

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Irish Republican Army ends 'armed campaign'

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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L.A. socialist candidate opposes antiunion initiative on ballot

BY NAOMI CRAINE

LOS ANGELES—Diana Newberry, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for City Council District 14 here, has spoken out against a proposal on the November ballot in California that would weaken the ability of trade unions to participate in politics. It would require public employee unions to get written permission from every member before their dues can be used to support candidates or lobbying efforts.

"This is an antilabor measure aimed at tying up unions in red tape and opening the door to employer and government interference in the basic organizations of working people," Newberry said.

The defeat of a similar reactionary



Diana Newberry, left, SWP candidate for Los Angeles City Council District 14, campaigns July 24 in Boyle Heights area.

proposition in a 1998 referendum was an important victory for labor, she noted.

Campaigning around this and other political questions while presenting the party's platform, the socialists have collected 1,200 signatures to put

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UK gov't boosts police powers, conducts sweeps

'Inciting terrorism' charge used to attack rights

BY TONY HUNT

LONDON—Using the pretext of the need for "security" since the July 7 bombings in this city and the failed attacks two weeks later, the authorities here staged a massive deployment of police July 28. Some 6,000 cops, including some carrying submachine guns, patrolled streets, Tube (subway), bus, and train stations. It was one of the biggest-ever deployments of armed police in London.

In the following days a stepped-up police presence remained and "stop-and-search" powers were implemented.

"We will have to strengthen, in the next year, the firearms capability of the Metropolitan Police," said Metropolitan Police Commissioner Ian Blair. Government officials have also pushed for measures targeting bookstores that sell publications "inciting terrorism," as well as other steps aimed at increasing police powers and restricting the

rights of working people.

Dozens of armed police raids have taken place in several cities around the country since July 7. At the time of this writing, the police have arrested 37 individuals in connection with the July 21 failed attacks. Of these, 21 have been released without charge.

A series of armed raids were mounted July 29 in London resulting in several arrests of men and women, and one man was arrested in Rome by Italian police. Two of the arrests, in west London, were televised live. The men were forced to leave their apartment naked by armed police after being tear-gassed. One of the individuals arrested in Birmingham July 27 was shot with a Taser gun, which inflicts a 50,000-volt electric shock.

Government officials have announced they have arrested what they call the four main suspects in the July 21 attacks. Three of the four

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Utah miners call Aug. 21 solidarity picnic

BY DAVE FERGUSON

PRICE, Utah—On Sunday, August 21, District 22 of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) is sponsoring a solidarity picnic for the union-organizing struggle by the workers at the nearby Co-Op coal mine. The event will be held at Huntington State Park just a few miles north of Huntington, Utah, off State Route 10.

An invitation is being mailed out that includes an update on the Co-Op miners' struggle written by Ann Fivecoat. She and Bob Fivecoat, a

member of retirees Local 9958 of the UMWA, have helped organize this fund-raising effort for the miners.

The barbecue will begin at 11:00 a.m. and last through the day. Huntington Park is next to a lake where there is swimming, fishing and boating.

The Co-Op miners report they are working on getting a T-shirt printed with the words "UMWA Local 9957—Here We Come" in English and Spanish.

For more information, contact UMWA District 22 at (435) 637-

Solidarity is in the hands of the ranks of labor

On August 21 coal miners and other unionists from around Utah and the broader region will hold a celebration of two years of struggle by workers at the Co-Op mine in Huntington, Utah, to organize into the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA). The miners will be proudly wearing their new T-shirts announcing, in both English and Spanish: "UMWA Local 9957—Here We Come."

The miners at Co-Op have stood up to firings, a harassment lawsuit, and other attempts by the bosses to intimi-

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date them, but have refused to give up their fight. The two-year anniversary celebration is testimony to their staying power in standing up to the coal bosses and reaching out and winning solidarity for their struggle.

"These miners aren't joining the labor movement. They are leading it." That remark, by a Seattle unionist who last year helped host a speaking tour in that area by two Co-Op miners, captures eloquently the impact the miners' ex-

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Puerto Rico: Nat'l Guard used against truckers' strike

BY RON RICHARDS

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico—The governor of Puerto Rico, Anibal Acevedo Vilá, responded to a three-day strike by truck drivers on the island by mobilizing the National Guard to escort scab trucks. The government seized on a gasoline scare promoted by the big-business press to justify its strikebreaking action.

Under heavy pressure from the government, the drivers agreed to go back to work with a promise of talks but without winning their demand of an increase in pay rates for independent truck drivers.

The strike, which began July 20, was

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From 'New International' no. 12

"One of capitalism's infrequent long winters has begun. Accompanied by imperialism's accelerating drive toward war, it's going to be a long, hot winter." —Jack Barnes

Today's sharpening interimperialist conflicts are fueled both by the opening stages of a world depression—what will be decades of economic, financial, and social convulsions and class battles—and by the most far-reaching shift in Washington's military policy and organization since the late 1930s, when the U.S. rulers prepared to join the expanding Asian and European wars, transforming them into World War II.

Class-struggle-minded working people must face this historic turning point for imperialism, this cataclysmic crisis for "the West" and for "Christendom." And draw satisfaction and enjoyment from being "in their face" as we chart a revolutionary course to confront it.

New International no. 12 (In Spanish: Nueva Internacional no. 6;

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New International no. 13 (In Spanish: Nueva Internacional no. 7)—\$14

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Governor of Puerto Rico employs National Guard against striking truckers

Continued from front page organized by the Broad Truckers Front and the Teamsters union in response to the rising cost of living. This includes gasoline and diesel prices, which have gone up by more than 20 percent in recent months, and highway tolls, projected to increase by 30 to 40 percent in the next few months.

The truckers' main demand was a 10 percent increase in rates now and 30 percent or more after public hearings by the government's Public Service Commission, which sets rates paid to independent truckers.

The strike was solid, leaving virtually no trucks—either owner-operated or owned by trucking companies—on the roads.

On the second day, the Gasoline Retailers Association announced that if the strike continued for 24 hours more the country would run out of gasoline.

This announcement set off a run on the gas pumps. Within hours every station on the island had ran out of gas or had long lines. The strike also affected deliveries to supermarkets.

"All day it was reported that the truckers were preventing gasoline from being loaded, but last night the governor's chief of staff, Aníbal José Torres, confirmed that those who had 'shut down the dispatch' of gasoline were the companies themselves," *El Diario/La Prensa* reported July 22.

Governor Acevedo Vilá of the Popular Democratic Party (PPD), which supports the current colonial status of Puerto Rico known as the commonwealth, suspended negotiations with the truckers. The government mobilized the police and 150 members of the National Guard to escort gas



Militant/Ron Richards

Striking truck drivers July 20 under their trailer at the San Juan docks in Puerto Rico

shipments. It also got a U.S. federal court order forbidding "coercion" of truckers and ordering strikers not to block access to the docks.

By the third day, the daily *El Vocero* reported, only 38 gasoline trucks went out. That day a number of unions held a press conference in support of the strikers. They called on the government to resume negotiations.

The big-business press and the government cranked up an intense propaganda campaign against the truckers, claiming the truckers were wreaking havoc with the economy.

Later that evening it was announced that the truckers had agreed to go back to work. They received a promise that the public hearings process would be expedited.

Argentine court ends amnesties from 'dirty war'

BY PAUL PEDERSON

On June 14 Argentina's high court struck down two amnesty laws that for nearly two decades have protected most of those involved in the brutal repression by the military regime that ruled the country from 1976 to 83. The ruling opens the door to the prosecution of hundreds of those who oversaw the "dirty war," in which some 30,000 trade unionists, students, socialists, and others were murdered by the regime's death squads.

Following the collapse of the dictatorship in 1983, amidst a string of general strikes and popular demonstra-

tions, hundreds of military officers and police faced trial for their crimes.

The bourgeois regime that replaced the military government sought to put a stop to the trials, which implicated a substantial portion of the military brass. The Full Stop law, signed in 1986 by then-president Raul Alfonsín, set a 60-day deadline for filing charges against military figures and others.

When the first measure failed to stem the tide of charges, Alfonsín signed the Due Obedience law, which granted automatic immunity to all members of the military except top commanders. In 1990, Alfonsín's successor, Carlos Menem, took a further step to shield the death squad leaders from prosecution. He issued a presidential pardon that protected more than 400 of the top military officers involved. Current president Nestor Kirchner has refused to issue an annulment of Menem's pardons.

In 2003, the Argentine Congress voted that the amnesty laws were unconstitutional, leaving the Supreme Court as the final obstacle to their revocation. Protests demanding justice

for those killed during military rule began soon after the 1976 coup and have continued ever since.

The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo is an organization that has been at the center of the struggle for justice for the "disappeared." Led by women whose sons and other family members were victims of the terror, the group began daily protests during the first year of the military regime. They still march in the Plaza every Thursday.

"We are happy that these laws have been revoked," Hebe de Bonafini, the group's president, told the *Militant* in a July 21 phone interview. "It is a victory. But at the same time, there are a lot of legal obstacles ahead. Many judges have an interest in not exposing those responsible. And those who were pardoned by Menem are still protected."

De Bonafini's son, a young student radical, was "disappeared" by the dictatorship. She was among the initial founders of Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo. It will take "years, and years, and years" to bring those responsible to justice, she said.

For Further Reading

Puerto Rico: Independence Is a Necessity
by Rafael

Cancel Miranda
Also available in Spanish and Farsi

\$3.00

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THE MILITANT

Support Utah coal miners!

In face of the mine bosses' lawsuit aimed at silencing coverage of the Co-Op coal miners' fight for a union, the *'Militant'* has continued to offer weekly coverage of the battle. The miners remain steadfast as they approach the two-year mark. Don't miss a single week's news of this important struggle!



Co-Op miners picket the Huntington, Utah, mine June 29.

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Socialists campaign among auto workers

BY LAURA GARZA

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama—Auto workers in production and parts plants in Alabama, Mississippi, and South Carolina were introduced to the *Militant* newspaper by a team of young socialists and Socialist Workers campaigners the last week in July. They spent a week visiting plant gates to speak with workers in an industry with a growing presence in the region. These plants, which are all nonunion, present a challenge to the labor movement as more production is shifted to this region.

“The way they treat us we need a union,” said a worker who stopped and bought a paper from the team outside the Honda plant in Lincoln, Alabama, July 26. Nine workers bought copies of the paper before the team was urged to move on by local police.

Some workers, reporting they are paid starting wages from \$12.50 to \$14 and topping out in the \$20-an-hour range, said they thought they were doing well. But others explained the heavy pace of production and treatment by the bosses made them think about what could be

done to change conditions.

At two stoplights along Hyundai Boulevard in Montgomery, Alabama, July 28 workers from Hyundai and from the Glovis parts plant bought 21 *Militants*.

Alex Alvarado, a member of the Young Socialists and meat packer who joined the team from Miami, described a visit to the Canton, Mississippi, Nissan plant July 27. He said security guards quickly came out and moved the team away, but down the road at the Tower Automotive parts plant seven workers stopped and bought the paper. “The union needs to come out here” one worker told Alvarado.

The parts plant workers generally earn less than those in the main production plants. The push for production means that workers at Tower, for example, worked until the needed parts for production were done, meaning very long days. The United Auto Workers union recently set up an office in the area, citing the increase in phone calls they were getting from workers at the parts and production plants.

The team also visited the Mercedes



Militant/Tom Baumann

Militant supporters on July 27 show the socialist newsweekly to a worker coming out of the Tower Automotive parts plant in Canton, Mississippi.

plant in Vance, Alabama, and the BMW plant in Spartanburg, South Carolina, and sold outside one coal mine, three textile mills, and local shopping centers along the way.

Speaking at a Militant Labor Forum in Atlanta on July 30, Chauncey Robinson, a Young Socialist from

Newark, New Jersey, explained she had been reluctant to join the team at first because she was afraid of what conditions and attitudes were like in the South towards Blacks. But after seeing several cities, touring the Civil Rights Institute in Birmingham, and speaking with workers and students she came away with a different impression. “Things were not like what I thought. The team saw Blacks, whites, and women driving out of the auto plants. This is a region with a history of struggle and there are people who want to be a part of fighting for better conditions today.”

Just a week after returning from the team, Robinson is planning to attend the World Festival of Youth and Students in Caracas, Venezuela. Five other participants in the effort are also going to the festival. Robinson said she planned to share these experiences about the class struggle in the United States with those she meets at the festival.

L.A. socialist opposes antiunion ballot issue

Continued from front page

Newberry’s name on the ballot—more than double the requirement of 500.

“Give me that petition, I want to sign it,” said a young man after reading the first few points in the Socialist Workers Party platform. He was glad to find out that Newberry’s campaign was putting forward a working-class alternative to the twin capitalist parties, the Democrats and Republicans.

This response was typical of many who signed to put the SWP candidates on the ballot. The campaign’s emphasis on workers’ need to organize unions and use union power in face of the bosses’ assaults struck a chord.

Newberry is one of 17 candidates who have announced their intention to run for the seat in this working-class, predominantly Latino district. The special election was called after the incumbent, Democrat Antonio Villaraigosa, was elected mayor of Los Angeles in May.

In addition to the Los Angeles city council race, California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger has called a special statewide election for November 8 to vote on several ballot initiatives.

Besides the antiunion measure, another ballot initiative would require parental notification before a woman under the age of 18 may have an abortion.

“The Socialist Workers campaign defends a woman’s right to choose, and opposes all such restrictions on access to abortion,” Newberry said.

“This is fundamental to women being able to control their own lives. The U.S. rulers cannot easily roll back the

legal access to abortion that was won in the *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision, but they keep chipping away at that right through measures like this ballot initiative.”

Some people told socialist campaigners they wondered whether the recent decision of several major unions to walk out of the AFL-CIO might hamper workers’ ability to win support for their struggles.

Newberry explained that this infighting among union tops wouldn’t stop working people from resisting the bosses’ assaults or winning solidarity throughout the labor movement.

“It’s the struggles by workers standing up to the bosses and reaching out for solidarity that show the way to real unity in action and reversing the weakening of the unions.”

A student from Occidental College readily signed the petition, saying he had run across the *Militant* online last year while working on a school project, and really liked it. He expressed inter-

est in bringing the socialist candidate to his campus when the fall term starts up, as did a student from Los Angeles City College.

Campaign supporters did a final round of petitioning July 31. They also set up a table in front of the campaign headquarters on 4229 South Central Avenue, where an annual jazz festival was taking place. Several people came in, took campaign literature, and bought a wide variety of books on revolutionary politics.

Three weeks left in ‘New International’ campaign: All out to make the goal!

BY PAUL PEDERSON

We are now in the final stretch of the international campaign to sell 3,350 copies of the two newest issues of the Marxist magazine *New International*.

To date we have sold 2,388 copies—which leaves 962 to go in the final three weeks. Achieving that by August 22 will depend on a two-pronged campaign. One is the day-to-day effort organized on the job, in workers districts, at plant gates, and at union and political actions.

The other is the work by more than 40 socialist campaigners, many of them Young Socialists, who are attending the August 7–15 world youth festival in Caracas, Venezuela. They initially took a goal to sell 250 copies of the magazine, but have taken 450 copies with them and will try to sell out.

“For the Young Socialists, the *New Internationals* are tools we use to explain how capitalism works and point to the working-class road to power,” said Mike Ortega, 19, a YS member from Newark, New Jersey. “In Caracas there will be thousands of young people, many looking for a revolutionary road forward. The *NIs* are the best weapons we have to show them that road and build the communist movement today.”

Please send in updates on your results by Tuesday. Let’s go all out to reach 3,350!

New International sales campaign
March 26 – August 22

Country	Quota	Sold	%
CANADA	150	147	98%
UNITED KINGDOM			
London	200	194	97%
Edinburgh	55	49	89%
UK total	255	243	95%
NEW ZEALAND			
Auckland	55	48	87%
Christchurch	20	15	75%
N.Z. total	75	63	84%
SWEDEN	45	36	80%
UNITED STATES			
Chicago	115	105	91%
Washington	100	85	85%
Philadelphia	100	84	84%
Houston	105	87	83%
Miami	110	88	80%
Twin Cities	140	110	79%
Atlanta	115	88	77%
Seattle	130	98	75%
New York	325	244	75%
Los Angeles	225	164	73%
San Francisco	205	149	73%
Newark	125	89	71%
Birmingham	95	66	69%
Des Moines	105	71	68%
Price, UT	61	41	67%
Boston	120	74	62%
Pittsburgh	100	54	54%
Salt Lake City	15	7	47%
U.S. total	2291	1704	74%
AUSTRALIA	60	42	70%
ICELAND	32	18	56%
World Youth Festival	250	0	0%
pathfinderpress.com	200	135	68%
Int'l totals	3358	2388	71%
Goals/Should be	3350	3031	90%
*raised goal			

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

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San Francisco

60th Anniversary of Hiroshima: Behind the U.S. Nuclear Bombing of Japan Speaker: Betsy Stone, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Aug. 12, 7:30 p.m. 3926 Mission St. (415) 584-2135.

Seattle socialist candidate on ballot

BY BETSY FARLEY

SEATTLE, July 30—Chris Hoepfner, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor here, has qualified for ballot status.

The socialist candidate’s name will be one of eight, including Democratic mayor Greg Nickels, to appear on the September 20 primary election ballot.

“Hoepfner works in a meat-packing plant and has been active in unions and labor organizing,” an article in the July 23 *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* reported. That paper and the *Seattle Times* reported July 30 that Hoepfner was on the ballot.

The Socialist Workers Party slate also includes Cecelia Moriarity for King County executive and David Rosenfeld for city council.

Protesters demand justice for 1946 Georgia lynching

BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

MONROE, Georgia—"I am here to win justice. Justice for all, means justice today. And no, 59 years is not too late," said Charles Smith, a retired General Motors autoworker.

Smith was at an action here to draw attention to a brutal crime for which justice has never been done. On July 25, 1946, a mob of 15 to 25 racists lynched four young Blacks in the woods by the Moore's Ford bridge. The four were Roger Malcom, 24; Dorothy Malcom, 20; George Dorsey, 28; and Mae Dorsey, 24. They were dragged from their car, beaten, and shot in three volleys along the Apalachee River. The murder was organized as a mass public event.

Nearly six decades later, about 200 people watched as members of the Black community re-enacted the brutal executions by the Ku Klux Klan.

The ceremony capped a day of activities demanding prosecution of the murderers. A crowd of 500 listened to speeches at the First African Baptist Church. A 100-car motorcade, led by state representative Tyrone Brooks of Atlanta, stopped at the jailhouse from which the Malcoms and the Dorseys were delivered to the lynching party.

"I was six," said Learmy Malcom at the re-enactment. "Fearing violence against us, people said, 'Get the children in the house and turn off the lights.' My father said he paid his light bill and would do no such thing. The next day, he helped to cut their bodies down from the trees."

"To see this many people, especially young people here, is good. We can never forget this thing that happened," said Linda Byrd, a laid-off textile mill worker. "My grandfather was a farmer and knew these back woods. But all my life I was told never to set foot back here. This is my first time on this strange land."

'Lack of will, not lack of evidence'

"People who knew something were threatened," explained Armand Marshall of Monroe. "But people around here know who did it. It seems to me the problem is a lack of will, not a lack of evidence."

The federal Justice Department, the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, and Walton County District Attorney Ken Wynne have all lamented that the case is "cold." Bobby Howard, an activist who narrated the re-enactment, disagreed.



Militant/Bill Arth

July 25 reenactment of 1946 KKK lynching of four Black youths in Monroe, Georgia, focused attention on the brutal crime, as protesters demand prosecution of the killers.

"I'm not an investigator or a lawyer, but the eyes of the nation shall now focus on Monroe, Georgia, just as the eyes of the nation focused on Philadelphia, Mississippi, and Birmingham, Alabama," Howard said, referring to recent prosecutions for civil rights-era murders in those cities. In June a Klan member, Edgar Ray Killen, was con-

victed for the 1964 murders of three civil rights workers in Mississippi.

"Walk into the courthouse and look at the names on the plaques. Look at the prominent names around in this county and you will see who was in the Klan. We want the federal government to assume jurisdiction in this case," said Tyrone Brooks at the concluding rally.

St. Paul meat packers back campaign leave for socialist mayoral candidate

BY REBECCA WILLIAMSON

ST. PAUL, Minnesota—Workers at the Dakota Premium Foods meat-packing plant in South St. Paul have been waging a fight to obtain a 19-day leave of absence for Jacob Perasso, a co-worker and fellow member of Local 789 of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) union.

Perasso is the Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of this city. He has requested a leave of absence to campaign during this time, which includes an August 7-15 trip to Venezuela to take part in the World Festival of Youth and Students there.

Most workers who have been shown a petition in support of the request for a leave have signed it, including a big majority in the boning department. All told, 114 workers have signed on.

On July 26 a delegation of six cut-floor workers went to the plant manager's office to back Perasso's formal request and to present the petition, which the manager did not accept. Perasso has also won the support of the union. UFCW Local 789 president Don Seaquist sent a letter of support to the plant manager that said, "Perasso would like to use the time off to keep a campaign pledge that he will attend a youth conference. Jacob is doing what we would like more of our citizens to do, that is, get involved in politics. Regardless of anyone's political affiliation, Jacob is taking action and as his employer and union, we should support his efforts. I ask that you grant his leave for the purposes of running for Mayor."

Seven supporters of the socialist campaign stood outside the plant on July 27, and then two days later, with a campaign sign as they talked up the

fight for a leave for Perasso among workers from all over the plant. More signatures for the petition were won this way from other areas of the plant. About 100 campaign leaflets were given out. Over the previous two weeks, some 25 workers bought the *Militant*, many as they were signing the petition.

Perasso also wrote an open letter to the plant manager that was distributed to many workers. The letter explained that the heart of this fight is the ability of workers to participate in politics "as equals with other candidates who have more privileges."

"This campaign is a good thing. It speaks for and defends the interests of workers," said Gabriel Pérez Méndez, a worker at Dakota Premium and one of the supporters of the Socialist Workers campaign.

Over the past five years workers have waged a struggle to establish and consolidate a union at Dakota Premium, especially in order to resist the bosses' push for speed-up. Perasso has been involved with other workers in the union fights against speed-up on the job.

"After denying the leave, the company tried to take a photo of my supervisor giving me a birthday cake, but I wouldn't accept the cake or let them take the photo because the bosses are always trying to pretend they're our friends in order to make us work harder and faster," Perasso said. Afterward, one worker said, "That's why we signed the petition."

Rebecca Williamson is a member of UFCW Local 789 and is the Socialist Workers Party candidate for St. Paul School Board.

Militant Fighting Fund wins backing in New Zealand, among W. Coast unionists

C.W. Mining, owner of the Co-Op mine in Huntington, Utah, has filed a lawsuit targeting nearly 100 individuals and unions involved in or supporting the fight by workers there to organize into the United Mine Workers of America. The *Militant Fighting Fund* was launched to help defend the *Militant*, a prominent target of the lawsuit. A \$60,000 fund-raising campaign is under way. Endorsements and contributions can be sent to the fund at P.O. Box 520994, Salt Lake City, UT 84152.

BY FELICITY COGGAN

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—Support for the *Militant Fighting Fund* has come from Pauline Tangiora, a well-known Maori elder and champion of struggles of indigenous peoples around the world. David Wakim, a leader of activities in solidarity with the Palestinian people, also recently endorsed the campaign. Another who signed on was Paul Piesse, an official of the Southern Local Government Officers Union.

Mike Peters, national president of the New Zealand Ecological Restoration Network, lent his name encouraging those who are waging the battle for the *Militant* and the miners at Co-Op. Funds raised include \$200 at a yard sale held in Auckland and \$50 at a special dinner in Christchurch.

BY MARK DOWNS

SEATTLE—At an annual picnic organized here by International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 19, commemorating battles to build the union in the 1930s when several longshore workers lost their lives, supporters of the *Militant Fighting Fund* set up an information table and received the endorsement of several union members and officials. Six members of ILWU Local 19 signed on and contributed \$110.

Robert Gorman, of the AFL-CIO

staff in Washington State and a member of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 46, also endorsed the defense effort and contributed \$30. Gorman helped with tours of Co-Op miners to the Seattle area last year that won substantial solidarity for the miners' fight.

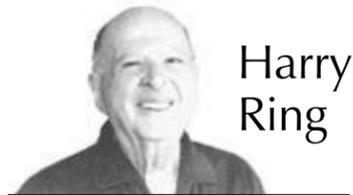
ILWU Local 63 in San Pedro, California, has sent the *Militant Fighting Fund* a \$200 contribution. The donation was approved by a local membership meeting on the recommendation of the executive board.

All payments from this round of fund-raising are due by August 15.

Help raise \$60,000 for the Militant Fighting Fund!

Country/City	Quota	Collected	%
NEW ZEALAND			
Auckland	1,100	933	85%
Christchurch	400	224	56%
N.Z. total	1,500	1,157	77%
CANADA			
	2,450	1,755	72%
AUSTRALIA			
	1,200	820	68%
UNITED STATES			
Los Angeles	4,000	4,235	106%
Salt Lake City*	1,200	1,063	89%
Houston	3,000	2,190	73%
Des Moines	1,200	820	68%
Boston	3,000	2,015	67%
San Francisco	6,000	3,875	65%
Price, UT	1,000	632	63%
Chicago	4,700	2,510	53%
Philadelphia	3,400	1,745	51%
Miami	3,000	1,205	40%
Pittsburgh	3,500	1,355	39%
New York	8,500	3,060	36%
Twin Cities	2,000	687	34%
Washington, D.C.	2,000	615	31%
Atlanta	3,750	1,137	30%
Seattle	4,400	1,010	23%
Newark	2,000	430	22%
Birmingham	750	150	20%
U.S. Other		487	
U.S. total	57,400	29,221	51%
ICELAND			
		40	
SWEDEN			
		160	
International total	62,550	33,153	55%
Goal/Should be	60,000	48,000	80%
* raised goal			

Take your choice—We read a top of the page headline in the business section of the *Los*



Harry Ring

Angeles Times: “U.S. Economy on ‘Firm Footing.’” Below the fold another headline: “GM

Reports [first quarter] \$286 Million Loss, Much Worse Than Expected.” (GM is the world’s biggest automaker.)

A system that should endure?—In the Birmingham, Alabama, area, Joseph Sullivan, 16, is totally disabled, afflicted with muscular degeneration. Initially, he had Medicaid help. But his father died and, somehow, this put Joseph \$13 over the Medicaid income limit. Along

with home health aides, Medicaid was cut off. His mother struggles to care for him, but can’t. She’s 69 and has had two strokes. A lawyer is trying to get Medicaid and home care back for the family.

How do you define ‘homeland’?—“Arizona tribes claim they aren’t getting a full share of homeland security funding.... Nearly \$4 billion has been allocated to state governments...but none

has been given directly to tribes.”—News item.

Corporate Protection Agency—“The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is failing to protect the public from tens of thousands of toxic compounds because it has not gathered data on the health risks of most industrial chemicals. About 80,000 chemicals are used by U.S. industries, and scientific studies suggest that many pose health threats,

such as cancer.”—News item.

Sounds bleak—“As a political entity, Canada is a nation adrift.” This harsh assessment is by the Canadian Council of Chief Executives. These are not petty shopkeepers. Together they have more than a million employees and combined assets of \$2.5 trillion. This meeting of big-time, glum capitalists convened in early July as reported in the French-language paper *La Presse*.

Socialist leader speaks on workers’ resistance in WW II

BY JOHN STUDER

NEW YORK—“The most important recollections I have of World War II are of seeing the class struggle unfold among workers during the war,” said Tom Leonard, a veteran leader of the Socialist Workers Party who was a merchant marine sailor in the 1940s and early 1950s. He was addressing a crowded Militant Labor Forum here July 16.

Leonard spoke on the topic of “War and the Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialism: Some Experiences from World War II and the Korean War.” The special forum was attended by some 100 people. Many took part in the meeting after spending the day petitioning to put the Socialist Workers Party candidates on the ballot in New York City.

He noted that these questions were not simply of historical interest, but crucial for militant workers and farmers seeking a way forward in today’s world.

“One of the first things I learned when joining the Socialist Workers Party was its immense confidence in the historical role of the world’s working people,” Leonard said.

He described his experiences as a radicalizing young worker who joined the merchant marine in 1943 during the second imperialist world war. Leonard said many of the soldiers and workers he met were influenced by the class battles fought by the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) during the 1930s labor upsurge.

Maritime union militants

On his first ship, the SS *William Paige*, he was approached by a union committee of two older seamen. “They sat me on a bunk and began to explain to me the facts of union life aboard ship,” Leonard said. “That discussion included a recent union history, especially about the series of waterfront strikes of the mid- and late 1930s, of which they were very proud.”

Leonard related how his experiences aboard ship, where he served as a union delegate from the age of 18, showed how trade union resistance unfolded as the war went on. The National Maritime Union, for example, grew from 4,000 to 55,000 members before the war was over. In this period the SWP had an active and growing fraction of members in the maritime unions.

Among the battles he described was “a tenacious struggle for job equality waged by Black seamen in an increasing fight against war time Jim Crow practices aboard many ships.”

Between the end of World War II

and the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950, Leonard shipped to the Pacific, with experiences in Korea, China, and the Philippines. There he got a glimpse of life for Asian working people and of the anticolonial struggles in the region.

He came to know a Korean longshore union militant in Pusan, in U.S.-occupied southern Korea, and learned that the Pusan longshore union had been smashed at the outset of the war. “I was told by an MP [military police] assigned to my ship that Korean union members were executed on the docks as traitors for allegedly aiding the enemy,” Leonard said.

Leonard explained how he met members of the Socialist Workers Party in the maritime industry. These experiences led Leonard in 1951 to join the party.

Answering questions during the discussion period, he spoke about the SWP’s role in backing the March on Washington movement as part of the emerging civil rights struggles, and efforts to counteract moves by the Stalinized Communist Party to subordinate labor and Black rights battles to “unity” in support of the imperialist war effort.

Leonard also described the powerful



Militant photos by Glova Scott
Tom Leonard (right) talks with members of audience after July 16 New York forum. Inset: Speaking at the meeting.

Bring Us Home movement that sprang up among U.S. soldiers in late 1945 to oppose Washington’s plans use them in the Pacific to fight against the Chinese revolution.

He also gave examples of the work by seamen SWP members to link up with revolutionary co-thinkers in other countries the party had been separated

from during the war.

Leonard applauded those in the audience who had spent the day working to put the socialist candidates on the ballot. He related how in 1952 one of his first party assignments was to join a petitioning team to put Farrell Dobbs, SWP candidate for president, on the ballot in New York.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



August 8, 1980

Two Puerto Rican nationalists, Alicia Rodríguez and Luis Rosa, were convicted on July 9 of armed robbery and conspiracy, in connection with an April 4 robbery at a car rental agency in the Chicago suburb of Evanston, Illinois. Sentencing is set for August 4.

The two nationalists, alleged to be members of the Armed Forces of National Liberation (FALN), were found guilty by an all-white jury that deliberated for only fifty-four minutes. For protesting the proceedings, the two defendants were forced to sit bound and gagged in the courtroom. Spectators were barred. Lawyers who had been acting as advisers to Rodríguez and Rosa (they refused the court-appointed attorneys) were thrown out of the court or harassed by the judge.

On the last day of the trial about 100 people marched outside to protest the exclusion of spectators, and a press conference was held by the National Committee to Free Puerto Rican Prisoners of War.

August 15, 1955

At the Texas Instrument plant in Dallas a woman worker now assembles seven booklets in the time she used to do one. Weavers at the Schwarzenbach Huber Co. in Altoona, Pa., now weave synthetic fabrics three and one-half times as fast as they did in 1950; a worker there who tended 24 machines five years ago now tends 65.

This is how an article on the tremendous increase in U.S. workers’ productivity starts off in the Aug. 9 *Wall Street Journal*. “This productivity jump of American industry is based on introduction of new machinery, a certain amount of automation, which, however, is just beginning, reorganization of work methods (time-motion studies), speed-up and bonus plans.”

This increased productivity of their workers is bringing fabulous profits to the bosses. The *Wall Street Journal* in the midst of its rejoicing is compelled to note a fly in the ointment. U.S. workers have some ideas about their increased productivity. They want wages to be increased as productivity increases.

August 15, 1930

In a few days the third anniversary of the cold-blooded murder of Sacco and Vanzetti will be reached. Their memory, ever green in the heart of the world proletariat, remains a burning appeal for the struggle against class justice and persecution.

While the workers everywhere gather to commemorate their judicial assassination the pledge must be renewed for the fight to release all the class war prisoners who continue to fill the penitentiaries of the bloated plutocracy of this country. At this very moment, a cynical, farcical “hearing” is being held again on the case of Tom Mooney and Warren Billings. At the hearings, the prosecutors boldly declare that irrespective of the evidence relating to the alleged crime proper, they favor the imprisonment of Mooney and Billings because they were labor agitators!

Hearing or no hearing, we have learned the bitter lesson sufficiently that no dependence can be put upon the capitalist hyenas.

Venezuelan workers fight to restart plants

Government confiscates some shut-down companies, promotes 'co-management'

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

LOS TEQUES, Venezuela—"In April the National Assembly declared this factory a public utility and expropriated it," said José Quintero, a welder at Inveval, which produces valves for the oil industry. The plant, previously called Constructora Nacional de Válvulas, is located at the top of a hill near this city in Miranda state, about an hour south of Caracas, the capital.

The former owner of Inveval, Andrés Sosa Pietri, was a figure in the country's main business association, Fedecámaras, which backed the April 2002 military coup attempt and the employers' lockout later that year that sought to topple the government headed by President Hugo Chávez. Pietri shut down the plant during the lockout, which was centered in the oil industry. The "oil coup" failed after Venezuelan working people mobilized to restart production and popular support for the bosses' action dwindled.

Afterward Pietri demanded workers agree to reopen the contract and take steep cuts in wages and benefits to "save" the company. Workers refused. Pietri then tried to move machinery out of the factory. In response, workers occupied the plant in May 2003. They demanded the government nationalize it and aid them to restart production.

A little more than half of the 120 workers remained involved in the two-year-long struggle. Speaking with *Militant* reporters July 4, José Rondón said they survived during this period thanks to solidarity from workers in nearby plants and other companies.

"In the last three months of 2004 we suspended the occupation due to difficulties in making ends meet," said Luisa Morales, an office worker. The owners then tried again to remove equipment. "But we were monitoring the situation and reoccupied the plant. We stopped Pietri's sinister plans a second time."

During the occupations workers organized the Conflict Committee, which replaced the union after local metalworkers union officials sided with the boss. The metalworkers union was affiliated to the Confederation of Venezuelan Workers (CTV), which backed the reactionary national lockout.

The government decided to confiscate the company, Quintero said, after the latest action by the owners and the reoccupation by the workers. Today the state holds a 51 percent stake in the new company and workers, now organized in a cooperative, hold 49 percent. The workers have elected members to a new board of directors who will serve along with managers appointed by the state.

Quintero and other workers said this is not exactly what they demanded. Most of the dozen workers interviewed at the plant gate said workers need to have complete control of production and job conditions. They are now organized through a factory committee that calls monthly assemblies of employees, while workers carry out repairs and maintenance in preparation for restarting production some time this fall.

Julio Rángel, another worker, said this is difficult to do in one factory alone. Quintero and others said that to try to push the process forward they are collaborating with workers in several other factories where "co-management" is being implemented by the government instead of nationalization under workers' control of production. These plants include Alcasa, an aluminum mill in Bolívar state, and the former Venepal in Carabobo (see articles below). Co-management is also in place at Invetex, a textile mill in Cojedes, and Pío Tamayo, a sugar mill in Lara. Invetex is privately owned. Its board includes the boss and representatives of the workers and government.

BY OLYMPIA NEWTON
AND CARLOS CORNEJO

CIUDAD GUAYANA, Venezuela—Last December, workers at the state-owned ALCASA aluminum mill here slowed down production to demand 13 billion bolívares (\$600,000) in unpaid wages and benefits. "We brought production down by 40 percent," Enrique José Contreras, a line operator, said in a July 6 interview. Contreras said workers argued the company had been operating in the red for 16 years. They demanded the books be open to public inspection and a new management be installed.

The company tried unsuccessfully to fire 20 union leaders. The governor of Bolívar state, of the governing Fifth Republic Movement, sent in 80 National Guardsmen to "protect the factory" and make sure production kept going.

"There was no confrontation because we didn't let the troops provoke us," said Manuel Figuera, a member of the executive board of Sintralcasa, the union representing 2,350 production workers. Some 500 others work here as contractors. The plant produces primary aluminum products, which are exported mostly to U.S. and European factories making soda cans and other finished goods. "We explained our demands and won public opinion to our side," Figuera said. In the end, the troops were pulled out.

In February, the government replaced most managers. The plant is now run under "co-management." ALCASA's board includes two directors elected by the workers and four appointed by the state. Foremen were also changed.

Figuera said that this type of co-management "can exist even in private companies." He added that he is not for a wholesale nationalization of the economy. "That is risky," he said. "We depend a lot on the U.S. economy, so we're not for bringing down the empire. Just a more equal society."

The company is using the new setup to draw workers toward increasing productivity, with the help of union officers. "Now that we have co-management, the union no longer speaks only of raising wages," said Trino Silva, the union's general secretary. "We have to increase production and lower costs." Production at the plant has increased from an aver-



Militant/Argiris Malapanis

Workers at plant gate of Inveval, which produces valves for the oil industry, near Los Teques, Miranda state, Venezuela, July 4. After a two-year struggle, including a plant occupation, the government expropriated Inveval in April. Production has yet to start.

age of 400 tons a day last year to 537 tons a day now, he noted.

During a union meeting at the plant entrance July 7, workers expressed various views on the new set-up. "I'm for co-management," said Fidel García, a maintenance technician. "Getting rid of the old management was a victory. But up to now it hasn't resolved the problem of the unpaid wages and benefits."

"The new management punishes you the same and job conditions haven't improved," said Gonzalo Rommel, a machine operator. "We still haven't gotten our back pay, which is why we slowed down production in the first place."

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS
AND CARLOS CORNEJO

MORÓN, Venezuela—Venepal was one of the main producers of paper and cardboard in this country, supplying 40 percent of the domestic market and exporting throughout Latin America. Its paper mill and associated paper bag and notebook plants here employed 1,200 workers. The company had two other plants in the nearby city of Valencia, also in Carabobo state, and Maracay, in the neighboring state of Aragua.

On January 19 the government expropriated the bankrupt company after a two-year-long struggle during which workers demanded its nationalization. Renamed Invepal, the company reopened in May under "co-management." The new five-person board of directors is made up of three elected by the workers and two appointed by the state. Edgar Peña, the former union president, is the new president of Invepal.

"The expropriation of Venepal is an exception, not a political measure," President Hugo Chávez told the press after signing the takeover. "If it's yours, it's yours. But for the company that is closed and abandoned, we'll go for them." In his weekly television program *Aló Presidente* (Hello President) on July 17, Chávez said the government may confiscate over 100 such companies.

Rowan Jiménez, a maintenance worker at the Morón mill who is now responsible for public relations, said workers belong to a cooperative, which holds a 49 percent stake in the company. The state owns 51 percent.

Jiménez and other workers described the struggle that led to the expropriation. It included a sit-down strike between July and September 2003, sparked by layoffs of 600 workers and announced wage cuts. The owners had shut down the plant between December 2002 and January 2003 as part of the employers' lockout, and afterward claimed they

were broke. An agreement the owners and the union announced in the fall of 2003 was short-lived.

Manrique González, Invepal's production coordinator and a former salesperson for Venepal, is one of few administrative employees who stayed. "I showed the union evidence that the owners had plans to bankrupt the company and take their capital abroad," he said. Last September, after the failure of the recall referendum against the Chávez administration, Venepal declared bankruptcy and announced it would sell machinery to pay creditors.

In response, workers occupied the Morón mill for five months, guarding the facilities around the clock and organizing solidarity rallies. "We also went to Caracas to demand nationalization," said Jorge Guasimucaro. They received support from other working people, including from oil workers at the nearby El Palito refinery who provided food during the takeover. The 300 workers who stayed in the plant during the occupation are the ones working now, having started up parts of the complex. If they bring production to pre-2002 levels, Jiménez said, another 1,000 workers would have to be hired.

Workers here said the expropriation was a victory in their struggle, but one riddled with contradictions.

"We now control our job conditions and make decisions on how to organize production," said José Campos, a machine operator at the paper bag plant. He and other workers also said this needs to be extended to the entire operation, involving more and more workers in administrative tasks. Workers said everyone now is paid 500,000 bolívares per month (\$232), slightly more than the minimum wage and less than their pay under the former Venepal. Several workers said that as "co-owners," organized into a cooperative that has replaced the union, it's harder to ask for better pay until the company gets on its feet and becomes profitable.

One of the two production lines in the mill that workers restarted two months ago was down on July 8. Production during this period has been running at 25 percent of capacity, workers said.

"The main reason is lack of raw materials," mainly paper pulp that is imported from Chile, said mill worker Carlos Alberto González. Several workers said there is a political reason behind the lack of paper pulp. There is opposition within the government to making the new company a success, because it could set a "bad example" of what could be done with other private industries, the workers said.

Imperialist lies and the atom bombing of Hiroshima, Nagasaki

BY SAM MANUEL

Sixty years ago, on the mornings of August 6 and 9, 1945, U.S. warplanes exploded atomic bombs over the densely populated Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, killing tens of thousands of civilians. The horrific loss in human life capped the end of the second world imperialist conflict.

To this day, the U.S. capitalist rulers justify these barbaric crimes, arguing that they “saved American lives.” Pacifist critics decry the bombings as irrational and “unnecessary.” The nuclear annihilation of these two cities, however, was a consequence of a war driven by the struggle between the leading rival Allied and Axis imperialist powers over the redivision of the world’s markets and resources. It was a trial run for further military assaults that Washington was planning, from intervening against the Chinese revolution to taking on the Soviet workers state.

On August 6, the U.S. warplane *Enola Gay* dropped a uranium bomb dubbed “Little Boy” over Hiroshima. For maximum effect it exploded almost 2,000 feet above ground. Everything within four square miles was obliterated. Some 70,000 people were killed instantly, many of them incinerated.

Within five years the death toll would rise to 200,000 as a result of severe injuries and radiation sickness caused by the bomb. Of Hiroshima’s 90,000 buildings, more than 60,000 were destroyed.

Three days later the U.S. bomber *Bockscar* dropped a plutonium bomb, “Fat Man,” over the industrial seaport of Nagasaki. The bomb instantly took the lives of some 40,000 people. The death toll would rise to 140,000 within five years.

In an August 9 radio address, U.S. president Harry Truman threatened to continue the atomic bombing of Japanese cities until Tokyo surrendered unconditionally. The Japanese government surrendered the following day.

Imperialist rationalization

The U.S. government’s rationale for

use of this new and terrible weapon, in this case to “save American lives,” was as self-serving as that given for Washington’s entering the war against Japan—the “surprise” attack on Pearl Harbor.

The central argument for deploying the atomic bombs was that it was the only way to compel the unconditional surrender of the Japanese government and thereby preclude a U.S. invasion of that country costing the lives of thousands of U.S. troops. In fact, however, Japan was on the verge of surrendering.

The tide of the war had begun to turn against Tokyo as early as mid-1942 and especially by 1943 with the Japanese defeats in the battle of Midway and the battle for Guadalcanal. The expulsion of Japanese forces from Saipan in the Northern Mariana Islands in July 1944 brought U.S. bombers within range of the Japanese capital.

While the tremendous loss in human life resulting from the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki is widely known, apologists for Washington downplay the fact that those numbers pale in comparison to those killed in the systematic U.S. firebombing of Tokyo and other Japanese cities during the previous months. Between February and August 1945 more than 300,000 Japanese were killed in the firebombings and nearly half a million were injured, according to the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey. U.S. forces dropped 41,500 tons of firebombs, wreaking destruction on 64 Japanese cities.

Tokyo was a special target. On the nights of March 9 and 10, nearly 300 B-29 bombers dropped firebombs on the capital. They burned out 16 square miles of the city, killing an estimated 83,000 people. The capital was struck again on the nights of May 23, 24, and 26. A combined total of nearly 1,000 bombers dropped more than 3,000 tons of napalm bombs on the city.

Reporting on the firebombing raids in the June 19, 1945, *Militant*, Joseph Hansen wrote that an area “twice as great as New York’s Manhattan...has



Hiroshima after the atomic bomb was dropped there on Aug. 6, 1945.

been burned out by fire bombs” in successive raids on Tokyo. “All the horrors that have blotched the pages of human history,” Hansen wrote, “were amateur beginnings in brutishness compared to the planned burning of women, children, and old men in Japan for the sake of imperialist profits and plunder.”

Japan seeks end of war

Washington was aware of Tokyo’s intention of ending the war. As early as June 1945 Japanese officials approached the Soviet government, the only member of the Allies with whom it had a neutrality pact, seeking its assistance in negotiating an end to the war. U.S. intelligence had broken the code to Japanese secret transmissions and intercepted several messages between the Japanese foreign minister and its ambassador to Moscow seeking the USSR’s aid.

The main condition the Japanese government presented for its surrender was guarantees for the emperor’s safety. After the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki the U.S. government dropped its insistence on the emperor’s abdication and accepted Japan’s surrender.

Tokyo’s hopes of negotiating an acceptable end of the war were dashed when the Soviet government, headed by Joseph Stalin, declared war on Japan. Soviet troops invaded Japanese-occupied Manchuria August 9, the same day “Fat Man” exploded over Nagasaki.

Ahead of a July 17, 1945, meeting of the Allies at Potsdam, Germany, the Stalin-led government had agreed to enter the war against Japan on August 8. It was seeking to strengthen its own negotiating position with its imperialist allies over the postwar division of “spheres of influence.”

At the Potsdam conference, however, Truman delayed opening the meeting, expecting to receive confirmation of the results of an atomic bomb test in New Mexico. After being informed of the successful test, Truman persuaded Stalin to delay the USSR’s entry by a week. He then gave the order to drop the atomic bombs in the weeks before the USSR’s entry into the war. With the bombing of Hiroshima Stalin realized he had been outmaneuvered, and Soviet troops launched their assault on Manchuria.

The *Daily Worker*, newspaper of the Communist Party USA, which backed U.S. imperialism in the war, hailed the bombings and the Soviet military ac-

tion as the “old one-two.”

How Washington provoked Tokyo

As with the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Washington’s December 1941 declaration of war on Japan after Pearl Harbor is presented as a necessary act of self-defense. But Tokyo’s attack on Pearl Harbor was provoked by Washington and was the inevitable consequence of the rivalry between Japanese and U.S. imperialists for domination of markets and resources in Asia and the Pacific.

Ten days before Pearl Harbor, on Nov. 27, 1941, the Chief of Staff of the U.S. War Department sent a message to the Hawaiian Command that negotiations with the Japanese government appeared to be terminated with little chance of resumption. “If hostilities cannot, repeat cannot, be avoided, the U.S. desires that Japan commit the first overt act.”

In September 1940 Washington stepped up its economic war against Tokyo, prohibiting the export of steel and iron scrap to Japan. In July 1941 Washington imposed an oil embargo on Japan, which was also cut off from shipments of arms and ammunition, as well as machine tools, scrap iron, pig iron and steel manufactures, copper, lead, and a variety of other commodities.

Added to this was Washington’s abrogation of Japan’s “most favored nation” trade status and the freezing of Japanese credits in the United States. For example, Japan depended on its lucrative silk trade with the United States to finance its imports. On Oct. 9, 1941, the U.S. ambassador in Tokyo, Joseph Grew, reported to Washington that “the frozen-credit policy of the United States was driving Japan into national bankruptcy and she would be forced to act.”

The final piece in provoking the Japanese rulers came on Nov. 26, 1941, when the U.S. government presented Japanese representatives in Washington with a 10-point “peace proposal” that amounted to asking Japanese imperialism to surrender its position as a Pacific power. It required the Japanese imperialists to withdraw their military forces from China and French-dominated Indochina in return for lifting economic sanctions, unfreezing Japanese credits, and concluding a new trade treaty.

The Pearl Harbor attack and the U.S. declaration of war on Japan took place 11 days later.

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Labor tops out of step with 1930s worker militancy

The following is an excerpt from *Teamster Politics* by Farrell Dobbs, one of *Pathfinder's Books of the Month* in August. Dobbs emerged from the ranks as an outstanding working-class leader during the historic 1934 Minneapolis Teamsters strikes. He resigned his post as general organizer on the Teamster national staff in 1940 to become labor secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. From 1953 to 1972 Dobbs served as national secretary of



Rank-and-file leader of Teamsters Local 574 announces settlement of May 1934 Minneapolis truck drivers strike. Top Teamster officials were unable to adjust to militant mood of the rank and file in the 1930s. Catering to better-off workers, they staked their positions on a cozy relationship with the bosses.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

the SWP, and was the party's presidential candidate four times from 1948 to 1960. Copyright © 1975 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BY FARRELL DOBBS

Since 1907 Daniel J. Tobin sat astride the Teamster organization as its general president. During those years he became wholly committed to the concepts of business unionism. As the term implies, that outlook is designed to assure the capitalists of organized labor's cooperation, both within industry and at the governmental level. In return, it is fatuously assumed, grateful employers will make a few significant concessions to the workers. On that premise the ruling hierarchy in the trade unions—today

as yesterday—displays “statesman-like” sensitivity to ruling-class needs, thereby stripping itself of any capacity to lead struggles in defense of the workers' interests.

Organizationally, business unionism first took shape through the establishment of the American Federation of Labor along narrow craft lines. (The structural base widened later on, however, when the Congress of Industrial Organizations became extensively bureaucratized.) From the beginning, the AFL concentrated on recruitment of skilled and semiskilled workers. In the case of its IBT [International Brotherhood of Teamsters] affiliate, efforts along that line focused primarily on select categories of drivers, helpers, and platform workers. Being somewhat better paid than the average laborer, they could more readily be drawn into contractual relations with the employ-

ers on class-collaborationist terms, especially when the arrangement also provided little job trusts for them.

In seeking contracts with trucking firms on this basis, Tobin put emphasis on *gradual* improvements for the workers. He insisted that union demands be “within reason.” If a working agreement could not be obtained through direct negotiations with a given company, the Teamster president called for an effort to secure arbitration of the dispute. Only when an employer rejected that proposal as well was a strike to be considered, and even then strict procedures were laid down for taking a vote on the question in an IBT local. It was done in a way intended to “cool off hotheads” and give full play to any expression of hesitation that might emanate from the ranks. When a strike was voted despite these obstacles, the decision was not

yet final. Formal approval of the action was still required from the IBT's general executive board.

Strict control over strikes was only one aspect of the Teamster head's bureaucratic arbitrariness. The union's constitution contained a set of “laws” designed to serve his objectives at the expense of rank-and-file democracy. “Official policy” was laid down by him through freewheeling interpretation of resolutions adopted by IBT conventions, which were held at five-year intervals. He kept a staff of watchdogs on the alert for signs of dissidence within the organization, and anyone who got out of line could expect harsh discipline.

Tobin's scheme of things had no place at all for workers whose occupations fell outside the elitist categories of craft unionism. To him they were “rubbish.” He said as much in the official IBT magazine, adding that the union didn't want such members, “if they are going on strike tomorrow.” His reference was, of course, to the underprivileged masses who were radicalizing under the impact of the post-1929 depression. For their part, these workers were ready to fight in defense of their interests, if a way could be found for them to get organized with the help of competent leaders. But to do that in the trucking industry some basic alterations had to be made within the Teamster movement.

Steps toward the necessary changes were initiated in 1933 by revolutionary socialists who worked in the coal yards in Minneapolis. They belonged to the Communist League of America, the organizational form then taken by the Trotskyist movement. Plans for their course of action in the IBT had been carefully thought out in advance. As the Trotskyists saw the situation, the key to success in a clash with Tobin over union policy lay in his failure to adjust to the new times.

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Labor solidarity is in workers' hands

Continued from front page

ample has had on other working people and why they have been able to win solidarity throughout the labor movement in the West and beyond. And they continue to reach out and gain support: among fellow coal miners, members of both the UMWA and the Operating Engineers, as well as among other workers, from West Coast longshoremens to Laborers in New York, from New Zealand to the United Kingdom.

In recent weeks the big-business press has spilled a lot of ink on whether the withdrawal of several major unions from the AFL-CIO will weaken workers' ability to organize and fight. Their focus, however, is on the top union officialdom and the factional infighting among its rival wings. Both the officials of the AFL-CIO and of the unions in the so-called Change to Win Coalition continue their decades-long course of tying the future of labor to the profits and prerogatives of the employers and to the bosses' parties, mostly the Democrats. This course has weakened the unions in face of the stiffening employer offensive backed by the government from Washington on down.

A lot of the press coverage has focused on one side or the other talking about the pressing need for labor to win to its ranks the tens of millions of workers who are not organized into unions today. But the heart of the battle between the two factions is over the allocation of workers' dues money and, to that end, over how many unions to merge and how fast.

The eyes of militant workers should be on the ranks of the working class, not the union tops. The resistance by workers that has begun in recent years represents the seeds of a strengthened labor movement and points the road toward its transformation. Out of such struggles

it will also become clearer to workers that they need to organize independently of the bosses in the political arena—to build a labor party based on the unions that fights in the interests of all working people.

What generates this resistance by workers is the relentless drive by the employers today to push down wages, intensify speedup at the expense of safety, extend work hours, and cut pensions and medical benefits. The bosses have no other way to reverse the decades-long decline in their profit rates, as their system enters the opening stages of a worldwide depression and offers working people a future of turmoil, economic devastation, and imperialist wars.

In face of these increasingly brutal conditions, the struggles of working people will not be advanced by hollow talk of "unity" at the top. What counts is the actions of workers themselves in organizing to resist the bosses' assaults and seek solidarity from other working people, both at home and internationally. This resistance is seen today in the battles for a union among Midwest meat packers, the strike by copper workers in Arizona and Texas, and ongoing unionization fights by laundry workers and others.

The efforts of workers such as the Co-Op miners to reach out for solidarity from other workers, regardless of what union they belong to, and to offer solidarity themselves, can and will continue. This course of effectively mobilizing union power is attractive and a powerful example to others who embark on the road to fight for decent wages, safer working conditions, and dignity on the job, including workers who are not yet members of unions.

To the ranks of labor, these struggles show that solidarity is in *our* hands.

Condemn UK shoot-to-kill policy

Printed below is a statement released August 1 by the Communist League in the United Kingdom.

The police execution of a worker, Brazilian-born electrician Jean Charles de Menezes, on an Underground train in south London on July 22 was not a "mistake" or "incompetent" policing. It was the Metropolitan Police's way of announcing their hitherto secret shoot-to-kill policy. As both Prime Minister Anthony Blair and Metropolitan Police commissioner Ian Blair have made clear, this may happen again. Their message is: "Get used to it!" This brutal action is of a piece with other attacks on the rights of working people: moves to expand police powers to wiretap phones, to extend to three months the time that cops can detain people without charges, to increase the cops' "search and seize" powers, to target bookshops and publications deemed by the police to "incite terrorism," and to establish a national ID card.

These measures all highlight what the British rulers' war on terror is primarily about: undermining the ability of workers and farmers to organize and fight the assaults by the bosses and their government.

The police who chased Menezes through Stockwell station and pumped seven bullets into his head turned the presumption of innocence—an elementary right—into the presumption of guilt. They acted as judge, jury, and executioner. Those cops and their superiors, up to and including Ian Blair, should be prosecuted for this crime.

The government and the police want working people to accept increasingly more brutal cop methods and powers. This was the purpose of the massive deployment of armed police in London and around the country on July 28, when machine-gun-toting cops patrolled streets, trains, and stations. This is their goal in the dozens of raids and arrests since 7/7 where they have used assault rifles, tear gas, stun grenades, and Taser guns, blowing front doors off their hinges and forcing people to strip naked as they arrest them.

As part of their campaign of "national unity" against "terrorism," Mayor Kenneth Livingstone and other voices of big business tell us that London is "united." But there is no unity of interests between

them—the tiny minority of wealthy parasitic families who rule the United Kingdom—and us, working people both here and worldwide.

The main enemy of the capitalist rulers is the working class and farmers, whom the bosses must take on to reverse the long-term decline in their profit rates and the crisis of their system of exploitation. The bosses and their government are preparing today for the fightback they expect in the years ahead by workers and farmers who will resist the inevitably deepening attacks on our wages, working conditions, and social gains.

The British rulers' involvement in the imperialist wars and occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan is an extension of their war on working people at home. Jean Charles de Menezes was not a victim of "Blair's war," as many on the middle-class left say, but of this class war at home and abroad. The Communist League calls for the withdrawal of British and other imperialist troops out of Iraq, Afghanistan, Ireland, and Sierra Leone. Hands off Iran and North Korea!

Oppose increased police powers, ID cards, and other curbs on rights!

Cop deployment in United Kingdom

Continued from front page

are reportedly British citizens born in Ethiopia and Eritrea. The fourth is a legal British resident originally from Somalia.

The SO19 armed police unit, which is trained by the SAS (British Army special forces), was in the forefront of these raids. It was the same unit that killed Jean Charles de Menezes, a Brazilian-born electrician, in south London. The cops chased him into a train station and shot him eight times at point blank, including seven shots to the head. Some of the initial statements made by the police to justify this execution have proven false. For example, the London *Sunday Times* reported July 31 that Menezes was not wearing a heavy coat but a denim jacket. He didn't jump over the ticket barrier but had a travel card, and may well have run because he heard a train coming.

Menezes was buried in Brazil July 29. One of his

Irish Republican Army ends 'armed campaign' against British rule

BY PETE CLIFFORD

EDINBURGH, Scotland—On July 28 the Irish Republican Army (IRA) ordered an end to the armed attacks it has been carrying out for decades in its fight against British rule in Ireland.

Three days later, the British government announced a two-year plan to slash the number of British troops stationed in Northern Ireland. The plan is to have "a permanent military garrison of no more than 5,000 members" operating from 14 bases, said Northern Ireland Secretary Peter Hain.

The IRA, which has maintained a cease-fire since 1997, instructed its volunteers to pursue "purely political and democratic programmes through exclusively peaceful means." It announced that its units would dump their arms while maintaining a goal of uniting Ireland, but that "there is now an alternative way to achieve this and to end British rule in our country."

In October 2002 the British government suspended the elected Northern Ireland assembly, and has been insisting that it not be reestablished until the IRA completely and publicly disarms. The assembly first came into being as a result of a 1998 accord between Irish republicans, pro-British Unionists, Dublin, and London.

Should the assembly be reconvened, Sinn Fein, which is now the largest Irish nationalist party, would likely be part of its executive body.

The day after the IRA's statement, the British army began dismantling military posts in the border territory of South Armagh. The British rulers have 12,000 soldiers in Northern Ireland, down more than 7,000 from 1998, and are keen to free some more up to be deployed elsewhere.

"The IRA statement must now be followed by actions demonstrating the republican movement's commitment to the rule of law," stated U.S. president George Bush.

Washington had taken its distance from earlier attempts by British officials to work with the Irish republicans after three alleged IRA members were arrested in Colombia in August 2001 on charges of training anti-government guerrillas in that South American country.

While London and Washington will be closely monitoring the IRA's disarmament pledge, "they have not demanded disbandment. Such a commitment would be a historic move," noted a July 28 *Financial Times* article.

Meanwhile, a third man has been murdered in recent weeks as part of an armed feud between rightist paramilitary groups that support continued British rule.

Earlier in the week, hundreds of Ulster Volunteer Force members had descended on a Belfast housing estate, forcing out families associated with the rival Loyalist Volunteer Force. These two rightist gangs, together with the Ulster Defense Association, "have committed more violence than the IRA in recent years," noted a *Washington Post* article.

killers has been allowed to go on a family holiday, according to the press. "This officer must be brought back and show the world he did something wrong," said Alex Pereira, one of the murdered worker's cousins. Seeking to smear the dead man ahead of an inquiry into the shooting, government officials claimed he was staying in the country using "forged documents."

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Anthony Blair received support from all the capitalist parties for new laws that threaten political rights. One of the proposed measures would target "extreme" publications, bookshops, and web sites that are deemed to "incite terrorism." Under another proposal, phone tap evidence would be allowed in court. Blair has supported a measure allowing police to detain suspects without charges for longer than the current 14 days. Cops want to detain individuals for up to three months in 14-day spells with the approval of a judge.