been done in complete concert with the workers.”

González said the 100,000 workers whose jobs have been eliminated are going through retraining programs to learn skills for work in other industries. One program involves using land previously set aside for sugar production to grow vegetables and raise livestock. “These workers continue to receive their salaries and all services they received as sugar workers,” he said. “This is possible because of the social, political, and economic system in Cuba. This would not be possible in any other system.”

Cuba and world economic crisis

In the session on “How the world economic crisis affects Cuba,” González invited participants to attend the second “International Conference of Workers Confronting Neoliberal Globalization-FTAA, Free Trade Area of the Americas.” The conference will take place in Havana at the end of November.

The FTAA is being pushed by Washing-

ton to beat down trade and investment barriers of semicolonial countries in Latin America in order to deepen the hold of U.S. imperialism on the region. González said the pact is “more than a free trade agreement—it’s an agreement of domination and colonization. At the same time the U.S. wants to impose the FTAA, they are imposing protectionist measures. There’s no such thing as free trade per se. Rather it’s a project of domination,” he said.

Manuel Montero Bistillero, director of the Americas Department of Foreign Relations of the CTC, said Cuba was able to confront the economic and social crisis provoked after the disintegration of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s. Workers and farmers were involved in the campaign to increase industrial and agricultural production, as the Cuban revolutionary leadership organized a retreat in order to defend gains of the socialist revolution.

Despite this crisis, Cuba’s revolutionary government sought to defend and maintain universal health care and education, he said. “The situation regarding health and education is in contrast not only with what has been described here in Canada” by some participants in the conference, “but all of Latin America and most of Europe,” he said. For the imperialists, the social policy of the revolution “is a very bad example” in the Americas, Montero noted.

The conference was endorsed by the Canadian Labour Congress. Union support also came from the Canadian Union of Public Employees, the National Union of Provincial and General Employees, the United Food and Commercial Workers Union, the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, and the United Steelworkers of America.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

MICHIGAN

Detroit

‘Miles of Smiles, Years of Struggle’: Video of the Fight of Black Sleeping Car Porters to Unionize. Fri., August 30, 7:30 p.m. Dinner at 6:30 p.m. 4208 W. Vernor. Tel: (313) 554-0504.

NEW YORK

Brooklyn

Hiroshima and Nagasaki: Washington’s Use of ‘Dirty Bombs.’ Speaker: Dave Prince, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Aug. 23, 7:30 p.m. 372A 53rd St. (at 4th Ave.) Donation: \$5 program, \$6 dinner. Tel: (718) 567-8014.

Upper Manhattan

From Argentina to Paraguay: Crisis and Class Struggle in South America—Prospects for Building the World Socialist Movement. Speakers: Martin Koppel and Romina Green. Fri., Aug. 23, 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.

CANADA

Toronto

The Deepening Crisis of Capitalism and the Drive to Imperialist War. Fri., Aug. 30, 7:30 p.m. 2761 Dundas St. W. Tel: (416) 767-3705.

UNITED KINGDOM

London

Celebrate the Publication of ‘Their Trotsky and Ours’ Speaker: Michel Prairie, Pathfinder’s French language editor. Fri. Sept. 6, 7:00 p.m. Pathfinder Bookshop 47 The Cut London SE1 Tel: 020-7401 2409.

October 1962: The 'Missile' Crisis

New book shows how Cuban people stood down Washington's invasion

Below is the introduction by Tomás Diez Acosta to his book, *October 1962: The 'Missile' Crisis as Seen from Cuba*, which will be released by Pathfinder Press October 15, on the 40th anniversary of the events it describes. The Spanish-language edition of the book, *Octubre de 1962: A un paso del holocausto: Una mirada cubana a la Crisis de los Misiles* (October 1962: One step from the holocaust: a Cuban look at the missile crisis), was published earlier this year by Editora Política in Havana. Copyright © 2002 by Tomás Diez, reprinted by permission.

Diez, then 16, participated in the mobilization of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces during October 1962. He retired from active duty in 1998 with the rank of lieutenant colonel. Since 1987 he has been a researcher at the Institute of Cuban History, where he headed its Department of Military History.

The preface by Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder, also appears here. Copyright © 2002 by Pathfinder, reprinted by permission.



Members of the Federation of Cuban Women kept up production as workers were mobilized for defense in October 1962. New book shows that the roots of the 'missile' crisis lay in Washington's drive to overthrow the Cuban Revolution. The armed mobilization of the Cuban people and the political clarity of the revolutionary leadership stayed the hand of the U.S. rulers.

ers of the time, this deployment became the pretext used by the United States to justify a naval blockade of the island and to provoke the outbreak of the crisis on October 22, 1962.

For Cubans, the crisis was a lesson that confirmed and strengthened their conceptions of how to defend the country. At the same time, it proved to the world the ideological strength of the principles upheld by the Cuban Revolution, because in face of the actions of the two superpowers, Cuba defended, with dignity and courage, its self-determination and sovereignty. Cuba firmly confronted the U.S. policy of arrogance and force. And, basing its stance on justice and reason, Cuba discussed the disagreements that emerged with the Soviet Union in the midst of the crisis, due to the unilateral manner in which the USSR negotiated to end the conflict. In those "brilliant yet sad days," as Ernesto Che Guevara described them, Cuba's policy was distinguished by having the necessary flexibility to open the door to negotiations, without making any concessions of principle, despite the unceasing efforts of the U.S. government to exclude Cuba from the process.

This book thus aims to analyze and reflect on the origins, development, and outcome of this historic event, and the complex political decisions, the successes and mistakes, and the supreme confidence shown by the Cuban people at that time of great danger.

June 2002

Introduction

BY TOMÁS DIEZ ACOSTA

More than forty years have passed since the revolutionary triumph of January 1, 1959. In countless events during those four decades, the Cuban people have been the main actors in defending their national independence against the stubborn, active hostility to the Cuban Revolution of successive U.S. administrations. Among these historic developments, the October Crisis—or "Cu-

**For the first time
the story is told from
the Cuban perspective.**

ban Missile Crisis"—of 1962 stands out for its character and its worldwide importance.

In the U.S. and western Europe, much has been written and published about the roles of the United States and the Soviet Union in this weighty and dangerous conflict, which brought humanity to the brink of nuclear war. But little has been said about the Cuban experience, perhaps due to the selective and discriminatory way that the powerful in today's world deal with the problems of small countries. The purpose of this book is therefore to help make known Cuba's position and the role it

played, since Cuba was directly involved in the events and was the main scene of that confrontation between the two military superpowers in the era of the Cold War.

The immediate causes of the October Crisis are found in the political actions undertaken by the U.S. government after the defeat it suffered at the Bay of Pigs. It became clear to the Cuban government that after this failure the White House would consider, as its main military option, the use of its own armed forces in a direct intervention aimed at overthrowing the Cuban Revolution.

This estimate was confirmed in subsequent months by the increase in subversive actions within Cuba, organized and directed by Washington. The U.S. administration dedicated considerable financial, military, and technical resources to carrying out sabotage and terrorist acts in Cuba. This included preparing assassination attempts against key leaders of the Cuban Revolution; providing material support to armed counterrevolutionary bands that operated in various rural areas of the island; and unleashing intense ideological and psychological warfare against Cuba. In addition, Washington fully exercised its powerful influence to isolate Cuba diplomatically from the rest of Latin America and, among other actions, to implement a tightened economic blockade against the island.

This was the framework for developments over the second half of 1962, beginning with Cuba's acceptance of the Soviet

proposal to deploy medium- and intermediate-range missiles in Cuba, and leading to the transfer of a contingent of some 42,000 Soviet troops with all their combat gear during Operation Anadyr. Subsequently, owing to the political mishandling of the secret operation by the Soviet lead-



Militant/Jack Arnold

Picket line at the United Nations on Oct. 27, 1962, demanding "U.S. Hands Off Cuba." Each day that the U.S. did not launch a nuclear missile was a victory, and the actions grew larger and spread to more cities and towns across the United States.

Preface

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

In October 1962, during what is widely known as the Cuban Missile Crisis, Washington pushed the world to the precipice of nuclear war. Scores of books on the subject have been written by partisans of Washington and of Moscow. Here, for the first time, the story of that historic moment is told in full from the perspective of the central protagonist, the Cuban people and their revolutionary government.

The author, Tomás Diez Acosta, joined the ranks of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba in 1961 as a literacy worker, one of the three hundred thousand young Cubans who mobilized to the mountains, factories, fields, barrios, barracks, and fishing villages during Cuba's Year of Education to teach every Cuban how to read and write. He was fourteen years old. In the midst of an exploding revolutionary struggle there was no "minimum age" for combatants, Diez says with a laugh. When he retired from active military service thirty-seven years later he held the rank of lieutenant colonel. For the last fifteen years,

as a researcher at the Institute of Cuban History, he has been assembling the material to tell the story that appears here, much of it in print for the first time.

Presenting a wealth of new information from Cuban archives and from interviews with direct participants, Diez details:

- the determination and readiness of Cuba's working people to defend the country's newly won sovereignty and the achievements of their unfolding socialist revolution against the increasingly aggressive designs of U.S. imperialism, including the full-scale bombing and invasion it was preparing during the October Crisis;

- the decision by Cuba's revolutionary leadership to allow Soviet missiles to be stationed on the island, not because they thought such weapons were needed to defend Cuba from U.S. military assault, but as an act of international solidarity as the USSR was being ringed by U.S. strategic nuclear arms;

- the carrying out of Operation Anadyr, the code name for the eventual deployment of some 42,000 Soviet troops and missile units in Cuba between August and November 1962;

- the day-by-day unfolding of what Cu-

Available in October

October 1962: The 'Missile' Crisis as Seen from Cuba

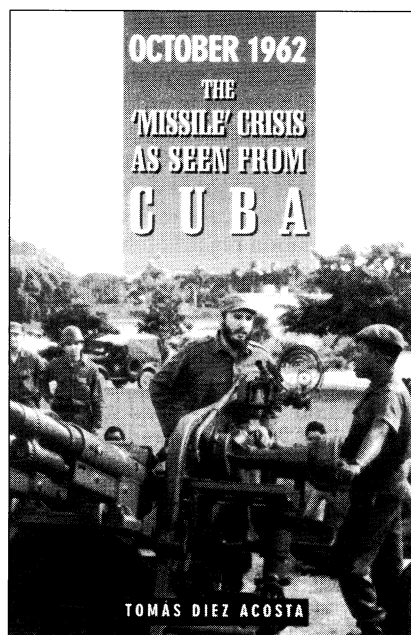
By Tomás Diez Acosta

"We possess moral long-range missiles that cannot be dismantled and will never be dismantled. This is our strongest strategic weapon."

Fidel Castro, November 1, 1962

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Order now from Pathfinder or from bookstores listed on page 14, or visit www.pathfinderpress.com



Seen from Cuba

noves and threat of nuclear war

ban revolutionary leader Ernesto Che Guevara called the “brilliant yet sad days” of the October Crisis, and the course followed by the revolutionary government as it worked simultaneously to defend Cuba’s sovereignty and move Washington back from the brink.

Drawing on declassified White House, Central Intelligence Agency, and Pentagon files available largely to “specialists,” the author makes the record of U.S. government policy accessible to the average

Thousands of young people took to the streets to repudiate Washington’s aggression against Cuba.

reader. He documents Washington’s plans for a massive military assault on Cuba in 1962, exposing the protestations of defenders of the administration of John F. Kennedy who have claimed the U.S. government had no such intentions.

On April 19, 1961, after fewer than seventy-two hours of hard-fought combat, the Cuban armed forces, national militias, revolutionary police, and fledgling air force had dealt a stunning defeat to a U.S.-trained, -organized, and -financed mercenary invasion force of some 1,500 at Playa Girón close by the Bay of Pigs on Cuba’s southern coast. From that day on, as the pages that follow amply attest, U.S. policy makers at the highest levels acted on the conclusion that the revolutionary government of Cuba could be overthrown only by direct U.S. military action.

And they marshaled seemingly limitless resources to prepare for that moment. Under the personal guidance of the president’s brother, Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, “Operation Mongoose,” with its multifaceted plans for sabotage, subversion, and assassination of Cuba’s revolutionary leaders, was unleashed to pave the way.

In October 1962, when U.S. spy planes photographed Soviet missile launch sites under construction in Cuba, the U.S. rulers recognized that the military and political costs of such an invasion were being qualitatively transformed, and they initiated the adventure detailed in these pages.

Most U.S. commentators treat the events of October 1962 as a Cold War showdown between the two superpowers, in which Cuba was at best a pawn, at worst a raging mute offstage. In that scenario the people of Cuba do not exist, nor in fact do the tens of thousands of Americans across the country who acted to oppose imperialist Washington’s preparations for a military assault.

As Diez demonstrates in these pages, however, the roots of the crisis in the Caribbean lay not in Washington’s Cold War with the Soviet Union, but in the drive by the U.S. government to overthrow the “first free territory of the Americas.” Kennedy’s acceptance of Khrushchev’s offer to withdraw the missiles—an offer broadcast worldwide over Radio Moscow without even informing the Cuban government—was how the stand-down of the two strategic nuclear powers was announced. But it was the armed mobilization and political clarity of the Cuban people, and the capacities of their revolutionary leadership, that stayed Washington’s hand, saving humanity from the consequences of a nuclear holocaust.

Divergent political courses pursued by the Cuban and Soviet governments marked each step. The Soviet leadership, seeking a way to enhance its strategic military position and to counter the Jupiter missiles the U.S. had recently installed in Turkey and Italy, insisted on secrecy and attempted deception. Cuba took the moral high ground, arguing from the beginning for the public announcement of the mutual assistance pact and the right of the Cuban people to defend themselves against U.S. aggression.

The defeat of the invasion force at the Bay of Pigs had bought precious time for Cuba to organize, train, and equip its Revolutionary Armed Forces. Even more decisive, the people of Cuba used that time to consolidate the agrarian reform; win the battle of the literacy campaign; build schools, homes, and hospitals; extend electrification; advance social equality among Cuba’s working people; and strengthen the worker-farmer alliance that was the bedrock of the revolution and of the respect Cuba had earned among the world’s toilers. As they navigated the contradictory dialectic of the greatly appreciated aid they received from the USSR, the Cuban people were not only defending themselves against the Yankee predator. They stood *for* the future of humanity, as they stood *down* the power of U.S. imperialism.

And despite all odds they prevailed.

On October 26, at a decisive moment in the unfolding crisis, John F. Kennedy asked the Pentagon for an estimate of the U.S. casualties that would be incurred during the invasion they were weighing. He was informed that the Joint Chiefs of Staff expected 18,500 casualties in the first ten days alone—



At Indiana University in Bloomington, on Oct. 24, 1962, a protest of some 20 students, organized by the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, is attacked by a mob. Carrying the sign “Hands off Cuba” is Jim Bingham, a member of the Young Socialist Alliance. Bingham and two other YSA leaders were accused of “inciting to riot” for organizing the demonstration. Seven months later they were indicted on charges of advocating the overthrow of the government of the United States and state of Indiana. The charges were dropped after an international defense campaign.

greater than the casualties U.S. troops would suffer in the entire first five years of fighting in Vietnam. And knowledgeable Cuban military personnel say U.S. casualties would have been far greater. From that moment on, Kennedy turned White House strategists away from their well-advanced plans to use U.S. military forces in an attempt to overthrow the revolution. The political price such body counts would entail continues to this day to hold off any direct U.S. military attack against Cuba.

As Cuba has proven not once but multiple times over the last forty-some years, the empire, despite its pretensions to hegemony, is in fact a tethered monster when a determined people, with a leadership worthy of it, does not flinch.

Inside the United States, a widely promoted myth has it that ordinary Americans everywhere were so consumed by panic over the danger of nuclear attack that they, too, were not a factor during these historic events. Those of us who lived through those days of crisis as active political people, however, know the extent of that lie.

The news clips of grocery stores swamped by semi-hysterical middle-class housewives buying up canned goods and flashlight batteries to stock their basement bomb shelters misrepresent the broader mood that prevailed. Most working people, aware of the heightened tensions, nonetheless went about their normal lives of work and family responsibilities.



Cuban militia members during October 1962 crisis. The signs on the truck read, “We stand firm, together with Fidel,” and “No more tolerance of shoddy work.”

Thousands of young people, meanwhile, as well as other partisans of the Cuban Revolution, took to the streets, determined to repudiate the course taken by a government that did not speak in our name. As the photographs in *October 1962* depict,

ness, we were conscious that our actions had weight, that minute by minute the men in the White House were calculating the political consequences of their potential moves. Each hour they postponed invading, each day they didn’t launch a nuclear missile, was a victory. And each day our actions grew larger, and spread to more cities and towns across the United States.

They were a harbinger of what was to explode a few short years later in response to the Vietnam War, as Washington desperately tried—and again failed—to vanquish another people who would not flinch.

October 1962: The ‘Missile’ Crisis as Seen from Cuba makes the real dynamic of the October Crisis available for the first time. Therein lies its lasting merit.

The Spanish-language original of this work was published in June 2002 in Havana by Editora Política, the publishing house of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, under the title *Octubre de 1962: A un paso del holocausto: una mirada Cubana a la crisis de los misiles* [October 1962: One step from the holocaust: a Cuban look at the missile crisis]. Cuban editor Iraida Aguirre provided valuable assistance in preparing the English-language edition.

For the Pathfinder edition the author expanded and reorganized the structure of some chapters. Also included are translations of a number of major Cuban documents of the epoch, most of them never before published in English, or long unavailable. The September 29, 1962, declaration by Cuba’s Council of Ministers appears here in English for the first time. The transcript of the October 30–31, 1962, meetings between United Nations Secretary-General U Thant and a Cuban leadership delegation headed by Prime Minister Fidel Castro has not previously been published in full in any language.

The original translation of the manuscript and integration of the English-language sources was the work of Ornan Batista Peña of the Institute of Cuban History.

A team of volunteers organized by John Riddell and George Rose, including Paul Coltrin, Robert Dees, Dan Dickeson, Mirta Vidal, and Matilde Zimmermann, edited the translation. They were supervised in this work by Pathfinder editor Michael Taber. George Rose undertook the considerable task of checking the sources.

Help in assembling the photo pages designed came from the author, as well as Delfin Xiqués of *Granma* and Manuel Martínez of *Bohemia*.

Finally, Pathfinder would like to express special appreciation to the Institute of Cuban History and to Tomás Diez Acosta. With competence and good humor the author devoted many days of work to reviewing the English-language manuscript, clarifying questions of translation and factual accuracy, and assuring that this edition would be accessible and understandable to readers outside Cuba, whether or not they lived through those historic days of October.

August 2002

West Coast sales prepare subscription drive

BY JACK WILLEY

Socialist workers and young socialists on the West Coast are setting an example heading into the September 7 to November 17 subscription drive for the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*.

They have sold more than 300 copies of the socialist newsweekly to longshore workers, along with revolutionary books and pamphlets. Another team this week joined members of the United Farm Workers union who are on a 150-mile march from Merced to Sacramento to demand the government sign legislation that strengthens their ability to organize in the fields. In just the first few days, participants in the march have purchased 20 copies and three subscriptions to the *Militant*, five copies and one subscription to *Perspectiva Mundial*, and several pamphlets.

In Seattle and Tacoma, Washington, socialist election campaigners have set up tables with communist literature near the union halls of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union. Two dockworkers who are longtime supporters of the socialist press joined one of the sales teams. In the past week 28 dockworkers picked up the *Militant* and two bought subscriptions.

One worker who saw the Pathfinder book *Blacks in America's Wars* said he had been in Vietnam. One photo from 1971 caught his eye. It depicts soldiers in Vietnam commemorating Martin Luther King's birthday. He bought a copy and said he would get a subscription to the paper the next time around.

These are just a few examples of the opportunities to expand the readership of the two socialist periodicals, along with Pathfinder books, as part of the Socialist Workers Party election campaigns. The drive will run through the November 5 elections and

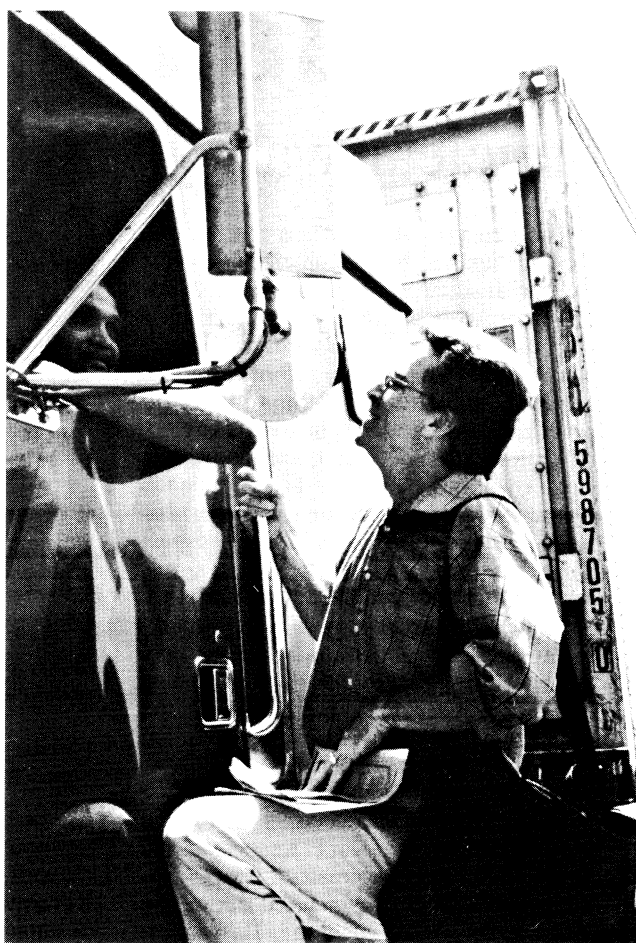
reinforce street electioneering for socialist candidates who are running in nearly every state where there are *Militant* supporters.

Young socialists are campaigning on street corners and college campuses, as well as at labor and other struggles as noted above, in support of the fighting, working-class perspective of the Socialist Workers candidates. Young Socialists for Koppel and Hawkins in New York; Young Socialists for Bailey, Kalman, and Newton in California; Young Socialists for Manuel in Washington, D.C.; and others across the country are encouraging revolutionary-minded youth to become part of the effort. Many young people will decide to purchase a subscription, and buy books by revolutionary leaders, after meeting socialists at a campaign table.

The subscription drive will include sales of *Capitalism's World Disorder* and *New International* magazine—in English, French, and Spanish. *Capitalism's World Disorder*, together with issues of *New International*—nos. 7, 10, and 11, especially, give an explanation of the underpinnings of the imperialist march toward economic depression, fascism, and war.

In addition, *Capitalism's World Disorder* places the growing inter-imperialist conflict, and the deflationary drag on finance capital in the context of increased resistance among working people registered in the opening chapter, "A Sea Change in Working-Class Politics."

New International no. 7, containing



Militant/Shirley Peña
Socialist worker Bernie Senter selling *Militant* to truck drivers at Port of Oakland.

"Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's assault on Iraq," far from narrowly focusing on the U.S. imperialist slaughter in the Gulf War, places the war in the context of deepening inter-imperialist conflict; in-

creased conflict between the imperialist powers and the toilers of the semicolonial world; and imperialism's march toward more wars and depression. It records the working-class campaign against imperialism and war that was waged by socialist workers internationally. The magazine also covers the hidden history of the 1945-46 U.S. GI protests demanding to be demobilized and sent home, rather than be kept in the Pacific to protect Washington's interests from the growing colonial revolution.

Supporters in each area are taking a combined goal for sales of *Capitalism's World Disorder* and *New International* over the course of the 10 weeks. *Capitalism's World Disorder* will be sold at a steep discount of just \$15 with an introductory or renewal subscription to the *Militant* or *Perspectiva Mundial*. *New International* nos. 7, 10, and 11 will be sold for \$10, and all other issues of *New Internationals* will be on sale for \$2 off the cover price with a subscription.

New campaigners for the socialist candidates should be encouraged to build up their libraries of revolutionary literature. Some will be interested in getting the entire set of *New Internationals* and may want to set up a payment plan.

The circulation campaign will include talking with current subscribers and encouraging them to renew. Most introductory subscriptions sold last spring are lapsing at the end of August and in September. *Militant* readers who decide to continue their subscriptions will also want to take advantage of the special offers on the books.

Socialists who are members of the United Food and Commercial Workers, United Mine Workers of America, and Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees will set goals for sales of the socialist press and books to co-workers and fellow union members. Candidate handshaking and leafleting at factory plant gates and mine portals will give a boost to socialist workers on the job.

Soapboxing, reaching to struggles

Working-class neighborhoods and college campuses are fertile ground for meeting revolutionary-minded workers and youth. "Soapboxing" street meetings with socialist candidates in working-class areas have already proven effective in interesting others in the socialist campaign and in revolutionary literature in New York City.

The proposed targets for supporters of the socialist press are 1,000-1,100 *Militant* subscriptions, 400-500 *Perspectiva Mundial* subscriptions, and 500 copies of *New International* and *Capitalism's World Disorder*. After receiving local goals the *Militant* will set the international goal and publish a chart of all the local targets next week.

Pathfinder Fund pledges up to \$94,450

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

Supporters of Pathfinder Press are launching a campaign to raise tens of thousands of dollars this fall. The funds are needed to ensure the publisher can keep producing the books on revolutionary politics that working people need.

Pathfinder is a unique publishing house because it produces—and keeps in print—some 375 books and pamphlets containing the lessons of more than 150 years of struggle by the working-class movement. The newest title will be *October 1962: The "Missile" Crisis as Seen from Cuba*.

Pathfinder is also unique because it is not funded by the likes of the owners of J.P.

Morgan Chase, Mobil Oil, or Bloomberg News. Its pillar of financial backing is working people, youth, and others who value these revolutionary books.

Supporters of Pathfinder are setting fund-raising goals for their areas. As we go to press, local quotas add up to \$94,450 and the total is approaching \$100,000. Next week the *Militant* will publish a chart with the goals.

The Pathfinder Fund kicks off September 1 and ends November 15. It will be intertwined with a fall campaign to win subscribers to the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*. These drives will help in campaigning against imperialism and its war drive today, and in presenting a working-

class alternative to the consequences of capitalism's worldwide depression.

To hit the ground running September 1, supporters of the revolutionary publishing program are detailing their plans on who to approach for contributions and how to do so.

The key to success will be to approach the broadest number of people possible. This includes co-workers in garment shops, coal mines, packinghouses, and other workplaces. It includes young people who are just meeting the communist movement and for whom Pathfinder books open up a new world.

Pathfinder stalwarts in several cities have made plans for September public meetings to raise funds. Those in Philadelphia are building a September 7 meeting on the class struggle in South America today and prospects for building the communist movement worldwide. In New York's Garment District the meeting will highlight Pathfinder's new book on the 1962 Cuban "missile" crisis.

Contributions to the Fund can be sent to the *Militant*, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014, with checks made out to Pathfinder.

Workers picket Krogers over sexual harassment case



Militant/Jacquie Henderson

Leticia Mireles (on right) and supporters picket Krogers food store in Houston August 18 as part of a fight against sexual harassment on the job. Mireles said that she was "told to shut up about it," after informing the store manager of harassment by her supervisor in the meat department. "I was told that maybe I shouldn't have gone for a 'man's job' if I didn't like this kind of thing." Krogers bosses cut her hours back and then took her off the schedule. Mireles, family members, and supporters organized a one-day protest outside the store. Mireles joined United Food and Commercial Workers union to help advance her fight.

Chicago hotel workers gear up for strike

BY CHESSIE MOLANO

Chicago—More than 4,000 hotel workers, members of the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees (HERE) union, locals 1 and 450, turned out for mass meetings August 12 over their contract fight. Ninety-eight percent of those present voted to authorize the negotiating committee to call a strike if their demands for wage increases, lower health-care costs, and other issues are not met by the end of the month. The meeting was translated into Chinese, Serbo-Croatian, and Spanish.

Spirits were high as workers streamed into the Cadillac Palace Theater in downtown Chicago where they were met by chanting, clapping co-workers and supporters of the union.

In the past 10 years, hourly wages for hotel workers have risen by an average of a dollar or less. "We've decided we're going on strike, we've had enough of miserable wages, enough of the employers getting richer," said Nancy Carrasco, who works at the Fairmont Hotel.

Chicago hotel workers earn significantly less than their counterparts in New York, San Francisco, Boston, Washington, and Los Angeles. They pay \$85 per month for health insurance, higher than in these other cities

and unaffordable for many.

The contract covers almost 7,000 union workers, including housekeepers, food servers, kitchen staff, bell staff, and telephone operators from 24 downtown and five suburban hotels.

In gearing up for a possible strike in September, the union has launched a canned food drive and has announced that workers will receive \$200 in weekly strike pay. So far their strike fund has received pledges of more than \$250,000 from unions around the country.

The Teamsters have provided a warehouse to store the food. Engineering, maintenance, truck driving, and electrical workers unions, whose members also work in these hotels, have pledged to honor the hotel workers' picket lines.

A rally to support the hotel workers will be held August 23 at 5:00 p.m. on Michigan Avenue by the *Chicago Tribune* building. For more information contact HERE Local 1, 55 W. Van Buren, Chicago, Illinois 60605, telephone: (312) 663-4373.

Chessie Molano is the Socialist Workers Party candidate for lieutenant governor of Illinois and a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees.

Socialist nets 6,000 signatures for ballot spot in Washington

Continued from front page

he talked with individuals and groups of workers and youth. Many were glad to learn that someone who had fought to keep the hospital open was running for mayor. Many signed his petition to be placed on the November ballot.

From there the candidate and his supporters campaigned at a rally for reparations held on the Mall here, which attracted several thousand participants. They were able to talk to many youth and others who traveled from cities across the United States to demand reparations from the U.S. government for centuries of slavery and racism. Participants purchased some \$175 worth of books and pamphlets published by Pathfinder Press.

"To end racism," Manuel told one group to youth, "we need to take power from the capitalist minority and form a government of workers and farmers. Such a revolutionary struggle will open up the fight to once and for all put an end to racism and all forms of discrimination. It will act in our interests and join a worldwide fight for socialism." Many residents of the city who attended the rally signed the socialist petition.

Mayor ruled off ballot

Mayor Williams has been ruled off the ballot for the September primaries due to widespread fraud and forgeries contained in the 10,102 signatures he submitted. A D.C. Court of Appeals upheld the decision August 7. The mayor was fined a record \$277,700, for the 5,533 violations of election law, almost all of which were forged signatures. However, \$27,700 of the fine was suspended after Williams agreed to train petition circulators more carefully. Williams is now running a write-in campaign for the Democratic Party nomination.

In a related development, the D.C. Board of Elections ruled that the Marijuana Policy Project had failed to gather enough valid signatures to place an initiative on the ballot that would decriminalize the medical use of marijuana. The board ruled that while the group had filed the required 17,455 valid signatures, it fell 122 signatures short in one of the wards in the city. The group is appealing this ruling.

Manuel said the Socialist Workers campaign opposes this undemocratic move to prevent working people from expressing their opinion on this issue. Four years ago, a similar initiative succeeded in getting on the ballot. But the U.S. Congress intervened and delayed the ballots from being counted, and blocked the measure from becoming law.

SWP candidate in Iowa gains ballot status

BY JOE SWANSON

DES MOINES, Iowa—Edwin Fruit, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for Congress in the third congressional district here, joined his campaign supporters August 13 in filing more than 670 petition signatures for ballot status, double the requirement, with the Iowa secretary of state.

The next day, Fruit, 56, was sent a letter stating that his name will be certified for inclusion on the November 5 election ballot.

The socialist campaign offers a working-class alternative to the Democrats and Republicans, the twin parties of imperialist war and economic depression. The campaign is the only voice for workers, farmers, and young people who are standing up to the brutal effects of the deepening global crisis of the capitalist system.

The week before, Fruit and his supporters fanned out around Des Moines and the surrounding region with information about the campaign.

Supporters visited Storm Lake, Iowa, where they spoke to working people in shopping centers and in their homes in support of the fight being waged by Planned Parenthood to protect its patients' privacy. Following the discovery of the remains of a baby, officials in Buena Vista County had demanded the release of pregnancy-test

In an August 11 *Washington Post* column, American University professor of constitutional law Jamin Raskin decried these petitioning requirements.

"Massive signature requirements impose a pointless burden on outsider candidates that becomes an all-consuming drain on their campaigns," he wrote. He pointed out that since 1940, not a single statewide nominee of a third party has met the signature requirements for getting on the ballot in Maryland. Anyone who wants to run for governor as a Democrat or Republican is required to submit one signature, their own. Any other party must submit more than 27,000 valid signatures.

'Private preserve of two parties'

The ballot restrictions "paralleled a national trend to knock left-wing parties off the ballot. By the 1960s, the official ballot was treated like the private preserve of the two major parties," he wrote. "This perverse approach lives on across America because of the U.S. Supreme Court's 1971 decision in *Jenness v. Fortson*. In that case, the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) of Georgia challenged the state's draconian ballot policy, in which major parties had automatic ballot status but minor parties had to collect signatures equal to 5 percent of eligible voters in the previous election.

"The SWP's candidate for governor, Linda Jenness, had to collect an eye-popping 88,175 signatures and its two House candidates had to collect more than 10,000 signatures each," Raskin noted. "The court upheld Georgia's rules, declaring that the job of collecting tens of thousands of signatures to get on the ballot is not 'inherently

'Capitalism has nothing to offer'

BY NATALIE CHEVRIER

VANCOUVER, British Columbia—Beverly Bernardo, the Communist League candidate for mayor of Vancouver, brought her campaign to 1,500 dockworkers rallying in Seattle August 12 as part of their fight for a contract. There she joined David Ferguson, who recently launched his campaign for U.S. Congress on the Socialist Workers Party ticket in Seattle.

Bernardo's campaign had begun the weekend before, as campaign supporters joined her on a trip to talk with workers in the West Kootenays region of British Columbia (B.C.), where they learned of the poisoning of 65 construction workers at the

records from the organization's Storm Lake clinic. The socialist campaign champions the right of women to control their bodies.

At a Native American powwow in Tama, Iowa, vendors expressed interest in taking a consignment of Pathfinder titles.

Fruit has also joined his supporters in campaigning at the gate to the meatpacking plant where he is employed. The socialist candidate works on the cut floor and is a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers, Local 1149.

Supporters have taken the campaign to the UPS terminal in Des Moines, which is organized by the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Local 90. They set up a campaign table at the terminal gate and spoke to a number of workers about the proposed UPS contract and broader social issues, such as the U.S. rulers' drive toward a war against Iraq.

Discussions with working farmers

Campaigners met working farmers at the Iowa State Fair, held the same week that the petition signatures were filed. A Waterloo dairy farmer who has showed cattle from his 90-cow milking operation at the fair over a number of years, said that the price he gets for his milk barely covers the cost of maintaining his herd. "If my wife and my son did not have an off-the-farm job, we would

Candidate for Nebraska governor gets 'enthusiastic response' in S. Omaha



Militant/Don Reed

Lisa Rottach, the Socialist Workers candidate for governor of Nebraska, campaigns in South Omaha on August 18. Rottach and supporters handed out leaflets, and sold the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and Pathfinder books. South Omaha is home to thousands of workers in the Nebraska meatpacking plants. "We received a very enthusiastic response to the program of our campaign," said Rottach, adding that one worker told her, "it's important you're out here because nobody else tells the truth about what we workers need."

more burdensome' than trying 'to win the votes of a majority in a party primary.'

"But this is comparing apples to oranges," he said. "The SWP is a party and should receive the same treatment as the Democratic and Republican parties. The proper comparison was thus not between how hard it was for any SWP candidate to get on the ballot (very hard) and how hard it was for a specific Democrat or Republican to emerge

from a competitive primary battle (very hard). The proper comparison would have been between the chances that some Democratic or Republican nominee will be placed on the general election ballot (100 percent) with the chances that any SWP candidate will be placed there (zero to none). There have been no minor-party candidates for Congress on the ballot in Georgia since the 1940s."

Teck Cominco lead and zinc smelter in Trail. "These workers are fighting to get the truth out and win just compensation from the company and the Workers Compensation Board," said Bernardo.

The team was able to get a better picture of the impact of the austerity measures being imposed by the B.C. government. "The cuts to social services are felt more deeply in rural areas," she said.

The resistance to the provincial government's cuts is widespread. The team to Trail unexpectedly ran into a protest by the British Columbia Government Employees Union at the Coquihalla highway toll. The workers opposed the privatization of

B.C. highways and were letting people through without charging them the usual \$10 fee.

At a campaign event in Vancouver August 10, Bernardo, a meat packer, spoke together with Ferguson. "Capitalism has nothing to offer working people and youth—either at home or abroad," she said. "No matter who is elected November 16, they will organize the next round of assaults on behalf of the ruling rich. The Communist League campaign offers a revolutionary program to unite working people around the world in a common struggle that can take on and defeat the imperialist rulers in Canada and elsewhere.

"We join with the struggle of Native people in rejecting the results of the illegitimate and racist referendum held by the provincial government," said the socialist candidate. "We call for Quebec independence as well as for immediate relief for farmers in Alberta and Saskatchewan, who are facing a devastating drought."

Many of the participants at the forum had questions about the socialist campaign's response to the escalating imperialist war drive. "What we see now is a snapshot of U.S. military might," Bernardo said. "This hides the truth: that the imperialists are acting out of weakness, not strength. We join with the unbreakable fight of the Palestinian people for their land and against Israeli government brutality; with mobilizations of working people across Latin America against the imperialist-imposed social catastrophe; and with the people of Cuba, Iran, Iraq, and north Korea standing up to the economic and military threats of Washington and other imperialist powers like Ottawa."

Bernardo encouraged all those in attendance to "campaign with us, using our campaign newspapers, the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, on street corners and college campuses in order to meet other workers and youth. We bring our campaign to workers at factory gates and on the job, including to my co-workers in meatpacking; to strikers and to fighters for immigrant rights; against police brutality; and in opposition to the government and employer attacks on workers' rights."

Oppose Washington's war drive

The U.S. ruling class is cold-bloodedly laying the groundwork for a massive military assault on the Iraqi people. Washington is building up its forces in the region, setting the political stage for the assault, and attempting to demonstrate the Iraqi government to justify its imperial designs.

Washington's bipartisan course toward war in the Arab-Persian Gulf is part of its broader war drive and militarization campaign. Along this trajectory, the U.S. rulers are making sure that no American soldier will ever come before an international war crimes tribunal; probing to include countries with the potential to build crude cruise missiles as targets for "preemptive strikes;" proposing to deploy U.S. Special Operation forces to carry out covert military assassinations abroad; and announcing matter-of-factly that the U.S. armed forces will occupy Afghanistan for the foreseeable future.

An imperialist war drive does not take place only in foreign lands. Whether they are waging war or heading toward it, the U.S. rulers press forward the militarization of the United States; try to curtail workers' rights, including the right to strike; and probe to institute a national ID card and other repressive measures. The establishment of the U.S. Northern Command, the jailing of citizens without charges or access to a lawyer, and the federalization of the police forces run parallel to the military assaults on working people abroad.

In 1990-91 the U.S. rulers launched their brutal war against Iraq under the guise that they were defending the sovereignty of Kuwait and preventing Iraqi president Saddam Hussein from dominating Middle East oil reserves. A decade later it is Washington that has thousands of troops in Kuwait, along with a government beholden to it. And it is the U.S. imperialists who greedily anticipate gaining control of the region's oil fields—and dealing blows to their imperialist rivals to boot.

The U.S. war drive has nothing to do with the Septem-

ber 11 attacks. Rather, it represents an acceleration of what the imperialists had been doing beforehand. The war preparations against Iraq register the U.S. rulers' attempt to finish the business they began in the Gulf War, by imposing a protectorate in Baghdad beholden to their interests. They are driven to war today for the same reason they carried out that slaughter: they seek to change the relationship of forces in the region and to shore up their declining empire.

There is much that working people and revolutionary youth can do today to oppose imperialism and its war drive. There are struggles against the bosses and their government to join—from those of farmworkers and dockworkers in California to hotel workers in Illinois. Anyone standing on the front lines against the employers' assaults is open to learning about and solidarizing with others who face a common enemy.

Bringing the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and Pathfinder books to fellow workers, farmers, and youth is essential in widening the fight against imperialism. They contain a scientific explanation of the world and provide a revolutionary working-class course in defense of working people.

As a number of articles in this week's issue point out, the Socialist Workers campaigns are another way to educate and organize together with anyone who is part of the working-class resistance today. Campaigning with young socialists who support the socialist candidates and becoming part of this effort is an effective way to build a revolutionary leadership.

The future of fascism, wars, and economic catastrophe that the superwealthy minority holds for working people points to the need to wage a revolutionary struggle to take power out of the hands of the U.S. war makers. This is the only road toward building a society based on human needs, rather than the profits of the few.

Cancel the Third World debt

The International Monetary Fund just added the first installment on an additional \$30 billion in debt that Brazil owes to the banks in the United States, Japan, and other imperialist countries. The announcement of the loan package—an attempt to stave off a default on the more than \$250 billion national debt and an economic collapse like that experienced in Argentina—sparked only a few-days' rebound of the country's currency and financial markets.

The potential for a financial collapse of Latin America's largest country and economy—of catching the Argentine flu that has already spread to Paraguay and Uruguay—and of explosive resistance by working people have made Washington nervous. The U.S. rulers have already expressed concern over the possibility of the Workers Party candidate winning the presidential elections in September. They fear working people will see it as an opening to fight for land reform, jobs, and other burning social issues.

Some two weeks before the IMF announcement, U.S. treasury secretary Paul O'Neill had scoffed at the proposal for a loan, suggesting the billions involved would end up in "Swiss bank accounts." In fact, much of the "bailout" will end up in U.S. bank accounts, including the coffers of J.P. Morgan Chase, FleetBoston, and Citigroup. As one liberal commentator, a supporter of the package, asked: "Who, exactly, is being bailed out?"

U.S. big business siphons off billions of dollars in interest alone from loans to Brazil and other semicolonial countries around the world. This wealth comes from only one source—the superexploitation of workers and peasants. With each "bailout" comes demands for "belt-tightening" measures that bring ruination to growing numbers of toilers.

The problem for the superrich is that these profit harvests come with an overhead. In times of stagnating and declining profit rates, a default on one country's loans can have a domino effect. And the major U.S. banking institutions are not only facing the threat of those defaults. Their giant "bubble" of trillions of dollars in stocks, derivatives, and shaky domestic loans is deflating today. That is why any one financial disaster—a default in Brazil, a banking collapse in Japan, or further nose-dive of the stock markets—can trigger a collapse of the U.S. banking system.

Pathfinder books like *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* and *Capitalism's World Disorder* help demystify the economic and political dynamics of the world today and offer a perspective for working people to follow the example of the Cuban toilers. The Cuban revolutionary leadership has consistently called for the cancellation of the Third World debt, a debt that now exceeds \$2 trillion. This is a demand that all working people and anti-imperialist youth should champion.

Zimbabwe's land

It's hard to remember when the fight by a few thousand farmers to keep their land captured so much print and tough talk on a daily basis in the big-business media as have the recent events in Zimbabwe. Usually farmers struggle and protest for years, and lose their land to the banks, without so much as a peep in the daily press. But that is the difference between being a capitalist farmer and a working farmer.

What is the situation?

"Over six million people live in Zimbabwe's marginal rural lands without fertile soils and reliable rainfall, lacking control of water rights and restricted from access to the bulk of the nation's natural resources...and 4,500 mainly white, large-scale farmers today dominate Zimbabwe's largely agrarian economy," wrote Sam Moyo in *The Land Acquisition Process in Zimbabwe* (1997/1998).

Many of these farms are massive. According to 1998 statistics, the largest 233 farms were more than 19,760 acres each. Anglo American Corporation alone owns 25 farms totaling 1.17 million acres.

The colonial conquest of what is now Zimbabwe involved the forced dispossession of Africans from their land, the stealing of cattle and farming implements, and the imposition of a brutal regime to defend the interests of the settlers and their masters in London.

Even with the liberation of the country in 1980 after a hard-fought struggle, the imperialist rulers forced the new

government to agree not to touch the land for at least a decade. Going back on their promise to fund land purchases and resettlement, the British imperialists helped keep masses of peasants from gaining even a scrap of land to farm.

The moves by the government of Zimbabwe to end one of the most devastating vestiges of British colonial rule have been roundly condemned from London to Washington and back again. The imperialists try to use the fact that working people are facing growing food shortages in Zimbabwe to justify their demand that the government in Harare end measures to force the capitalist farmers to turn over their land.

While the methods of the government of Robert Mugabe have nothing in common with mobilizing working people to carry out a genuine land reform, his administration seems to be determined one way or another to end the system of land domination remaining from the colonial set up. Washington and London should stay out of Zimbabwe's affairs. Their sanctimonious hand-wringing over a continent devastated by centuries of colonial and imperialist exploitation need not carry the weight of a single seed of corn with working people. Instead, Washington can start by addressing the claims and discrimination suits by Black farmers it has helped drive off the land across the United States. And London can turn its attention to addressing demands being raised by working farmers in the United Kingdom.

Hugo Chávez and the unions in Venezuela

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

In a letter in the August 26 *Militant*, reader Theodore Jones writes that the Venezuelan Workers Federation (CTV), the largest labor federation in the country, is "an organization that represents the Venezuelan capitalist class" and that the "wholesale recall of its leadership attempted by [Hugo] Chávez would have been an enormous step forward for the Venezuelan working class."

Jones takes issue with recent articles in the *Militant* on the character of the CTV, and the attempt by Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez in 2000 to suspend the union federation's leadership through a state-sponsored referendum. The referendum was approved by a 65 percent majority, but only 22 percent of the 11 million eligible voters turned out to the polls. Given the lack of support for the move, and opposition from the bosses and most of the officials of the various trade union federations, Chávez backed down and recognized the CTV leadership.

The article reported the views of Orlando Chirino, executive secretary of the Workers Federation of Carabobo State (FETRAC), and other unionists who helped lead the working-class rebellion against the U.S.-backed military coup in April.

Chirino and other workers we interviewed referred specifically to Chávez's attempt to replace the CTV leadership through direct government intervention as reactionary, not the labor policies of his government in their entirety. Chirino was among a minority who openly opposed that move when it was announced on the basis that it undermined efforts by militant unionists to turn the trade unions into organizations independent of the capitalist state. Others we interviewed, who did not oppose or support the referendum on the CTV to begin with, concluded that it had been a mistake after seeing how it ended up strengthening the CTV leadership's position. The attempt by Chávez to remove the CTV tops through a government-sponsored referendum allowed these labor fakers to pose as victims of government persecution and "defenders of union democracy."

In his "Afterword" to *Teamster Bureaucracy*, Farrell Dobbs describes the accelerated degeneration of the labor officialdom in the United States following World War II and the bureaucratic control imposed on the unions. "These officials have gone a long way toward converting the trade unions into auxiliary instruments of repression acting in collusion with capitalist authorities," says Dobbs, who was a leader of the 1934 Minneapolis strikes, a central organizer of the 11-state Teamster over-the-road organizing drive in the late 1930s, and national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party from 1953 to 1972.

"Among the consequences has been the clamping of collective bargaining into an iron vise," Dobbs writes. "One jaw consists of restrictions imposed upon organized labor by the bosses' government. The other takes the form of bureaucratic controls within the unions themselves. Through this combination of repressive forces the workers have been subjected to steadily intensifying exploitation at the hands of the capitalists." Dobbs also explained that these trade union bureaucrats played the role of lickspittles in the sphere of capitalist foreign policy.

Much of this applies to the CTV labor fakers who have tied the unions to the capitalist state and the bosses' parties. Many workers in Venezuela told us of the CTV leadership's support for police repression against militant workers and restrictions by the bosses on organized labor. They sat on their hands for decades in face of attacks by the employers on wages and working conditions while keeping a bureaucratic stranglehold on the unions.

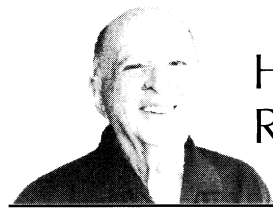
Not an organization of the capitalist class

The CTV, however, is not "an organization that represents the Venezuelan capitalist class," as Jones suggests. The unions that belong to the federation remain defensive organizations of the working class, albeit with a bureaucratic, pro-capitalist leadership.

In *Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay*, Leon Trotsky, a central leader of the Russian Revolution, says: "It is necessary to adapt ourselves to the concrete conditions existing in the trade unions of every given country in order to mobilize the masses, not only against the bourgeoisie, but also against the totalitarian regime within the trade unions themselves and against the leaders enforcing this regime. The primary slogan for this struggle is: *complete and unconditional independence of the trade unions in relation to the capitalist state*. This means a struggle to turn the trade unions into the organs of the broad exploited masses and not the organs of a labor aristocracy."

One final point. Hugo Chávez is not "a reactionary," a description that Jones mistakenly implies that the *Militant* has used. He is a bourgeois nationalist figure who won presidential elections using pro-working-class demagoguery and promising to use executive power to deal with the corrupt elite as a strong man. He has done that, while leaving intact capitalist market relations, with economic power firmly remaining in the hands of the capitalist class. The *Militant* wholeheartedly supported the struggles by working people to oppose the bosses' attempts to overthrow the Chávez government.

Why they have to steal so much—“The rich have more, and more to lose”—The remarkably brilliant *New York Times*.



Harry Ring

Bread and water menu—A growing number of state prisons are punishing inmates with bread and water, plus some raw cabbage leaves. They claim the bread meets

caloric needs—if they eat three pounds a day.

Try boarding that way—Four male passengers were removed from an American Airlines flight. For 30 minutes they were searched in view of other passengers by three female employees. They were forced to lift their shirts and unzip their pants. Charging public humiliation, they're filing a civil rights suit against the airline. The three are U.S. citizens of Palestinian descent.

In-depth reporting—Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao paid a visit to San Francisco's Chinese community. She observed: “Asians are small business people, conservative

and opposed to taxes...and few are political activists.... Asians tend to go with whoever is in power because of their respect for power.”

Doesn't even need a shredder—The *Denver Post* reports that 30-year veteran cop Jerome Powell has arrested nearly 6,000 people for alleged drunk driving. Also, the paper ruefully adds, he has a propensity for violence. He's been charged with assault and brutality five times and suspended twice. Adds the *Post*: “He accidentally shot a man in the jaw and has been repeatedly accused of abusive behavior, including against his family.” He's currently being probed on the basis of a videotape showing him

roughing up a woman, half his size, in a holding cell. Meanwhile, he continues his job on the graveyard shift.

Enron? Who's that?—“Enthusiasm wanes for tough reforms in wake of Enron”—News headline.

Judicious—*USA Today* reported that WorldCom has admitted “discrepancies” and “improperly” accounted numbers that led them to state \$3.3 billion more than they thought they had.

Relatives, big and fat—New York City has rent “stabilization” with holes like the ones in antique Swiss cheese. For instance, one of

a variety of permitted evictions is that the apartment can be reclaimed by the owner of a dwelling for his own use. One owner in a high rise in a costly area of the East Side had a process under way to get stabilized tenants evicted—so he and his kin can move in. That, he says, will take 23 apartments.

Records fresh as air—Birmingham, an Alabama coal and steel area, has its share of ozone, the corrosive airborne chemical that attacks the lungs. For a period ending seven years ago annual reports were filed on ozone levels. Now, in response to a court suit, a judge suggested the last record filed might be a suitable document in the case.

New York bus workers ‘stand united,’ win contract

BY RUTH ROBINETT

FLUSHING, New York—“This strike has showed the character of us all. United we stand, divided we fall,” O'Neill Evans said to the *Militant* as he and other bus workers exited their contract voting site in Queens on August 6.

Other workers were also upbeat that through their two-month work stoppage they had pushed back the city administration's attempt to cut their health benefits, the issue at the center of the confrontation, and strengthened their union.

The bus workers, members of Transit Workers Union (TWU) Local 100, voted 1,058 to 88 to approve the contract negotiated with three private bus companies: Triboro Coach, Queens Surface, and Jamaica Buses.

The private lines are subsidized by \$110 million annually in city funds and the city government owns two company bus depots and many of the vehicles.

The contract is retroactive to January of last year, when the previous one expired. It includes wage increases of 4 percent for 2001 and 2002, and a further 1 percent on March 31, 2003 when the agreement expires. The workers now earn an average of \$20.35 per hour.

Retirement pension payments have been increased. While employer contributions to the Health Benefits Trust will move in step with the Consumer Price Index (CPI), an additional \$3.75 million has been promised by the city. The contract says this will be recouped through “productivity improvements.”

To go into effect the contract must now be approved by New York's Office of Labor Relations and be accepted for funding by the city administration.

The unionists' concerns about job security were addressed not in the contract but in a July 24 city council resolution. More than two-thirds of council members voted that any city franchise for privately operated bus services should “provide for the protection of the jobs, benefits and collective bargaining rights of employees of the current franchise holders.”

In championing this vote, union officials also pointed out that in 30 years workers have never been able to achieve any employee protection provisions in city franchises.

Strikes earlier this year

As the employers and the city stalled the contract negotiations, the union members organized a two-hour wildcat strike in January, and a two-day stoppage in February, forcing the companies to agree to a draft contract.

City officials withheld their approval, however, and on June 17, union members began an indefinite strike.

The city's refusal to provide funding for increases in health-care benefits over and above the CPI increase was a key issue in the dispute. As well, many drivers and other workers recognized that fundamental union rights were at stake.

“The city is just trying to bust the union. New York City was built on union labor,” said one worker. Setting up regular picket



Militant

Striking bus workers in Queens, New York, picket during two-month strike. Workers voted August 6 to approve a contract with private bus companies and city government, after winning increases in wages and health-care benefits.

lines at company depots, the unionists won the support of many working people. Their action had a big impact on public transport, affecting the daily schedules of some 100,000 people.

The strikers showed their resolve on July 14 by rejecting an attempt to ram a contract down their throat that, in their view, did not address the questions of health-care funding and job security.

“They want us to go back with promises,” a striker commented. “We say unless we have a contract that's signed, sealed, and delivered, we have no deal.”

New York gov't uses jail as shelter for homeless

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

NEW YORK—Mayor Michael Bloomberg is drawing fire here for his decision to reopen a decrepit city jail for use as an emergency overnight homeless shelter.

As the economic crisis worsens and capitalist landlords price working people out of apartments, the number of homeless families in New York City is growing by 25 percent a year. On an average night last week some 8,400 families, encompassing around 25,000 men, women, and children, were officially registered with the city's homeless agency, along with 9,000 single people. The number of individuals in homeless families has increased by 10,000 since 1998.

Prior to reopening the jail on August 11 the mayor and the city commissioner for homeless services, Linda Gibbs, toured the facility, a tall brick fortress surrounded by barbed wire and guarded by corrections officers carrying guns, mace, and sticks. The jail is located just blocks away from the city's Emergency Assistance Unit intake center in the Bronx, where those seeking shelter must wait in line to register and be fingerprinted.

Despite some quick touchup, which included covering some of the bars with white sheets, hanging shower curtains, and removing some of the perimeter barbed wire, the place looks, smells, and feels like a jail, several of those forced to stay there said.

About 90 homeless families were scheduled to sleep at the jail August 14. One of them, Kimberly Miller, 18, who was sent there with her two sons, aged one-and-a-half years and four months, said that she could not stand it and was finally allowed to leave after two hours.

Four days after opening this shelter, city officials admitted the presence of large amounts of lead-based paint, and announced they would no longer send children younger than six to the facility. This move came in response to an investigation by the Legal Aid Society. The firm hired by the society found that of 20 samples of paint, 17 were in “poor condition,” meaning the paint was loose or chipped, making it easy for children to ingest. The levels of lead were as high as 8.5 milligrams per square centimeter of paint, the society said. The toxicity level as de-

finied by the city Health Department is 1 milligram per square centimeter. If ingested, lead-based paint can cause permanent brain damage.

“Why stop at six, they're still kids if they're older, and lead poisoning is lead poisoning,” stated Shanon Moore, 28, who was with her seven- and 10-year-old daughters. “Of course, I'll go if I'm sent, we have no other choice.”

On many days, dozens of families who have gone to the Emergency Assistance Unit

Continued on page 15

LETTERS

Lord Greenspan

Upon learning Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan is about to be knighted by the royalty of England for bringing economic stability to the world, I'm glad I was already laying on the floor exercising!

Talk about satire, I could only think of a political cartoon with the world's three billion disenfranchised and marginalized people who make less than \$2 a day looking quizzically at the royal proceedings.

Larry Ginter
Rhodes, Iowa

Campaign statement

It seems to me that the New York Socialist Workers campaign statement printed in the August 19 *Militant* could have been clearer. Someone unfamiliar with the communist movement could easily get the impression that the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists expect revolution to occur

mainly as a result of their own exhortations.

Related to this, the full scope of what's being discussed doesn't come through clearly when the statement uses words like depression, war and revolution. I think the statement would be stronger if it spelled things out more.

1) As bad as things are now, the ruling class attacks and sudden breakdowns of the past three decades are destined to get dramatically worse. Capitalism is headed towards a depression on the scale of the 1930s, and war on the scale of Vietnam or worse.

2) Sooner or later, this will provoke massive working class protests, involving tens of millions in strikes, demonstrations, and other actions.

3) This working class revolt will open up the possibility of a revolutionary fight to replace the government of big business with a government of workers and farmers.

This perspective is discussed at length in various issues of *New International*, and in

Pathfinder books by Jack Barnes. But in the pages of the *Militant*, the need for a workers and farmers government gets much more prominence than the first two points, and is often presented by itself. It seems to me that these three points should receive equal prominence, and should be discussed in the same breath.

No social system leaves the scene until it is thoroughly bankrupt, expressed in a profound social crisis that drives its opponents into action.

Dave Morrow
Oakland, California

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

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

Malcolm X on the stakes in African struggles

Printed below is an excerpt from *Malcolm X Speaks*. The Spanish-language edition, *Habla Malcolm X*, is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for August. The piece quoted is from a talk presented by Malcolm X at the Audubon Ballroom in New York on Dec. 20, 1964. Copyright © 1993 by Betty Shabazz and Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

BY MALCOLM X

Africa is strategically located, geographically between East and West; it's the most valuable piece of property involved in the struggle between East and West. You can't get to the East without going past it, and

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

can't get from the East to West without going past it. It sits right there between all of them. It sits snuggled into a nest between Asia and Europe; it can reach either one. None of the natural resources that are needed in Europe that they get from Asia can get to Europe without coming either around Africa, over Africa, or in between the Suez Canal which is sitting at the tip of Africa. She can cut off Europe's bread. She can put Europe to sleep overnight, just like

that. Because she's in a position to; the African continent is in a position to do this. But they want you and me to think Africa is a jungle, of no value, of no consequence. Because they also know that if you knew how valuable it was, you'd realize why they're over there killing our people. And you'd realize that it's not for some kind of humanitarian purpose or reason.

Also, Africa as a continent is important because of its tropical climate. It's so heavily vegetated you can take any section of Africa and use modern agricultural methods and turn that section alone into the breadbasket for the world. Almost any country over there can feed the whole continent, if it only had access to people who had the technical know-how to bring into that area modern methods of agriculture. It's rich. A jungle is only a place that's heavily vegetated—the soil is so rich and the climate is so good that everything grows, and it doesn't grow in season—it grows all the time. All the time is the season. That means it can grow anything, produce anything.

Added to its richness and its strategic position geographically is the fact of the existence of the Suez Canal and the Strait of Gibraltar. Those two narrow straits can cut off from Europe anything and everything Europe needs. All of the oil that runs Europe goes through the Suez Canal, up the Mediterranean Sea to places like Greece and Italy and Southern Spain and France and along through there; or through the Strait of Gibraltar and around on into England. And they need it. They need access through the Suez. When [Egyptian president Gamal Abdel] Nasser took over the Suez, they almost died in Europe. It scared them to death—why? Because Egypt is in Africa, in fact, Egypt is in both Africa and Asia....

Valued natural resources in Africa

Another reason the continent is so important is because of its gold. It has some of the largest deposits of gold on earth, and diamonds. Not only the diamonds you put on your finger and in your ear, but industrial diamonds, diamonds that are needed to make machines—machines that can't function or can't run unless they have these diamonds. These industrial diamonds play a major role in the entire industrialization of the European nations, and without these diamonds their industry would fall.

You and I usually know of diamonds for rings—because those are the only diamonds we get close to, or the only diamonds within our line of thinking. We don't think in terms of diamonds for other uses. Or baseball diamonds—some of us only get that far.

Not only diamonds, but also cobalt. Cobalt is one of the most valuable minerals on this earth today, and I think Africa is one of the only places where it is found. They use it in cancer treatment, plus they use it in this nuclear field that you've heard so much about. Cobalt and uranium—the largest deposits are right there on the African continent. And this is what the man is after. The man is after keeping you over here worrying about a cup of coffee, while he's over there in your motherland taking control over minerals that have so much value they make the world go around. While you and I are still walking around over here, yes, trying to drink some coffee—with a cracker.

It's one of the largest sources of iron and bauxite and lumber and even oil, and Western industry needs all of these minerals in order to survive. All of these natural minerals are needed by the Western industrialists in order for their industry to keep running at the clip that it's been used to. Can we prove it? Yes. You know that France lost her French West African possessions, Belgium lost the Congo, England lost Nigeria and Ghana and some of the other English-speaking areas; France also lost Algeria, or the Algerians took Algeria.

As soon as these European powers lost their African possessions, Belgium had an economic crisis—the same year she turned the Congo loose. She had to rearrange her entire economy and her economic methods had to be revised, because she had lost possession of the source of most of her raw materials—raw materials that she got almost free, almost with no price or output whatsoever.

When she got into a position where she didn't have access to these free raw materials anymore, it affected her economy. It affected the French economy. It affected the British economy. It drove all of these European countries to the point where they had to come together and form what's known as the European Common Market. Prior to that, you wouldn't hear anything about a European Common Market.

Being the gateway to Southwest Africa,



Malcolm X speaking at meeting in Harlem, New York, 1964.

Southern Rhodesia, Basutoland, Swaziland, and South Africa, the Congo is a country on the African continent which is so strategically located geographically that if it were to fall into the hands of a real dyed-in-the-wool African nationalist, he could then make it possible for African soldiers to train in the Congo for the purpose of invading Angola. When they invade Angola, that means Angola must fall, because there are more Africans than there are Portuguese, and they just couldn't control Angola any longer. And if the Congo fell into good hands, other than Tshombe, then it would mean that Angola would fall. Southern Rhodesia would fall, Southwest Africa would fall and South Africa would fall. And that's the only way they would fall.

When these countries fall, it would mean that the source of raw material, natural resources, some of the richest mineral deposits on earth, would then be taken away from the European economy....

I say this because it is necessary for you and me to understand what is at stake. You can't understand what is going on in Mississippi if you don't understand what is going on in the Congo. And you can't really be interested in what's going on in Mississippi if you're not also interested in what's going on in the Congo. They're both the same. The same interests are at stake. The same sides are drawn up, the same schemes are at work in the Congo that are at work in Mississippi. The same stake—no difference whatsoever.

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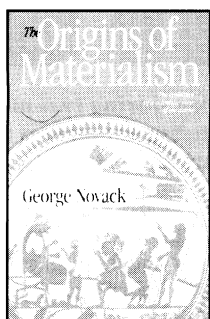
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U.S. rulers press war drive on several fronts

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

The Bush administration's ongoing preparations and assembly of bipartisan support for an imperialist assault against Iraq are taking place within a broader war drive by Washington.

From making sure that U.S. troops will not be brought before an international court, to preparing to send Special Operations forces on covert missions, and planning for a long-term occupation of Afghanistan, U.S. imperialism is preparing for future wars.

Earlier this year the U.S. government forced through the United Nations an agreement that U.S. troops and personnel operating under UN authority will be exempt for one year from the jurisdiction of the newly established International Criminal Court.

The court, dominated by the imperialists, will prosecute individuals for "war crimes" and "genocide."

Tensions have now risen between Washington and its European counterparts over the issue. U.S. government officials are pressing the governments of 13 nations that have applied to join the European Union to sign agreements not to extradite U.S. citizens to the court.

A senior European Union official, Romano Prodi, told the aspirants for EU membership—including Poland, Hungary, Slovenia, and Cyprus—that they should resist signing such an agreement with Washington until the EU has reached a common policy on the issue. So far only the Israeli regime and the government of Romania have signed a pact. The Swiss government announced August 13 that it would not sign, the first to formally do so.

Washington has threatened to withhold military aid to nations that decline to make a deal. According to media reports, governments in the EU nations and other countries nearby have stated their refusal to be pushed into accepting U.S. terms.

Cruise missiles and special forces

An August 18 article in the *Miami Herald* reported that U.S. defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld sent the White House a "classified memo" in July "warning of the spread of cruise missiles among hostile nations and urging an intensified government-wide effort to defend against them."

In the month following Rumsfeld's memo the National Security Council convened an interagency "working level" meeting to discuss "how to get our hands around the issue and figure out who" would spearhead a campaign against countries supposedly deploying cruise missiles, said an unnamed White House official.

According to the *Herald*, at least 81 countries possess some type of cruise missile, totaling more than 70,000 weapons, although most are defensive armaments designed to be launched at ships at a range of less than 60 miles.

N.Y. homeless

Continued from Page 13

in the Bronx have been offered nowhere to sleep other than the unit's floor. On August 14, for example, 51 families slept on the floor there. A court order bars the commissioner for homeless services from allowing any overnight stays at the unit. New York City is under court supervision of its homeless program, and operates under a consent decree to provide homeless people with shelter.

In June Mayor Bloomberg announced his plans for "reforming" the shelter system. While offering a modest increase in subsidies to those lucky enough to gain access to the scarce low-income housing units in the city, the mayor seeks the right to evict anyone in the shelter system whom city authorities deems to have been staying there too long. The billionaire mayor's proposal "would require shelter clients to look at two apartments a week and prohibit them from refusing multiple-housing options presented to them, or they would risk losing the right to stay in shelters for 30 days," reported the *New York Times*.

Elaborating further on the proposal, Homeless Services Commissioner Gibbs insisted, "Clients need to understand that this is temporary shelter that is there for emergencies. If families come in they need to understand and accept their obligation to seek and accept permanent housing."

"What worries U.S. authorities," the paper wrote, "is the prospect of such states as Iraq, Iran or North Korea or such terrorist groups as al Qaeda taking existing aircraft or anti-ship missiles and converting them into unmanned drones that could function as crude but still very deadly cruise missiles."

Shortly after releasing the memo Rumsfeld and senior military officials met to discuss proposals on how to get U.S. Special Operations forces "more deeply involved in long-term covert operations" in countries where Washington is not at "open war" and in some cases where the "government is not informed of their presence," the *New York Times* reported August 12.

The Special Forces in the U.S. military would be authorized to capture or kill so-called "al Qaeda leaders"—authority that would run counter to an executive order that bars assassinations. Seeking to circumvent this prohibition, Bush administration officials claim that the "global campaign against terrorism" justifies U.S. troops killing those on foreign soil they deem to be terrorists.

Washington has begun a military buildup in the Middle East, with the Pentagon ordering 10 ships to carry armored vehicles, helicopters, tanks, ammunition, and other war materiel to the region. According to press reports, the Air Force is stocking up on ammunition and spare parts, and rushing to meet a fall deadline to replenish precision-guided bombs depleted in the war against the people of Afghanistan. The U.S. military already has armaments stored in 37 huge warehouses in Kuwait and Qatar—enough to outfit two reinforced army armored brigades. Equipment for two other

brigades is stacked on ships in the region.

Building bipartisan support for war

The Bush administration is making progress in building bipartisan support for an eventual massive bombing, invasion, and occupation of Iraq—what the big-business press and government officials call a "regime change."

The August 19 *Wall Street Journal* took the *New York Times* to task for headlining a alleged rift within the Republican Party over Iraq policy. Articles in the *Times* had featured quotes from opinion columns by former secretary of state Henry Kissinger and Brent Scowcroft, who was national security adviser under the previous president Bush, to support its claim.

Kissinger's column was featured in the August 12 *Washington Post*. Far from opposing the planned imperialist assault on Iraq, Kissinger stated that the administration's "case for removing Iraq's capacity of mass destruction is extremely strong" because "weapons of mass destruction, could inflict catastrophic, even irretrievable, damage."

'Catastrophic consequences'

He added "another, generally unstated reason for bringing matters to a head with Iraq. The attack on the World Trade Center had roots in many parts of the Islamic, and especially the Arab, world.... While long-range U.S. strategy must try to overcome legitimate causes of those resentments, immediate policy must demonstrate that a terrorist challenge or a systematic attack on the international order produces catastrophic

Socialist campaigners join with strikers

Continued from front page

sponse. One stood at our campaign table to encourage others to come over." Several days later, a co-worker invited him over to his house and introduced the socialist candidate to family and neighbors. And recently, a taxi driver invited him to his home to discuss politics and bought the *Militant* to read more about the U.S. war drive against Iraq, which he opposes, and the Palestinian struggle, which he supports.

Young socialists campaign

After their first two weeks of electioneering, the Young Socialists for Koppel and Hawkins held their first meeting August 18 and mapped out plans to follow up with a growing number of youth they have met who have expressed interest in campaigning with them for the socialist alternative. They also discussed getting together with students they know about setting up speaking events for the candidates on their campuses when the fall semester starts.

The young socialists and other campaigners have found support in areas throughout New York—from Manhattan's Garment District to Harlem to Washington Heights. On August 20 Margaret Trowe, a garment worker who is running for U.S. Congress in the 14th district, took a bullhorn and the milk crate that serves as her "soap box" and led campaign supporters out to the Garment District's bustling Eighth Avenue. She and other campaigners met a student from Baruch College who endorsed the campaign, bought a *Militant* subscription, and offered to set up a get-together with his friends to meet the socialist candidates.

In the Garment District, socialist candidates campaigned two weeks in a row in front of a building filled with sewing shops. Trowe, Jack Willey, who is running for state comptroller, and others passed out flyers and introduced workers to *Perspectiva Mundial* and the *Militant*. Trowe met two women who are trying to organize a union in their shop. Both wanted to meet up to learn more about getting involved in the campaign.

Over the past two weeks, Trowe and Willey have soap-boxed in Harlem, joined by an increasing number of supporters who have taken their turn at the bullhorn for a few minutes. They found particular interest in the socialist candidates' unconditional opposition to U.S. imperialism's war preparations against Iraq; their demand of jobs for all by reducing the workweek with no cut in pay; and their defense of affirmative action with quotas, which takes on added importance at a time of increased layoffs. The Socialist Workers Party is the only party

in the workers movement that is running a campaign in New York.

A subway track maintenance worker stopped by the communist literature table when he learned that the Socialist Workers campaign supported the bus drivers recently on strike in Queens. He said Mayor Michael Bloomberg's administration claims it no longer has funds to cover full medical benefits and instead insists the transit union will have to take concessions when the contract expires in December.

After the union garment shop where Trowe works announced a 10-day layoff, in what has been a series of shutdowns and short weeks over the summer, many workers were outraged. On the way out of the plant, a co-worker bought a subscription to *Perspectiva Mundial* after talking to Trowe, who spoke about the trap the bosses—often echoed by the trade union officialdom—

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

September 2, 1977

LOUISVILLE—Right-wing violence continues to escalate here. On the night of August 17, civil rights activist Anne Braden's car was fire-bombed, and a window of the Socialist Workers Party campaign office was broken by what police believe was a pellet gun.

These attacks coincide with an announcement by federal and local officials that a cache of ninety-seven fragmentation hand grenades, twenty-six sticks of dynamite, and 17,000 rounds of ammunition was seized at a Bullitt County dump, directly south of here. Police says warrants were issued in connection with an investigation of local "radical antibusing groups."

The attack of the SWP headquarters followed a threatening call received there August 5. The caller said that the National Socialist (Nazi) Liberation Front thought "SWPers should be bullwhipped and shot." This same group took credit for the 1975 bombing of the Los Angeles offices of the SWP.

At a well-attended press conference August 18, Debby Tarnopol, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor, blasted the inaction of Louisville Mayor Harvey Sloane and Jefferson County Judge Todd Hollanbach. She demanded they conduct a full-scale investigation into these violent attacks.

consequences for the perpetrators, as well as for their supporters, tacit or explicit."

The *Journal* wrote that Scowcroft's hesitations about a war, expressed in a column that appeared in its own pages, represent a "legitimate point of view," but one whose "track record doesn't inspire confidence." The paper pointed to Scowcroft's opposition to U.S. involvement in the war on Yugoslavia and his advice to President Bush "to stop the Gulf War early, based in part on CIA fear that a divided Iraq without a dictator was worse than a 'stable' Iraq ruled by Saddam or his Baath Party successor."

"Colin Powell was complicit in all those mistaken judgments, as was the State Department over which he now presides," the *Journal* added.

Tony Blankley, editorial page editor of the *Washington Times*, took note of Kissinger's advocacy of "catastrophic consequences" to a "terrorist challenge." He wrote favorably August 14 that on the day that Kissinger's article appeared, the Texas-based Strategic Forecasting Co. published a report that said the Bush administration "is not abandoning its strategy [of war with Iraq] because it sees a successful campaign against Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein as a prime way to shatter the psychological advantage within the Islamist movement and demonstrate U.S. power."

Blankley wrote that in the "imminent future the signs we suggest we are facing is a violent and perhaps prolonged struggle to defeat the will of an aroused and myriad people. As Winston Churchill warned shortly before World War II, we are moving into a time of 'measureless peril.'"

promote by blaming joblessness on workers from other countries in order to divert working people from fighting the real cause of unemployment—the bosses themselves.

In Washington Heights, William Estrada, candidate for Congress in the 15th district, received a good response to his street-corner talks. The U.S. drive toward war against Iraq sparked quite a bit of discussion. Throughout the last few weeks, campaigners have sold several copies of the *New Internationalist* issue in English, French, or Spanish with the feature article on "The Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's Assault on Iraq." Others have been attracted to the perspective of building a party capable of leading working people to take power, and some of them have been particularly interested in the pamphlet *The Working-Class and the Transformation of Learning: The Fraud of Education Reform Under Capitalism*.

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

August 11, 1952

"Fire—not explosives or bullets—is the most horrible and devastating weapon in Korea," said *The Militant* of Feb. 19, 1951, in describing the massacre of Korean civilians by the U.S. air forces. This type of warfare, we wrote, has added a new word to the common speech—"napalm"—flaming jellied gasoline. "The U.S. command's favorite method of warfare is burning people alive," we charged.

I cite what we wrote more than a year and a half ago about napalm bombings, because the Pentagon and U.S. Air Force officials are trying to represent the recent official complaints of the Chinese and north Korean government about U.S. napalming of civilian centers as nothing but a "new concerted Communist propaganda line." (*N.Y. Times*, Aug. 19)

Gen. Nathan F. Twining, acting Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force, claims the U.S. Air Forces in Korea "have never employed napalm against civilians." Secretary of Defense Robert A. Lovett goes further to cynically describe napalm as a "weapon like a bullet, a bomb or a shell." He opined that fire has been used in warfare since "Biblical days" and termed the Chinese and north Korean complaints "obviously unjustified" and a "tiresome form of propaganda."

Videotron strikers reject concessions

BY ÉRIC DESMARAIS
AND AL CAPPE

MONTREAL—"We are determined to keep fighting. Once the battle has started, I'm not going to abandon it," stated David Alexandre, a picket captain for Local 2815 of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, as he emerged from an August 15 union meeting.

By a near unanimous vote, 1,500 unionists rejected the latest concessions from the cable company Videotron and decided to continue their strike, now in its fourth month. They cheered the results and stood on chairs chanting "So-So-So-Solidarité" [solidarity].

The company locked out some 2,200 workers 15 minutes after they went on strike May 8. The workers are fighting a drive by the bosses to eliminate as many as half the jobs, slash wages, and deal a serious blow to the union. Caught in the free-fall of high tech stock, the value of Videotron has declined by more than \$3 billion since it was acquired by the media giant Quebecor in September 2000. At the same time, it is facing stiff competition from satellite dish companies.

At the heart of the conflict is the question of contracting out jobs. After the strike began, Quebecor signed an agreement to sell its installation and repair departments, covering 650 employees. The wages of technicians are to be cut by an average of 30 percent. It further proposed 30 percent contracting out across all departments.

The union does not recognize this sale, which was prohibited in the expired contract, and refuses to negotiate without the inclusion of the 650 workers.

"They want to give out all the work to subcontractors and then they'll say they have no work for us and lay us off," said a worker who identified himself as Noxs.

Quebecor billionaire president Pierre-Karl Péladeau also proposes that the workweek be increased from 35 hours to 37.5 but workers will be paid for only 36.25 hours. He has the audacity to call this arrangement a 3.57 percent increase in weekly revenue.

"The offer is an insult," said David Alexandre.

The fighting spirit of the workers that was displayed at the August 15 meeting has been present throughout the strike. After the failure to reach an agreement through government mediation, the workers organized a series of protests. On August 8 the strikers picketed in front of the TVA television station, which is owned by Quebecor, preventing employees from entering the building and thus delaying morning programming. The police were called to force the pickets away from the door. The workers then organized a demonstration in front of the offices of the Caisse de dépôt et de placement du Québec, a Quebec government financial agency that owns 45 percent of the shares in Videotron. These are but two of a number of actions that had been held since the beginning of the strike.

The company has attempted to undercut these mobilizations and the solidarity they have won by accusing the strikers of acts of sabotage such as cutting cables. While the company and the cops have no proof of union involvement, Quebecor is tripling to \$15 million its lawsuit against the union and has doubled to \$50,000 its reward for "information" about vandalism.

Union members reject these charges, pointing to a history of severed cables and company charges of "sabotage" on the eve of earlier union mobilizations.

Moreover, there is documented history of the use of agent provocateurs and frame-ups against the labor movement in Quebec. In 1974 the Royal Canadian Mounted Police attempted to plant a bomb during a strike against the Steinberg food chain to discredit the union. In the fall of 1987, Canadian Security and Intelligence Service agent provocateur Marc Boivin admitted to carrying out bombings during a union struggle at the resort Manoir Richelieu. And last year, on the eve of the Summit of the Americas in Quebec City, an RCMP agent infiltrated the

group Germinal, inciting the young people to take more radical action and provided them with materials as well as transportation to the summit.

Growing solidarity

But the accusations of sabotage and the disruptions of cable service have failed to stop the growing solidarity with the Videotron strikers. At secondary pickets in front of video clubs and music stores owned by Quebecor, strikers are collecting signatures on a petition calling on the government to pressure Videotron to negotiate an end to the conflict and to respect the rights of workers. More than 60,400 signatures have been garnered so far.

On July 29, the 12 strikers picketing Videotron offices on Berri Street in Montreal marched with their placards to join the picket line of striking hotel workers at the nearby Crown Plaza Hotel. "It really gave a lift to the hotel workers and to us. It was great to see that we were not alone," stated Antoine Comtois, a technical service representative.

Another striker, Tulsa Valin-Landry, added that "unions need to get together. Messages of solidarity are good but nothing replaces a visit to the picket line."

The unity and solidarity of the ranks that was underscored by the near unanimous vote to continue the fight has steered the determination of the workers.



Militant

Workers at Videotron in Montreal, members of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, vote at August 15 union meeting to reject latest concessions from the cable company. The 1,500 unionists have been on strike since May 8.

"The battle will be waged to the end," said Noxs.

"Péladeau is the one that is going to give in. Not us," declared Sylvain Naud, from Internet technical support. And referring to

the 650 "sold" employees, added, "We are going to be 2,200 when we sign."

Al Cappe is a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers union.

Labour Party wins New Zealand vote

BY FELICITY COGGAN

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—The governing Labour Party was returned to office in general elections in New Zealand July 27 with a higher share of the vote and three more seats in the 120-member parliament.

The results, however, fell short of the party leadership's expectations in calling the election some three months early. Registering more than 50 percent support in opinion polls at the time, it had hoped to win enough votes to govern alone. With 52 seats, Labour has been compelled to form a minority government with the Progressive Coalition, which won two seats. The party has also reached an agreement for support on confidence and money supply votes with the United Future Party, which won eight seats.

Only 77 percent of voters turned out for the election, the lowest in the 45-year period for which records have been kept.

In its previous term, Labour had governed in coalition with the Alliance Party, which held 10 seats, and with the support in parliament on confidence of the Green Party. Heading into the election, the Alliance split over New Zealand's participation in the imperialist intervention in Afghanistan. While the party's members of parliament (MPs) voted with Labour to commit military forces, many Alliance members wanted it to take more distance from the decision. As further conflicts emerged over whether the Alliance would assert a more independent image, leader James Anderton left to form the Progressive Coalition to continue full support for the Labour Party government. The remaining Alliance Party won no seats in this election.

National Party in disarray

The vote for the National Party, the traditional party of the ruling class in New Zealand and the governing party for most of the post-World War II period, plummeted to 21 percent, its lowest since the party was founded in 1935. Labour's share of the vote was 41 percent. National ended up with 27 seats, 12 fewer than in the last term.

Since the election, the National Party has been in turmoil, with calls for the resignation of party president Michelle Boag, and MP Maurice Williamson, an opponent of Boag, refusing to accept his new lower ranking in the party's parliamentary caucus.

The election result was largely welcomed in ruling circles. The *New Zealand Herald*

editorialized August 9 that "common sense has won" and that the outcome "offers fairly much the best possible prospect for a full term of stable government." *Herald* business editor Frances O'Sullivan commented that the new parliament "represents fertile ground on which to sow pro-business policies."

The paper noted that the election took place amid "looming economic clouds that suggest this term will be far more difficult than Labour's first." Farm income, though still at record highs, is predicted to drop 18 percent, and the rising New Zealand dollar is beginning to erode export revenue.

The *Herald* applauded the fact that the election result had "effectively neutered the Greens." The Greens, a bourgeois party that to date has cast its policies to the left of Labour, made opposition to the commercial release and field trials of genetically modified organisms the flagship of its campaign. The party campaigned on nationalist and protectionist themes, and made a special pitch to youth, with policies aimed at students, and so-called pro-environment schemes such as "ecological" taxes. It took nine seats.

Gains by New Zealand First

The most notable outcome of the election was the resurgence in support for the rightist New Zealand First Party, which increased its share of the vote from 4 percent to 10 percent, and more than doubled its parliamentary seats to 13. Its leader, Winston Peters, increased his personal majority from a bare 63 votes to almost 10,000.

Peters ran an explicitly rightist campaign, focusing his publicity and speeches on three themes: for slashing immigration, against Maori rights and what he termed the corrupt Maori "grievance industry," and for tougher "law and order" measures. He brandished a three-finger salute to symbolize this, and adopted the slogan of a popular cartoon character of "Can we fix it? Yes we can," which he encouraged supporters to chant at meetings.

Peters claimed to discuss issues that were "off-limits—important things that need to be said and cannot be spoken of." He blamed immigrants for problems in the health and education systems, and for being responsible for boosting inflation and interest rates, Auckland's traffic gridlock, and the country's AIDS levels. He called immigrants "gate-crashing asylum seekers" from "alien cultures and rigid religious practices."

The rightist politician saved particular barbs for liberals and the "political elite" that "share an internationalist global view. These people regard being patriotic as hopelessly old-fashioned and parochial," he said. "Their ideal is to have a villa in Tuscany, a time share in Wanaka and a job with a United Nations agency blaming the developed countries for all the ills of the world."

Outside of the campaign of the Communist League, which stood two candidates, there was no voice that spoke in the interests of working people in this election. The Alliance campaigned for more funds for health and education and for "social justice," saying that it would "keep Labour honest on behalf of working people." At the same time the party backed up its MPs' vote in support of New Zealand's imperialist intervention in Afghanistan. The centrist Socialist Workers Organization, which did not field candidates itself, called for a vote for the Greens.

Communist League campaign

The Communist League campaign joined with the resistance of working people. Supporters of the campaign joined protests of teachers and high school students over funding and pay demands, Maori opposed to construction of a prison in Northland, hospital workers fighting for a contract, and tertiary students marching to protest the government's student loan scheme.

The campaign also released a statement opposing the police harassment of Mohammed Saffi, an Iraqi-born New Zealand citizen, after he was jailed and deported by United States authorities on a spurious charge of a visa violation.

The candidates received warm support from fellow workers, along with suggestions for the campaign. At the Christchurch garment factory where candidate Baskaran Appu works, a workmate held a fund-raising raffle and gave out leaflets as she sold tickets.

The *Sunday Star Times*, a nationwide paper, published a major article explaining the campaign's views.

The candidates also spoke on a number of panels on the election. Following one such meeting at an Auckland polytechnic campus, a student called in to say that he thought the program and stance of the socialist campaign were "just what was needed" and wanted to find out more about the Communist League and Young Socialists and their activities.