

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Activists say, 'Free Puerto Rican independence fighters'

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'Workers in U.S. have an interest in fighting Cuba blockade'

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL AND BROCK SATTER

HAVANA, Cuba — The fight to oppose Washington's economic war against Cuba "is an issue of interest to workers, intellectuals, and farmers in the United States," stated Ricardo Alarcón, president of Cuba's National Assembly.

The reason, he said, is that "no society can be free as long as it oppresses another."

Build U.S.-Cuba Youth Exchange! — see page 8

Any society based on injustice against another, on attempting to colonize another, will face this as its main problem. The effort to end the injustice imposed by their country on another must become a vital priority for the workers, intellectuals, and decent people of that country because this is a prerequisite to achieve their own freedom."

Alarcón was addressing the opening session of the Eighth U.S.-Cuba Philosophy and Social Science Conference. The week-long event, held at the University of Havana, began here June 10. It brought together 84 participants from Cuba and 45 from the United States and a few other countries.

Alarcón, who is also a member of the

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St. Louis strikers prepared for long battle

BY DANNY BOOHER AND MARY MARTIN

ST. LOUIS — One week into the strike by 6,700 McDonnell Douglas workers that began here June 5, members of International Association of Machinists (IAM) District 837 are staffing the picket lines and strike headquarters, determined to stick out what many say may be a long fight.

Outsourcing of jobs is the central issue in this strike. The machinists union is seeking guarantees that current work done in St. Louis will not be outsourced to non-union companies or other McDonnell Douglas facilities, and that 7,000 IAM jobs will stay in the plant. The company offer calls for a workforce of as few as 5,000 through the life of the contract.

Under the company's offer, union workers would receive a 2.5 percent wage raise in the first year of the four-year contract followed by lump-sum payments equal to between 2.5 and 3 percent of wages in the following years. Workers at McDonnell have not received a wage hike outside of cost of living increases in the past seven years.

The contract offer also demands concessions from the union members in the areas of job classifications, benefits and pensions. Striker Dan Sanders, 34, spray paints Harpoon missiles. "I'm one of the younger workers in the plant," he explained. "There used to be younger workers until McDonnell

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'Stop the burning of Black churches!'

Socialists call for protests to condemn racist assaults

The following statement was issued June 12 by Socialist Workers Party candidates for U.S. president and vice president, James Harris and Laura Garza, along with John Hawkins for U.S. Senate in Alabama, Arlene Rubinstein for Senate in Georgia, and Jim Rogers for Governor in North Carolina.

The Socialist Workers campaign urges the labor movement, all working people, and supporters of democratic rights to organize protests to condemn the series of racist arson attacks in Black communities across the South. For 18 months, and despite pleas from Black ministers and others, little has been done by federal and state governments to respond to the string of church burnings.

Little was done despite the fact that it has been known for some time that white supremacist groups have been publicly agitating against Black churches. The lack of response by ruling class politicians to these fires serves to encourage further attacks. In Alabama, Gov. Fob James has refused to make any public statement condemning

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Timothy Funderburk, who lives near burned church in Charlotte, North Carolina. Police took no serious action in response to earlier reports of vandalism, he said.

Socialists: 'Defend, extend abortion rights'

The following statement was issued June 13 by SWP candidates James Harris and Laura Garza.

The call by presidential candidate Robert Dole for a "declaration of tolerance" on the question of abortion at the Republican Party convention reflects the deep gains women have won in establishing the right to control their bodies. Rightists like Patrick

Buchanan have made little headway in their "cultural war" against abortion rights; the big majority, especially among working people, support women's right to choose.

While unable to turn back history to the days of illegal, back-alley abortions, Republican and Democratic politicians alike have whittled away at access to abortion — from the federal Hyde Amendment barring Medicaid funding for the procedure to state laws

like Wisconsin's waiting period and the ban on abortion insurance for state workers just issued by Virginia governor George Allen.

Now is the time for all supporters of women's rights to press the fight to defend and extend abortion rights. We urge unionists, students, and others to get out in the streets and in front of the clinics to say, "We will not go back. Keep abortion safe, legal, and accessible to all."

Germany: workers protest social cuts

BY MARKIE WILSON AND CHRIS MORRIS

BERLIN, Germany — Local trade union mobilizations have spread across Germany in preparation for a national demonstration in Bonn June 15 against the federal government's "savings plan," which will gut social benefits.

On Monday, June 10, the engineers union IG Metall called actions in Hamburg, Bremen, and the Rhineland in the western part of the country. In Salzgitter 14,000 pro-

testers marched, blocking traffic, including workers from Volkswagen and Bosch. Traffic in Hamburg was blocked for 20-30 minutes. In Rostock, in East Germany, 100 people demonstrated.

Five hundred students from three universities in Berlin attended a meeting here June 12 against raising university fees from DM40 to DM100 (\$26 to \$65) per semester. Oltan Dertli, a Humboldt University student, who recently participated in the congress of the Central Organization of Cuban

Workers in Havana, said that the new fees are "part of an attack on the social wage." He also described protests that have taken place every Monday here, ranging from 1,000 to 35,000 people.

According to another student activist, Senator Radunsky in Berlin stated recently he intends to push for "student fees as high as DM1,000 per student each semester; and I think it could be achieved in 2-3 years."

University students here are mobilizing to attend the June 15 national march in Bonn. The Berlin chapter of the National Student Union (GEW) has issued several leaflets describing government cutbacks and calling on youth to join protests against them.

One of these flyers said that attacks on the working class include cutbacks in payments to people with children, slashing health care coverage, reducing sick pay from 100 percent to 80 percent of wages, cutting pensions and unemployment benefits, and raising the retirement age.

Dieter Schulte, leader of the DGB trade union federation, stated in the newspaper *Die Welt* that a "hot summer" is ahead that will make the protests in France look like a "tired imitation."

Markie Wilson is a member of United Transportation Union in Oakland, California; and Chris Morris is member of the Amalgamated Electrical and Engineering Union in Manchester, England.

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JULY 6-9 OBERLIN, OHIO

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Washington reasserts domination in Europe — page 7



Metal workers strike in Russia

More than 10,000 workers went on strike May 31, over living conditions at the Nadezhdinsky metallurgical plant, in Russia's Far North. The strike cut production at the plant, a subsidiary of the Norilsk Nickel corporation, in half and reduced Norilsk's total output by 12 percent.

Meanwhile Russian president Boris Yeltsin has been campaigning hard for reelection, with the backing of Washington and other imperialist governments. Russia's Central Bank protested June 6 a move by Yeltsin to turn over \$1 billion to help pay for the federal deficit, which has risen as he ordered the payment of tens of trillions of rubles in wages, pensions and other benefits to workers in order to win votes.

Apology for 'comfort women'

Japan's prime minister, Ryutaro Hashimoto, announced in early June that he would apologize to the "comfort women" who were forced into prostitution houses for the Japanese military during World War II. A private fund was set up last summer to compensate the women, but Japanese officials refused to apologize.

In 1991 the Japanese government admitted it officially organized the prostitution conscription of Korean, Chinese, Dutch, and Filipina women. Historians estimate that up to 200,000 Asian women, mostly Koreans, were forced into the Japanese military brothels.

U.S. probes against North Korea

Lt. Gen. Richard Meyer, commander of all U.S. military forces in Japan, told the *Washington Post* that the U.S. military in Asia is focused on preparing for armed conflict with North Korea, in an interview printed June 8. Meyer added that U.S. troops training in Japan are supposed to prepare for any regional conflict, but that Pyongyang is at the top of their immediate agenda. Washington has some 100,000 troops and its most advanced equipment stationed in the region.

The U.S. government claims that North Korean forces may attack South Korea due to the food shortages in the country. The Clinton administration announced June 7 it



Garment workers in New York protest in front of Michael Matisse store demanding back pay June 2. More than 100 workers have been cheated by the owners of the garment shop. The workers say they are tired of being exploited.

would grant 10,000 tons of food assistance to North Korea, a fraction of the 60,000 tons the United Nations called for to immediately relieve the famine.

Liberian refugees denied port

Ghanaian officials drove a Russian cargo ship carrying refugees from Liberia out of the country's waters June 9. The *Zolotitsa* has been stranded at sea for two weeks, packed with 450 passengers — including many Ghanaian nationals — who paid \$60-70 each to get away from fighting in the Liberian capital, Monrovia. The government in Togo also refused to allow the ship to dock there.

In May, some 2,000 refugees aboard the *Bulk Challenge* remained at sea for 10 days as one government after another denied them port along the West African coast. Finally, after international pressure, those deemed

"eligible" were granted refugee status in Ghana.

Workers in Morocco hold sit-in

Since May 20 hundreds of jobless graduates demanding jobs have taken over a trade union building in central Rabat, the Moroccan capital. More than 1,000 men and women are estimated to be in the building. On June 3, riot police sent reinforcements to the seized trade union hall. Reuters reported that dozens of youth were chanting slogans and waving banners from the building, where they are packed into every room, the cellar, and the roof. The two main trade unions have called a general strike to force the government to honor previous commitments to increase wages and respect trade unions.

UN official threatens to reimpose sanctions against Belgrade

The president of the United Nations war crimes tribunal said June 6 that it may reimpose sanctions on Serbia and on the so-called Republica Srpska in Bosnia if two leaders of the Belgrade-backed Bosnian Serb forces are not arrested. Judge Antonio Cassese is campaigning for the arrest of chauvinist leader Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic, the Bosnian Serb military commander, on war crimes charges. Previous economic sanctions were lifted after the Dayton accord partitioning Bosnia was signed last December.

Carl Bildt, the former Swedish prime minister who is overseeing the civilian implementation of the agreement, warned that

reimposing sanctions must be considered carefully because "the consequences are very dramatic." Both U.S. secretary of state Warren Christopher and NATO European commander Gen. George Joulwan said the imperialist troops would step up patrols in Bosnia with the intention of arresting Karadzic.

British beef ban eased

The European Commission eased the 10-week-old ban on British beef products — imposed in the name of fighting "mad cow" disease — June 6. The commission voted to allow Britain to export bull semen, beef fat, and beef-based gelatin.

The same week a leaked report from the British Treasury Department stated that the United Kingdom will be displaced as one of the seven biggest world economies in the next 20 years. The document predicts that in 2015 the top seven markets will be China, India, Brazil, Indonesia, the United States, Japan, and Germany.

OAS criticizes Cuba embargo

The Organization of American States (OAS) voted overwhelmingly for a resolution criticizing the "Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act," or Helms-Burton bill, signed by U.S. president William Clinton in March. Washington, which generally dominates the organization, was the sole dissenter. Cuba has been excluded from the OAS since 1962 at the U.S. government's insistence.

The resolution adopted by the OAS opposes all laws that "obstruct international trade and investment" or "the free movement of persons." The new U.S. law tightens the anti-Cuba embargo by allowing U.S. lawsuits against foreign companies that "traffic" in property formerly owned by U.S. capitalists that was seized by Cuban workers and peasants after the 1959 revolution. It also calls for excluding the executives of such companies from the United States. The U.S. delegate to the OAS, Harriet Babbitt, called the vote an act of "diplomatic cowardice." A spokesman for the Cuban Foreign Ministry said the resolution was "really a surprise" and thanked the OAS members for their support.

Orange County sells bonds again

It has been eighteen months since Orange County, California, declared bankruptcy, losing \$1.7 billion and wiping out workers' pensions, school funds, and other moneys invested there.

On June 5, the county issued \$900 million of new debt on Wall Street. Nearly all of the bonds were snatched up quickly by investors looking at the higher return rates. After the 1994 collapse, Orange County officials eliminated 41 percent of the county's operating budget by cutting 3,000 jobs, slashing prenatal care programs, closing abused women clinics, and ending programs for children and low-income families.

— MEGAN ARNEY

THE MILITANT

Fight racist attacks

The battle against racist assaults and discrimination are decisive questions for the labor movement. The 'Militant' provides coverage of these struggles as new generations of workers and youth are drawn into combat against the capitalist system of exploitation and racist oppression. Don't miss a single issue!



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Arson hits 30th Black church in South

BY MARTIN BOYERS

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina — Arsonists burned down a portion of an historic Black church here June 6. This is one of more than 30 fires set in Black churches in the South since early 1995. A rural Black church was torched in Greensboro, Alabama June 3. The attacks have intensified calls for effective federal investigation and prosecution of those responsible.

The wood-frame sanctuary of Matthews Murkland Presbyterian Church was built in 1903 and is home to a congregation that dates back to freed slaves in 1864. The building was no longer in active use.

Church pastor Rev. Larry Hill vowed, "We intend to overcome this in a big way. We are not afraid." Many individuals from public officials to religious leaders to individuals visited the burnt ruins of the church the following Sunday to express their support.

Kelly Alexander Jr., a leader of the NAACP, called for the creation of Neighborhood Church Watch programs. "The neighbors of African American churches must become the first line of defense against arson. Church neighbors must report any suspicious activity in and around African American churches promptly to police."

The site was visited June 9 by Myrlie Evers-Williams, chairwoman of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). She pledged, "We will see to it that those responsible will be captured and will be punished." She also commended the proposal for a church watch. The NAACP national convention will be held in Charlotte July 6 - 11.

The fire was reported by Timothy Funderburk, a 28-year-old hospital worker and church member who lives across the road from the church.

He related that he has called police 8 or 10 times over the past year or so to report suspicious activity near the building. The church has been broken into, the interior damaged, refuse has been dumped inside, and the adjacent cemetery has been vandalized. One of the coffins was unearthed and opened.

No serious attempt to stop vandals

When called, Funderburk reported, the police did not make any serious attempt to catch the vandals. "When I reported that the guys had just turned to the left, the police would take their time getting going and then turn to the right.... Just today, the police department called and told me they had only three reports on record. But that's not true." Funderburk reported seeing two carloads of men driving slowly onto the church property at about 11:30 p.m. a few days before the fire.

The list of 30 Black southern churches that are victims of this wave of arson attacks includes five in southern Alabama in the last six months, and it is far from complete. A March 1995 fire set at Charlotte's New Out-

reach Christian Center was not listed, according to a source at the city's Fire Department, because it was said to be a storage building. The congregation's co-pastor refuted this claim.

"We had services in there every week," Brenda Stevenson, one of Outreach's co-pastors told the *Charlotte Observer* June 8.

Pastors harassed by investigators

President Clinton announced the formation of a special task force to investigate the series of arson attacks in a radio address June 8. He said that 200 federal cops, including Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms police, will visit churches throughout the South and announced a toll-free number for information on the attacks. "Fire investigators, national response teams, polygraph examiners, and forensic chemists are combing through fire sites, interviewing witnesses, and following leads," Clinton declared. He also expressed support for legislation in Congress making it "easier to bring federal prosecutions

against those who attack houses of worship."

Rev. Mac Charles Jones reported to a recent board meeting of the National Council of Churches (NCC), these investigators have often focused their probes against the victims of the attacks. "Rather than investigating the perpetrators of the church bombings and fires," said Jones, who is a Kansas City minister and associate director to the NCC's general secretary, "the agents are questioning pastors and their congregants as though they are responsible for the disasters."

He said some pastors have been asked to take polygraph tests implying they may be lying about the incidents, and that some Black female church members have been asked if they have been sexually molested by their pastors.

There have been some arrests in the arson wave, including two alleged members of the Ku Klux Klan. A 13-year-old white girl was charged June 10 with setting fire to the Matthews Murkland Presbyterian Church. Most of the other cases remain un-

solved. North Carolina governor Jim Hunt offered a \$10,000 reward for information leading to arrests and convictions in the Charlotte case. Charlotte-based Nations Bank offered a \$50,000 reward per incident for up to 10 incidents.

About 30 pastors from burned-out churches met with Attorney General Janet Reno June 9 and complained that official investigations focus more on church members than on outsiders.

Rose Johnson, executive director of an organization that monitors racist attacks, told the *New York Times* that after a church was set on fire in Knoxville, Tennessee, federal cops "fingerprinted church members, showed up unannounced at job sites and homes, and implied that some church members burned their church."

In another racist attack, a swastika was painted on a statue of civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. in Charlotte's Marshall Park this weekend. Police have no suspects.

'We have to fight this cop brutality'

BY CHRIS REMPLE

IRVINGTON, New Jersey — Some 20 people turned out June 10 for the beginning of a day-long protest against the police beating of Max Antoine, a young Haitian law student here. Antoine's father, Joseph Antoine, described how the police assaulted his son.

The cops had come to the door of the Antoine home at 2:00 a.m. Sunday, June 2, to tell them to turn down the music at a party they were hosting. Although the music was then completely turned off, the cops pushed their way into the house and began harassing two women, one of them Max's six-month pregnant sister.

Max told his sister to take down the officers' badge numbers so they could file a complaint the next day. At that time, one cop leapt across the two women, pushing the pregnant one to the floor, and began slamming Max's head against the wall of the house.

After the police handcuffed him, they continued to beat him at the house. They took him to the squad car and shoved him inside with their feet and gave him two more beatings at the police station. He was refused medical care or any contact with his family from early Sunday until Monday morning.

At the time of the protest, Max Antoine had just been released from the hospital in order to go to court in downtown Newark to face charges of trying to take one of the cops' guns.

Joseph Antoine attended the Socialist Workers campaign event in Newark Sunday, June 9, to appeal for solidarity and asked people there to come to the protest the next

day. The story of the beating and plans for the protest were publicized on several Haitian radio programs — Radio Verité, Moment Creole, and Radio Liberté — and a number of people had come from hearing of this fight on the radio.

Najieb Isaac, a 16-year-old high school student from New York, stated, "As far as I'm concerned, the police always seem to find just cause for beating up Black people. They always assume a Black person is guilty and go for their gun."



June 10 picket line in Irvington, New Jersey, demands justice for Max Antoine, a Haitian law student who was brutally beaten by the police at his home.

Militant/Stefanie Trice

— YOUNG SOCIALISTS AROUND THE WORLD —

High school students protest racist attacks, discuss curfew

This column is written and edited by the Young Socialists, an international organization of young workers, students and other youth fighting for socialism. For more information about the YS, write P.O. Box 14392, St. Paul, MN 55114. Tel: (612) 644-0051, Fax: (612) 645-1674.

BY JACK WILLEY

LAKEVILLE, Minnesota — A racial slur was bleached into the grass at Lakeville High School on June 3. The epithet, "Die N-----," stretched over fifteen feet on the lawn between the student parking lot and the school entrance. It was the second major incident this school year at Lakeville, a suburb of the Minneapolis and St. Paul.

The next night, a group of students came together to discuss the incident and organized a purple ribbon campaign in protest. On the final two days of class, hundreds of the 1,200 students at Lakeville wore purple ribbons, condemning the attack.

Some of the 12 Black students who go to school here, their parents, and friends called on the newspapers, radio, TV stations and elected officials to denounce the incident.

After learning about the incident on the

news the night before, Jennifer Benton, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress, Michael Pennock, and myself went to Lakeville in solidarity with those taking a stand against the attack and brought to them the socialist election campaign.

Many students expressed outrage at the racial incident.

"I'm upset at what is happening. I find this pathetic that people have nothing better to do. At the beginning of the school year, somebody wrote on the windows, Go home N-----. We were angry, but we were told the administration would take action. Now it just happened again and many of us knew something had to be done," stated Sabrina Kirkpatrick, one of the Black students who helped initiate the purple ribbon campaign.

Another student said, "Next year's going to be different because we are not going to stand for any of this," pointing to the area where the racial slur was bleached.

The incident has further polarized the school. Some students refused to wear a purple ribbon. Two students said they heard about the incident on the news, but did not know what happened and did not really care. As we campaigned at the school entrance,

two other students about a hundred feet away carried a large confederate flag from the bed of their truck and set it in the front seat. It was clear from the stream of purple ribbons pouring out of the school, however, that the racists are a tiny minority.

YS campaigns at high schools

Once a week for the final three weeks of class, Young Socialists went to South High, a school of 1,800 in South Minneapolis, with the Socialist Workers election campaign. We were greeted with a warm response and great deal of interest.

One of the hot topics on peoples' minds is the statement by President Clinton that he will support a nationwide curfew for people under 17.

"They treat us like we're a bunch of criminals. Our school is built like a fortress, with no windows to even see outside, they have guards, some with guns, walking through the hallways and now Clinton wants a curfew. What's going on?" asked a sophomore student.

When I mentioned the curfew issue to another group of students, one remarked, "The Democrats and Republicans, they are

all the same. Clinton just signed a new anti-terrorism bill and now he wants to go after gays and put up curfews."

Another student, when she saw a young socialist with the *Militant*, ran up and said, "My friend just showed me that paper, I want it!" She was excited to hear that there is an alternative to the Democrats and Republicans. A couple students I met are studying Russian history and want to go on the U.S.-Cuba Youth Exchange. In fact, there was a great deal of interest in Cuba among several students. A few took applications for the Youth Exchange to read over.

In total, fifteen students signed up to campaign with Young Socialists for Harris and Garza or for more information about the campaign. We sold four new issues of the *Militant*, two back issues, and got dozens of campaign brochures in students' hands. In addition, we received several small contributions toward the campaign and a couple students gave us the names of teachers to look up in the fall to get classroom speaking engagements for our candidates.

Jack Willey is a member of the Young Socialists in St. Paul, Minnesota.

'I've been looking for a way to end oppression'

BY STEFANIE TRICE

NEWARK, New Jersey — At a pizza joint outside the Ford assembly plant in Edison, New Jersey, James Harris met to discuss politics with 12 of the plant's United Auto Workers members on June 10. Harris was accompanied by Tom Alter, the Young Socialists leader who has been touring with him, as well as an entourage of local campaign supporters.

Harris, the Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. president, and Alter had begun the day with an interview by the daily *Bergen Record*, which published a substantial article on Harris's campaign the next day.

"I've heard about democracy all my life but I've never seen it in action. Would a socialist government still be operated by certain departments?" asked one of the auto workers.

"The problem now is not governmental forms, it's who the government serves," Harris replied. "The U.S. government is organized for the rich; we're fighting for a workers and farmers government, that serves the majority. In Cuba, costs for retirement and education are guaranteed by the state. Why can a poor country do this?"

"I was drawn to this movement because as my experience as a Black man," said another worker. "I've been looking for the way to end my oppression. It seems to me now that it is innate in capitalism in general. How does socialism deal with that?"

"In Cuba," Harris said, "white barbers wouldn't cut Blacks' hair. With a revolutionary government, this was changed by racist barbers' shops being shut down. Only after this action was taken, upon orders of the Cuban militia, did they cut the customer's hair. Racist divisions within the working class don't come from us, they come from the ruling class."

When asked about jobs going overseas, Harris responded, "The same people who hire and fire you are the same ones who will tell you that immigrants take your jobs. We start from the right to a job for all working people anywhere." At the end of the discussion, four people at the meeting signed up to get involved in the campaign.

BY ELLEN HAYWOOD

ATLANTA, Georgia — The five-day tour of Laura Garza here registered gains for the socialist movement. Six youth attended a meeting of Young Socialists for

Harris and Garza, a 24-year-old auto worker joined the Young Socialists, and a Guatemalan construction worker asked to join the Socialist Workers Party. Garza is the SWP's candidate for vice-president of the United States.

Her first stop was visiting garment workers during two lunch periods at a mop factory organized by the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE). "Democrats and Republicans want to cut back the only items in the federal budget that are spent on millions of working people — Social Security, Medicaid, and welfare payments," Garza said. "They don't touch the rest of the budget that goes to the rich." Several workers nodded and said, "That's right."

Jamaal, an 18-year-old who recently moved to Atlanta from a small town in South Carolina, and Angela, an army veteran and former postal worker, sat down with the vice presidential candidate for about 20 minutes of discussion. Garza then moved from table to table talking with workers from the United States, Colombia, Mexico, and Haiti.

During the next lunch period, Paul, a young worker who is Black and helped organize the union at the plant two years ago, quizzed the socialist candidate more about the Cuban revolution. He has been reading the book *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War* by Ernesto Che Guevara.

Another highlight of the tour was the 30 youth who came to Jittery Joe's Cafe in Athens, Georgia, to hear Garza speak. The event had been organized by two young people who attended a Memorial Day weekend BBQ for the Georgia Socialist Workers can-



Militant/Bob Miller

James Harris (fourth from the left) discuss politics with Ford workers in Edison

didates. The first person to speak in the discussion after Garza's presentation said that the University of Georgia at Athens "generates a labor pool of young people for the local restaurants and industries. It means a lot of young workers here are paid below minimum wage and subject to abusive conditions — like if you are 5 minutes late they dock you a whole hour's pay. You are here in the deep South talking about unionism and workers fighting for our rights — we need that."

At the campaign rally that wound up the tour, one third of the participants were young workers or students. Campaign supporters here had invited Ken Piaro, a member of the Movement in Solidarity with the Ogoni People (MOSOP), who recently was forced into exile by death threats from the Nigerian military regime. The Ogoni people have been fighting Shell Oil's destruction of their farmland and have been subject to brutal repression by the Nigerian government. Garza welcomed Piaro's participation. "This shows how opposite the socialist campaign is from the Democrats and Republi-

cans," she said. "We urge working people to look around the world at other oppressed people's struggles and see what we can do to join our fights together."

Clint Ivie and Karolina Bjornheden, both members of Young Socialists for Harris and Garza (YSHG), urged the other young people present to "go out on campaign tables to meet other youth and learn from the discussions." They invited others to go with them on the U.S.-Cuba Youth Exchange trip.

Also attending the meeting was a textile worker who drove up from LaGrange, Georgia, about two hours from Atlanta, to hear Garza. A reporter from the area Spanish-language newspaper came to the rally to interview the socialist candidate.

At the campaign rally, industrial workers and others present contributed \$1,032 to the \$90,000 socialist campaign fund and pledged another \$435 pledged.

Stefanie Trice is a member of the United Transportation Union in Newark. Ellen Haywood is a member UNITE Local 2523 in Atlanta.

On the road petitioning for socialism

BY JOSHUA CARROLL

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama — On Friday, May 31, this reporter and Andrew Feine made our way here. Feine is a Yale University student who will be participating in the upcoming U.S.-Cuba Youth Exchange. Both of us have been active in the New York U.S.-Cuba Youth Exchange Committee.

We came here to help get 8,500 signatures on petitions to put James Harris and Laura Garza on the ballot in Alabama. I volunteered for this trip a few days earlier. Andrew attended a house meeting on May 30

with Harris, who was in New York as a part of his campaign tour. He decided on the spot to come along and help out. Ten hours later we took off for Alabama.

At the meeting, Andrew and Antonio Olivo, a student at New York Technical college, decided they wanted to support the socialist campaign by going out to picket lines, demonstrations, and other social protest actions to present a working-class alternative to the Democrats and the Republicans. Both signed up as Young Socialists for Harris and Garza.

What you do when you petition is briefly explain what the socialist campaign is about, and then ask if the person would like to sign up to put Harris and Garza on the ballot. The two main places we petitioned over the next few days were in a Wal-Mart parking lot and outside the building where people pay their utilities bills.

The response was really good. I would say over two-thirds of the people who actually stopped to listen to us ended up signing the petition. Some of them said they would vote for William Clinton, but thought it was important to have alternative choices on the ballot. Others simply agreed when Andrew and I said, "Working people can't look for the lesser evil among candidates who speak for a few already wealthy families, but have to do something different to defend our class interests."

Some people who initially didn't want to sign would flatly state, "I don't vote." We frequently won these people to sign our petition when we explained that we sympa-

thize and even agree with many people's motivation for not voting: there's no capitalist candidate who is offering any solution worth workers' support anyway. We said that the Democrats and the Republicans are completely bought stock-lock-and-barrel by the landlords, big-businessmen, and bankers.

With the help of other volunteers from the Birmingham area, however, we were able to get 2,200 signatures, including nearly 200 at Birmingham's Gay Pride March on June 9. Andrew was the top petitioner during the five-day period he was there — getting 36 in his very first hour alone. That first hour was hard to match for the rest of the week, but we were able to average over 20 signatures per hour.

Among other supporters who helped out petitioning were four Young Socialists for Harris and Garza here. Three of these people expressed interest in coming to the International Socialist Conference in Oberlin, Ohio, next month (see ad on front page). We were also able to recruit two more young people as Young Socialists for Harris and Garza, one of whom subscribed to the *Militant*.

Volunteers are needed to petition there full time between now and July 3. Help is also needed for other petitioning efforts: July 10 — August 20 in New York; July-August in Washington, D.C.; as well as in Utah, Minnesota, Iowa, Vermont, Rhode Island, and Washington state.

Joshua Carroll is a member of the National Committee of the Young Socialists.

Rallies, picnics raise money

BY CLIVE TURNBULL

NEWARK — Supporters of James Harris for president and Laura Garza for vice

president have stepped up their efforts to collect funds for the 1996 Socialist Workers campaign. Donations totaling nearly \$13,400 from around the country were mailed in — the biggest one-week collection to date. But there's plenty of work still ahead to meet the \$90,000 goal by July 1.

In Newark, more than \$1,100 in donations and pledges was raised at a June 9 campaign rally of 50 people. Harris shared the floor with Marie Antoine, calling for support for her brother Max, who had just been brutally beaten by the cops.

"Campaign supporters in Seattle organized a picnic fund-raiser over the Memorial Day weekend that included an auction of items from Cuba," wrote supporter Kathy Wheeler. "Enclosed is \$2,115 we raised at the event."

Supporters in San Francisco organized a barbeque, also over the Memorial Day weekend, where \$883 was collected.

Contributions to the campaign cover expenses of the working class candidates to keep them on the campaign trail around the country and the world. Greg McCartney, the SWP national campaign director, said Harris will be traveling to St. Louis to lend solidarity to workers on strike against McDonnell Douglas, and plans to attend the National NAACP convention in early July.

Garza will attend the annual convention of the National Organization for Women, which will take place June 28-30 in Las Vegas. Anyone interested to join Garza at the gathering should contact supporters in Salt Lake City or Los Angeles (see directory on page 12).

Contribute to the Socialist Workers \$90,000 1996 Campaign Fund

| | Goal | Paid | Percent |
|------------------|---------------|---------------|------------|
| Philadelphia | 4,500 | 3,452 | 77% |
| Detroit | 3,500 | 2,495 | 71% |
| Newark | 5,000 | 2,999 | 60% |
| Pittsburgh | 5,000 | 2,900 | 58% |
| Seattle | 5,000 | 2,875 | 58% |
| Twin Cities | 5,000 | 2,431 | 49% |
| Boston | 3,500 | 1,675 | 48% |
| Houston | 2,000 | 925 | 46% |
| Greensboro | 1,500 | 690 | 46% |
| Miami | 2,000 | 915 | 46% |
| Peoria | 1,200 | 510 | 43% |
| Washington, D.C. | 2,000 | 800 | 40% |
| San Francisco | 10,000 | 3,921 | 39% |
| Salt Lake City | 2,000 | 725 | 36% |
| Des Moines | 600 | 211 | 35% |
| Brooklyn | 7,000 | 2,455 | 35% |
| Morgantown | 500 | 175 | 35% |
| Birmingham | 3,200 | 1,098 | 34% |
| Atlanta | 2,000 | 570 | 29% |
| Los Angeles | 8,000 | 2,077 | 26% |
| Chicago | 5,000 | 1,240 | 25% |
| New York | 7,000 | 1,531 | 22% |
| Cleveland | 1,200 | 30 | 3% |
| Total | 86,700 | 36,701 | 42% |
| Should be | 90,000 | 54,000 | 60% |

Campaign for the socialist alternative!

- Sign me up as a Young Socialist for Harris and Garza. I want to campaign for the socialist alternative and against the parties of exploitation, racism, and war.
- Sign me up as a campaign supporter and keep me informed of protests, picket lines, and other political activities.
- Enclosed is a \$ _____ contribution
- I want to invite a candidate to speak at my union, school, or organization
- Enclosed is \$10 for a 12-week subscription to the *Militant*, a socialist newsweekly, or \$6 for 4 months of *Perspectiva Mundial* in Spanish.

Name _____ Phone _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State/Zip _____
 Union/School/Organization _____

Mail to: Socialist Workers 1996 Campaign, P.O. Box 2652, New York, NY 10009
 CompuServe: 104124,1405 Phone: (212) 328-1504

SELL THE BOOKS WORKERS OF THE WORLD NEED

Join the campaign to sell Pathfinder books and pamphlets

BY HILDA CUZCO

"Sales in Australia got off to a good start in June when a team of Pathfinder supporters visited Melbourne to take part in the annual national consultation of the Australia-Cuba Friendship Society," writes Linda Harris. "We found a lot of interest in the *Militant's* coverage of the recent conference of trade unionists in Cuba. All the copies we had of their theses were snatched up, including two sold with introductory subs to the *Militant*." The team also sold a copy of *New Internationalist* no. 10, with the article "Imperialism's March toward Fascism and War," and one of the Spanish-language *Nueva Internacional* no. 2, on Che Guevara. They also signed up two members for the Pathfinder Readers Club. While in town, they visited a campus bookstore and received an order for 13 titles.

This is one illustration of the possibilities for combining sales of revolutionary books with subscriptions to the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and *New Interna-*

tional, during the final week of the international subscription drive and beyond.

The initial results of an international sales and reporting team in Germany are good as well. On their first day in Berlin, socialist workers from Sweden, the United States, and the United Kingdom sold 10 *Militants* and Pathfinder titles for a total of \$72. The activists also visited two commercial distributors, taking orders for 38 books, including two *New Internationalists*.

Jerry Freiwirth from Houston reported that socialist workers attending the Labor Party convention in Cleveland June 6-9 got a good hearing. "Our sales figures include 13 *Militant* subscriptions, one *Perspectiva Mundial* subscription, one *New Internationalist*, nearly 70 single copies of the *Militant* and \$500 of books, sold among the 1,400 participants at the conference," he reported.

Pat Grogan in Salt Lake City wrote in that a member of the United Steelworkers of America there sold four Pathfinder titles to a co-worker: *The Wages System* by Frederick Engels; *Labor's Giant Step* by Art Preis; *Workers, Bosses, and Bureaucrats* by Tom Kerry; and *The Long View of History* by George Novack.

Militant supporters in Chicago reported that they are back into regular plant gate sales. They sold six copies of the *Militant* to LTV steelworkers at a busy intersection. A week later at the same intersection, they sold 16 copies of the *Militant* and one copy of *Perspectiva Mundial*. The headline on the protests by workers in France demanding a shorter workweek to create more jobs in the June 10 issue received a lot of attention.

Many of these workers would probably be interested in reading *An Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis*. It proposes the labor movement carry out an international fight around demands such as shortening the workweek, defending affirmative action, and canceling the Third World debt — demands that can unite working people in all countries and of all nationalities in a common struggle against the effects of the capitalist economic depression. A French-language edition of the pamphlet, already available in English, Icelandic, Spanish, and Swedish, will be produced within a month.

In a phone conversation, Janice Lynn in Washington, D.C., described Pathfinder supporters' success in selling books at a range of political events. Sales at the June 1 March for Children

June 9 : 14%
Should be: 30%

| | Through Pathfinder Bookstores | | | To Commercial Distributors | | | Total | | | Readers Club |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|------------|------------|----------------------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|------------|--------------|
| | goal | sold | % sold | goal | sold | % sold | goal | sold | % sold | |
| AUSTRALIA | 36 | 10 | 28% | | | | 36 | 10 | 28% | 29 |
| CANADA | | | | | | | | | | |
| Toronto | 90 | 29 | 32% | 70 | 0 | 0% | 160 | 29 | 18% | 63 |
| Montreal | 72 | 19 | 26% | 64 | 0 | 0% | 136 | 19 | 14% | 37 |
| Vancouver | 36 | 4 | 11% | 28 | 0 | 0% | 64 | 4 | 6% | 50 |
| Total | 198 | 52 | 24% | 162 | 0 | 0% | 360 | 52 | 17% | 87 |
| Goal/Should be | 220 | 66 | 30% | 92 | 27.6 | 30% | 312 | 93.6 | 30% | |
| NEW ZEALAND | | | | | | | | | | |
| Auckland | 65 | 24 | 37% | | | | 65 | 24 | 37% | 39 |
| Christchurch | 28 | 4 | 14% | | | | 28 | 4 | 14% | 13 |
| Total | 93 | 28 | 30% | | | | 93 | 28 | 30% | 52 |
| SWEDEN | | | | | | | | | | |
| Stockholm | 40 | 0 | 0% | 60 | 0 | 0% | 100 | 0 | 0% | |
| UNITED KINGDOM | | | | | | | | | | |
| London | 95 | 34 | 36% | 98 | 98 | 100% | 193 | 132 | 68% | 87 |
| Manchester | 46 | 15 | 33% | 65 | 31 | 48% | 111 | 46 | 41% | 0 |
| Sheffield | 14 | 0 | 0% | 20 | 0 | 0% | 34 | 0 | 0% | 0 |
| Total | 155 | 49 | 32% | 183 | 129 | 70% | 338 | 178 | 53% | 87 |
| UNITED STATES | | | | | | | | | | |
| Miami | 55 | 19 | 35% | 42 | 60 | 143% | 97 | 79 | 81% | 27 |
| Atlanta | 48 | 24 | 50% | 32 | 11 | 34% | 80 | 35 | 44% | 39 |
| Philadelphia | 63 | 8 | 13% | 49 | 40 | 82% | 112 | 48 | 43% | 41 |
| Washington, D.C. | 54 | 24 | 44% | 42 | 2 | 5% | 96 | 26 | 27% | 34 |
| Los Angeles | 120 | 31 | 26% | 95 | 27 | 28% | 215 | 58 | 27% | 70 |
| Salt Lake City* | 50 | 18 | 36% | 40 | 2 | 5% | 90 | 20 | 22% | 40 |
| Des Moines | 45 | 16 | 36% | 35 | 1 | 3% | 80 | 17 | 21% | 21 |
| Peoria | 27 | 7 | 26% | 21 | 3 | 14% | 48 | 10 | 21% | 18 |
| Detroit | 77 | 27 | 35% | 60 | 0 | 0% | 137 | 27 | 20% | 47 |
| Greensboro | 41 | 15 | 37% | 36 | 0 | 0% | 77 | 15 | 19% | 35 |
| Brooklyn | 165 | 41 | 25% | 130 | 0 | 0% | 295 | 41 | 14% | 73 |
| San Francisco | 95 | 20 | 21% | 74 | 1 | 1% | 169 | 21 | 12% | 72 |
| New York | 175 | 21 | 12% | 175 | 22 | 13% | 350 | 43 | 12% | 74 |
| Boston* | 65 | 0 | 0% | 50 | 14 | 28% | 115 | 14 | 12% | 42 |
| Chicago | 77 | 14 | 18% | 60 | 2 | 3% | 137 | 16 | 12% | 8 |
| Morgantown | 32 | 5 | 16% | 25 | 0 | 0% | 57 | 5 | 9% | 19 |
| Twin Cities | 86 | 13 | 15% | 67 | 0 | 0% | 153 | 13 | 8% | 54 |
| Birmingham | 65 | 8 | 12% | 50 | 0 | 0% | 115 | 8 | 7% | 54 |
| Houston | 45 | 5 | 11% | 32 | 0 | 0% | 77 | 5 | 6% | 35 |
| Newark | 171 | 16 | 9% | 133 | 0 | 0% | 304 | 16 | 5% | 97 |
| Pittsburgh | 63 | 2 | 3% | 49 | 0 | 0% | 112 | 2 | 2% | 35 |
| Seattle* | 80 | 0 | 0% | 60 | 1 | 2% | 140 | 1 | 1% | 61 |
| Cleveland* | 50 | 0 | 0% | 40 | 0 | 0% | 90 | 0 | 0% | 18 |
| Total | 1694 | 315 | 18% | 1355 | 126 | 9% | 3049 | 441 | 14% | 987 |
| Goal/Should be | 1800 | 540 | 30% | 1400 | 420 | 30% | 3200 | 960 | 30% | |

* no new report

Pathfinder books sold to Co-workers

| Unions | Goal | Sold | % sold | Readers Club |
|-----------------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|
| Canada | | | | |
| IAM | 13 | 1 | 8% | 3 |
| United Kingdom | | | | |
| AEEU | 10 | 2 | 20% | 1 |
| TCWU | 7 | 0 | 0% | 0 |
| RMT | 0 | 0 | 0% | 1 |
| UK Total | 17 | 2 | 12% | 2 |
| United States | | | | |
| UAW | 100 | 25 | 25% | 49 |
| UMWA | 5 | 3 | 60% | 7 |
| UTU | 85 | 12 | 14% | 40 |
| OCAW | 48 | 4 | 8% | 27 |
| USWA | 58 | 3 | 5% | 13 |
| UFCW* | 6 | 0 | 0% | 0 |
| UNITE* | 42 | 0 | 0% | 7 |
| IAM* | 71 | 0 | 0% | 19 |
| Total | 315 | 47 | 12% | 113 |
| Goal/Should be | 400 | 120 | 30% | |

* No new report

As of 6/9

IAM—International Association of Machinists; OCAW—Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; UAW—United Auto Workers; UFCW—United Food and Commercial Workers; UMWA—United Mine Workers of America; UNITE—Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees; USWA—United Steelworkers of America; UTU—

will be useful to highlight. These include *Counter-Mobilization: A Strategy to Fight Racist and Fascist Attacks*, and *From Mississippi to Boston: The Demand for Troops to Enforce Civil Rights*, both published as part of the Education for Socialists series.

Militant Subscription Drive MAY 11 — JUNE 16, 1996

| Countries/Cities | Militant | | % Goal | PM | | NI | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | Goal | Sold | | Goal | Sold | Goal | Sold |
| Australia | 10 | 9 | 90% | 3 | 2 | 5 | 4 |
| Canada | | | | | | | |
| Montreal | 25 | 7 | 28% | 8 | 0 | 35 | 20 |
| Vancouver | 20 | 7 | 35% | 3 | 4 | 10 | 8 |
| Toronto | 45 | 12 | 27% | 10 | 7 | 20 | 14 |
| Total | 90 | 13 | 14% | 21 | 11 | 65 | 42 |
| France | 5 | 1 | 20% | 5 | 0 | 10 | 2 |
| Greece | 3 | 0 | 0% | | | 3 | 1 |
| Iceland | 10 | 2 | 20% | 0 | 1 | 10 | 2 |
| New Zealand | | | | | | | |
| Christchurch | 12 | 8 | 67% | 1 | 0 | 3 | 2 |
| Auckland | 30 | 18 | 60% | 2 | 2 | 4 | 5 |
| Total | 42 | 26 | 62% | 3 | 2 | 7 | 7 |
| Sweden | 10 | 8 | 80% | 8 | 4 | 6 | 12 |
| United Kingdom | | | | | | | |
| London | 20 | 13 | 65% | 20 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| Manchester | 26 | 3 | 12% | 2 | 0 | 15 | 3 |
| Sheffield | 2 | | | 1 | | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 46 | 18 | 39% | 22 | 3 | 18 | 6 |
| United States | | | | | | | |
| Greensboro, NC | 30 | 23 | 77% | 5 | 8 | 5 | 4 |
| San Francisco | 60 | 44 | 73% | 20 | 15 | 40 | 16 |
| Atlanta | 27 | 18 | 67% | 10 | 9 | 8 | 6 |
| Miami | 35 | 23 | 66% | 15 | 9 | 15 | 7 |
| Seattle | 50 | 32 | 64% | 10 | 2 | 15 | 0 |
| Twin Cities, MN | 55 | 35 | 64% | 20 | 18 | 20 | 13 |
| Los Angeles | 60 | 36 | 60% | 30 | 26 | 30 | 21 |
| Philadelphia | 40 | 23 | 58% | 10 | 6 | 12 | 0 |
| Detroit | 50 | 28 | 56% | 8 | 6 | 15 | 8 |
| Birmingham, AL | 35 | 18 | 51% | 7 | 3 | 20 | 0 |
| Brooklyn | 75 | 34 | 45% | 35 | 13 | 35 | 10 |
| Washington, DC | 30 | 13 | 43% | 10 | 6 | 10 | 7 |
| Salt Lake City | 42 | 16 | 38% | 12 | 8 | 21 | 4 |
| New York | 70 | 26 | 37% | 40 | 14 | 35 | 7 |
| Des Moines | 30 | 11 | 37% | 20 | 8 | 15 | 0 |
| Peoria, IL | 15 | 5 | 33% | 2 | 1 | 5 | 0 |
| Pittsburgh | 40 | 13 | 33% | 5 | 2 | 10 | 0 |
| Cleveland | 20 | 6 | 30% | 6 | 2 | 5 | 2 |
| Chicago | 40 | 11 | 28% | 20 | 6 | 12 | 5 |
| Houston | 30 | 8 | 27% | 10 | 0 | 8 | 0 |
| Newark, NJ | 80 | 16 | 20% | 30 | 12 | 30 | 0 |
| Boston | 40 | 7 | 18% | 10 | 0 | 20 | 0 |
| Morgantown, WV | 21 | 2 | 10% | 1 | 0 | 6 | 0 |
| Cincinnati | 3 | | | | | | |
| Total U.S. | 975 | 451 | 46% | 336 | 213 | 392 | 241 |
| International Totals | 1191 | 528 | 48% | 398 | 236 | 516 | 317 |
| Goal/Should be at | 1100 | 880 | 80% | 350 | 280 | 400 | 320 |
| IN THE UNIONS | | | | | | | |
| Canada | | | | | | | |
| IAM | 10 | 3 | 30% | 3 | 0 | 6 | 4 |
| New Zealand | | | | | | | |
| Meat Workers | 4 | 3 | 75% | | | | |
| United Food&Bev. | 4 | 1 | 25% | | | | |
| Engineers Union | 7 | 0 | 0% | | | | |
| NZ Total | 15 | 4 | 27% | | | | |
| United States | | | | | | | |
| UMWA | 5 | 3 | 60% | 0 | 0 | 5 | 1 |
| UFCW | 5 | 3 | 60% | 7 | 3 | 7 | 0 |
| UAW | 75 | 33 | 44% | 15 | 3 | 35 | 15 |
| UNITE | 25 | 9 | 36% | 10 | 2 | 10 | 4 |
| OCAW | 35 | 12 | 34% | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| USWA | 45 | 10 | 22% | 5 | 6 | 35 | 4 |
| UTU | 60 | 8 | 13% | 5 | 0 | 30 | 6 |
| IAM | 56 | 4 | 7% | 16 | 2 | 26 | 2 |
| U.S. Total | 306 | 82 | 27% | 58 | 17 | 148 | 34 |
| International Totals | 331 | 89 | 26% | 61 | 14 | 154 | 32 |

Activists say 'free Puerto Rican fighters'

BY RON RICHARDS

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — Activists are waging a campaign to free 15 Puerto Rican patriots held in jails in the United States. The effort is growing here, in Puerto Rican communities in the United States, and elsewhere. The harsh sentences that the prisoners received has led some political figures who oppose independence for this U.S. colony to support their release as a gesture of reconciliation. They were not convicted of killing anyone but have served more time in prison than the average convicted murderer. The majority of the 15 have been incarcerated for 16 years on charges of seditious conspiracy.

More than 100 people gathered on two days' notice here to attend a public forum to demand freedom for these prisoners. The principal speaker was U.S. Congressman Luis Gutiérrez from Chicago. The April 22 forum was sponsored by the Journalists Association and was held at the offices of the Bar Association.

Other speakers at the meeting included Chicago alderman Billy Ocasio, Cook County commissioner Roberto Maldonado and attorney Jan Susler, who represents the prisoners. In the U.S. Congress support for the release of the 15 has come from Representatives Nydia Velázquez and José Serrano, both of whom were born in Puerto Rico and represent districts in New York City. The city council of New York has also supported the release of the prisoners.

Since the meeting the mayor of San Juan, Hector Luis Acevedo, signed the open letter to President Clinton and the Mayagüez municipal assembly approved a resolution calling for the release of the prisoners.

Step up campaign in Puerto Rico

Part of the meeting was a discussion of the need to step up activities in Puerto Rico in support of these fighters. Up to this point, the campaign has largely been based out of Chicago. Campaign leader Luis Nieves spoke about plans to organize door-to-door activities. Since the meeting, it has been

announced there will be a march on July 4 in support of their release.

Radio announcements are being aired by well known musician Willie Colón, asking people to write Clinton demanding the release of the prisoners. The goal is to create a campaign similar to the one that forced Washington to release several nationalist prisoners in 1979. These activists were in U.S. prisons for more than 25 years for launching attacks on the temporary residence of U.S. president Harry Truman and the U.S. Congress.

The 15 prisoners currently held in the United States include two of the "Hartford 15" defendants. In that case, 15 independentistas were arrested in 1985-86 and charged with being members of the *Macheteros* (the machete wielders); organizing the robbery of \$7 million from a Wells Fargo armored car in Hartford, Connecticut; and using the money to fund revolutionary activities including giving toys to poor children.

Virtually none of the money was ever recovered. They were convicted with wiretaps that are illegal under the Puerto Rican constitution. The federal cops say they are not bound by the Puerto Rican constitution even though it was approved by the U.S. Congress.

The other 13 prisoners were arrested in the early 1980s and were accused of membership in the Armed Forces of National Liberation (FALN). The FALN had taken credit for a number of armed attacks in the United States but none of the people in prison were charged in those attacks. Eleven of them lived in the district in Chicago that Gutiérrez represents. They were well known in the Puerto Rican community as fighters against racism and for social justice.

Although Washington claims these pris-



Militant/ Susan Apstein
March in August 1986 demanding freedom for Puerto Rican fighters in U.S. jails. The banner reads 'Freedom for Puerto Rican political prisoners; Independence for Puerto Rico.'

oners are just like others, they are treated harsher than the average inmate. Federal law allows prisoners to receive passes to attend dying relatives or funerals but the Puerto Rican prisoners have been denied this right. Federal regulations also state that prisoners should be kept close to their families but this rule is also violated. Adolfo Matos is jailed in California and his family lives in New York. Antonio Camacho is incarcerated in Pennsylvania, while his family lives in Puerto Rico. In some cases the prisoners have been transferred to other states with no notice. In 1981 Elizam Escobar was transferred to another prison in the middle of a multi-day visit by his family.

Amnesty International denounced the maximum security conditions under which some Puerto Rican fighters have been held.

"The conditions and the regiment are deliberately and gratuitously oppressive. The constant and unjustified use of chains, the repeated strip searches, the almost total absence of privacy, the claustrophobic absence of sensory stimulation, the restriction of freedom of movement, the absence of liberty to choose their own activities and the limited range of contacts cannot be other

than to crush them," a report issued by the group stated. "The [maximum security] unit should be closed immediately."

Under the pressure of groups like Amnesty International the unit in question was closed and the conditions for the prisoners has improved marginally.

In 1987 the family of Edwin Cortés was traveling from Chicago to Pennsylvania to visit him in prison when they had an automobile accident. As a result his brother, Julio, was confined to a wheelchair. Julio can no longer visit his brother in prison because the visiting room of the prison is on the second floor and is not wheelchair accessible.

The campaign to support the release of the prisoners has gained some international support. Two winners of the Nobel Peace Prize, South African archbishop Desmond Tutu and Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, have endorsed the campaign as has Coretta Scott King, the widow of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

Within Puerto Rico the supporters of the campaign include leaders of all three political parties that appear on the ballot. Religious groups supporting the campaign include the Episcopal, Baptist, Evangelical and Disciples of Christ churches. Many of these people and groups were listed in an open letter to President Clinton that was published in the *New York Times*.

Only one prominent politician in Puerto Rico has attacked the campaign to free the prisoners. Resident Commissioner Carlos Romero said they should not be released unless they show repentance. The Resident Commissioner is elected by the voters of Puerto Rico and is a non-voting member of the House of Representatives of the United States. Romero was governor when the 1970s campaign to free the nationalist prisoners succeeded in forcing Washington to do so. He opposed that campaign as well.

From the pages of the *Peoria Journal Star*, Tuesday, May 28, 1996

Little shop of socialists

□ The bookstore is called Pathfinder, and its specialty is the ideas of famed revolutionaries

By PAM ADAMS
of the *Journal Star*

Tucked away in a small shopping plaza at the corner of Western Avenue and Main Street, between window signs for Classic Concepts (sculptured nails and hair design) and VCR Repair (free estimates, all models), there is a small shop whose window display offers a stark contrast to the wonders of free market enterprise.

The window, covered with posters and books such as "Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War," "Teamster Rebellion," and "Imperialism's March toward Fascism & War," is home to Pathfinder Bookstore, which, as its brochures say, is "a center for political books and discussion."

You might say Caterpillar Inc. in Peoria, and A.E. Staley and Bridgestone Tire Co. in Decatur, indirectly helped bring this non-profit bookstore to Peoria.

Several members of the store's small volunteer staff moved here in the last few years because of the area's labor struggles. Members of the Socialist Workers' Party, for the most part, they have found jobs and joined union locals, seeing the area as fertile ground for working-class political struggle. And James Harris, of Atlanta, the SWP candidate for president, spent several months here establishing a branch during the Caterpillar strike.

Bookstore manager David

Marshall downplays the SWP affiliation because other volunteers are not members of the party and Pathfinder offers a wide variety of titles.

"The breadth of what we offer is so much greater than any particular party," he says.

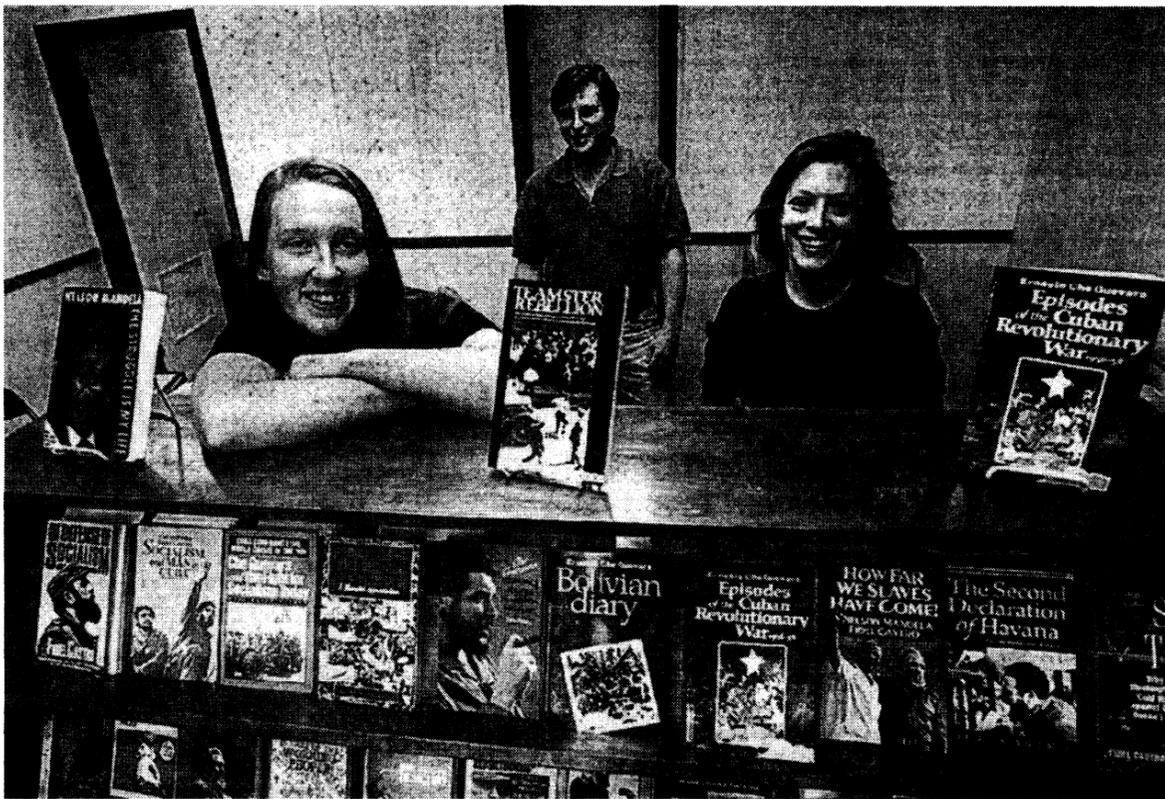
The bookstore, which opened early this month, is one of 35 others in the country devoted to selling books published by Pathfinder Press. The publisher, based in New York, is known for publishing speeches and writings of revolutionaries and intellectuals, including Che Guevara, Fidel Castro, Mother Jones, W.E.B. DuBois, Malcolm X, Nelson Mandela, Farrell Dobbs, Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky.

"What all of the writers whose books we publish have in common is the fact they believed and fought for the rights and ability of ordinary working people to take political power and use it to advance their own power," Marshall says.

But volunteers believe the books dealing with the history of trade unions and labor struggle spark the most interest in the area.

"This is a place that can really use this history," says Meg Novak, who recently moved here from Seattle. "Unionists need to know our history."

Angel Lariscy, a volunteer who worked at Archer Daniels Midland Co. until recently, recounts how ADM employees are a unique group that includes laid-off Cat workers, people who crossed United



Meg Novak, left, David Marshall, center, and Angel Lariscy are three of the eight volunteers who staff and run the newly opened Pathfinder Bookstore, 915 N. Western Ave. The bookstore specializes in works by revolutionaries, intellectuals and labor leaders.

Store sponsors political discussions

Pathfinder Bookstore, 915 N. Western Ave., describes itself as a "center for political books and discussion."

The discussion part is a regular Friday night forum sponsored by "The Militant," a news weekly.

Upcoming discussions include a panel June 7 focusing on sexual harassment allegations at the Mitsubishi

auto plant; and a talk June 15 with James Harris of Atlanta, the Socialist Worker Party's candidate for president.

The bookstore's regular hours are 5 to 7 p.m. Wednesdays; 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 5 to 7 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays; 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturdays and noon to 2 p.m. Sundays.

Auto Workers' picket lines during the strike, and former mine workers.

"This makes them much more receptive to talking

about working-class issues," she says.

But the socialist press, like publishers with a profit motive, has to work at increasing sales.

A recent issue of the socialist weekly newspaper, "The Militant," editorialized about efforts to sell more books published by Pathfinder and to increase the weekly's subscriptions.

"Socialists who are in the industrial unions are getting more books by revolutionary fighters and about working-class struggles into their co-workers' hands each month. They are beginning to reach out broadly in working-class neighborhoods and on campuses. . . Selling subscriptions to those who've been buying Pathfinder books will help them understand and act in today's politics."

Other articles in the same issue listed monthly goals and sales of Pathfinder books city

by city. Peoria met 72 percent of its monthly sales' goal shortly before the bookstore opened. The figure includes 28 Pathfinder books sold through commercial distributors and 18 sold by volunteers.

"The Militant" and "Granma International," a Cuban newspaper, are also available at the bookstore.

John Greiner of the Peoria Peace Network was among those long-time Peorians who signed a letter welcoming the bookstore to town.

Though Greiner is not exactly bowled over by Pathfinder's ideology, he says he welcomed them out of respect for the written word.

"If people can't read Trotsky or any other propaganda and survive it, then we're in bad shape."

Washington asserts domination in Europe

NATO meeting reveals growing strains within Atlantic imperialist alliance

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

"The U.S. will continue to be involved in all the crises NATO will face in the future," said State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns. "The U.S. considers itself to be a European power." Burns made these comments after the June 3 meeting of the foreign ministers of NATO member countries, which took place in Berlin.

The gathering highlighted the strains among the competing imperialist states in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization as Washington asserted once again its political and military domination in Europe. Headlines in the big-business press tried to paint a picture of a "refashioned" and perhaps more united NATO as a result of this meeting. But what one can point to in the aftermath of Berlin are the ongoing attempts of a declining British empire to hang on to Washington's military coattails in Europe to confront a fledgling Franco-German bloc led by Bonn.

The Berlin assembly, and other international gatherings that dealt with similar questions this spring, also confirmed that the initial euphoria of the exploiting classes over the post-1989 attempts to re-establish capitalism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union evaporated long ago.

Giving the appearance of concessions to French demands, Washington agreed in Berlin that NATO may occasionally supply the Western European Union (WEU) — which Paris and Bonn are pushing as the emerging military arm of capitalist powers in western Europe — military forces and equipment for European-only actions. But this U.S. military hardware can only be used to carry out "humanitarian relief" and "search-and-rescue" operations, and low-intensity "peacekeeping" missions.

'WEU not suitable for combat'

"I don't see any serious possibility that the WEU could be suitable to carry out a serious combat-related task," commented British foreign secretary Malcolm Rifkind.

All 16 NATO member states will have to approve NATO participation in any operations initiated by European governments, which means the Pentagon maintains its veto power. An article in the June 4 *Financial Times* said the agreement states that "the U.S.-led bloc would 'keep under review' the way its assets were being deployed." Furthermore, any military mission must be directed by NATO's commanding officer, always a U.S. general.

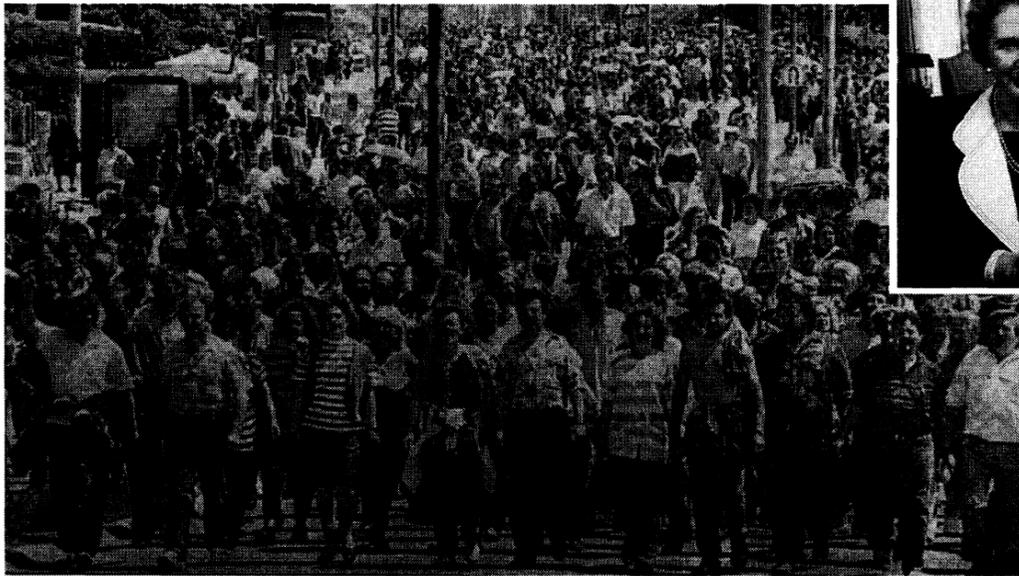
French foreign minister Hervé de Charette made it clear after this meeting that his government will not fully rejoin NATO's military structure until Washington allows its allies in Europe a greater role in organizing military operations.

In a recognition of U.S. dominance in Europe, Paris announced six months ago it will begin the process of rejoining NATO's military wing. France pulled out of NATO in 1966, under Charles de Gaulle's presidency, over U.S. rejection of giving any real decision making power to European governments within the Atlantic alliance.

At the same time, the recent NATO meeting helped spur closer military cooperation between Paris and Bonn. During a Franco-German summit on June 5, just two days after Berlin, French president Jacques Chirac and German chancellor Helmut Kohl pledged to give a "new push" to their military alliance "in a European perspective." This will include new elaboration of joint military strategies and a possible upgrade of their 27 bilateral arms programs.

Battle focused on Central Europe

While in Berlin, Charette insinuated that Paris wrested concessions from Washington by threatening to block attempts to enlarge NATO. The U.S. government has strongly supported admitting the former Warsaw Pact members in Central Europe — Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic — to the Atlantic alliance. "I don't see how



Margaret Thatcher, inset, speaking in Fulton, Missouri, said end of Cold War has ushered instability. Attempts to reimpose capitalism in Eastern Europe have had "little appeal to ordinary people." Above, over 10,000 workers march in Nis, Yugoslavia, May 13 demanding back pay and work.

enlargement could progress on the basis of rejection of France's proposals," the French foreign minister said.

Probes by Washington to incorporate these workers states into NATO have also run into fierce opposition by Moscow.

During a visit to Prague in mid-March, U.S. secretary of state Warren Christopher said NATO enlargement was "on track and will happen." General Pavel Grachev, Russia's defense minister, responded a week later that NATO expansion was the biggest threat to his country's security and called for a coordinated campaign among the former Soviet republics against enlargement.

The day after the Berlin meeting, Kohl urged other members of the Atlantic alliance to take into account Moscow's concern over the possible establishment of NATO structures near Russia's borders. "We want solutions which Russia, Ukraine and our [eastern] neighbors can accept," the German chancellor said.

U.S. and British representatives pushed in a different direction, a stance that is bound to exacerbate conflicts with the Russian government. Prominent conservative politicians from Britain and the United States were among the main sponsors and participants at a May 10-12 conference in Prague dubbed "New Atlantic Initiative." Former British prime minister Margaret Thatcher and Henry Kissinger, former U.S. secretary of state under Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford, topped the list of honored guests. Thatcher, in particular, pushed for integration of Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic into NATO. Her remarks in Prague echoed the themes of a speech she gave earlier this spring in the United States.

No 'New World Order' but instability

While the real conflicts between the imperialist powers and the long-term stakes are often veiled, Thatcher dealt with them with characteristic bluntness in her U.S. speech. She spoke at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri, on March 9. The occasion was the 50th anniversary of the address by her predecessor Winston Churchill on the same site.

In that talk, misnamed the "Sinews of Peace," Churchill declared that an "iron curtain" had descended across Europe. He was referring to the Soviet victory in World War II and the subsequent establishment of workers states in Central and Eastern Europe that closed off large hunks of the continent to capitalist exploitation. Churchill called for a "special relationship" between London and Washington that would form the core of an imperialist military alliance in Europe to contain any extension of the revolutionary overturn of capitalist property relations. The British prime minister also advocated maintaining a monopoly of atomic weapons within North America and the United Kingdom.

"Just as Churchill had broken the euphoria and warned of dangers in the aftermath of the Second World War his heir [Thatcher]... warned of dangers in the aftermath of the Cold War," noted an article in the April 8 *National Review*, a right-wing U.S. magazine.

"The long twilight struggle of the Cold

War ended five years ago," Thatcher said. "It ended amid high hopes of a New World Order. But those hopes have been grievously disappointed. Somalia, Bosnia, and the rise of Islamic militancy all point to instability and conflict rather than cooperation and harmony.

"The international bodies, in which our hopes were reposed anew after 1989 and 1991," said the right-wing politician, referring mainly to the United Nations and the European Union, "have given us neither prosperity nor security. There is a pervasive anxiety about the drift of events."

The period known as the Cold War was enunciated by U.S. president Harry Truman in a 1947 speech launching a massive military aid program to the rightist regime in Greece, which was threatened by a worker and peasant uprising. The policy outlined in that speech, which became known as the Truman Doctrine, sought to prevent the spread of anticapitalist revolutions like those that took place in Yugoslavia in 1945-46 and later in China.

During that period Washington devoted huge resources, both economic and military, to exert pressure on the workers states of Eastern and Central Europe, the Soviet Union, China, and elsewhere. An integral part of this effort was Washington's second militarization drive, the first being the U.S. military buildup in World War II. With the second interimperialist slaughter barely over, the U.S. rulers, who emerged supreme with Japan's surrender in 1945, felt the need to put back together a military force that could be used against the struggles of workers and peasants the world over.

NATO was founded in 1949 with this aim, codifying Washington's immense economic and military superiority in Europe in the aftermath of World War II. Hundreds of thousands of U.S. troops, a string of ground and air military bases across western Europe, and the U.S. sixth fleet based in the Mediterranean remain today the cornerstone of U.S. dominance in Europe.

Capitalism not re-established in Russia

The crumbling of the Stalinist regimes in Eastern Europe and the USSR at the onset of the 1990s marked the end of the cold war.



These events have created problems for imperialism by producing "violence" and "instability," Thatcher said.

"Market reforms" by Russian president Boris Yeltsin and other pro-capitalist politicians in Eastern and Central Europe have not led to re-establishment of capitalism and bourgeois democracy but to a lowering of the

standard of living that is despised by most working people.

"The absence of the legal and customary foundations of a free economy led to a distorted 'robber capitalism,'" she said, "with little appeal to ordinary people."

Thatcher's warnings were reminiscent of statements by former U.S. president Richard Nixon four years ago. "The United States and the West risk snatching defeat in the cold war from the jaws of victory," wrote Nixon in a 1992 memorandum entitled "How to Lose the Cold War."

Nixon assailed the administration of George Bush for meager aid to Yeltsin, whom he called the most pro-Western leader of Russia in history. "U.S. aid and investments in Russia, he said, are 'pathetically inadequate.'" He proposed pouring in aid funds in the range of \$20 billion a year for a five-year period.

Nixon's calls went unheeded. While capitalist investments continued to trickle into Russia, they have been very low compared to those in Eastern and Central Europe. From January 1991 to October 1995, foreign investments in Russia, with 148 million people, amounted to \$4.9 billion. Hungary, with 10 million citizens, received twice as much in the same period.

Meanwhile, conditions of life and toil for working people in Russia have continued to worsen. Life expectancy for men dropped from 63.8 years in 1990 to 58 years in 1995. The mortality rate per 1,000 people soared from 11.2 in 1990 to 15.7 in 1994. Unemployment has risen from 7.5 percent to 8.2 percent, while real wages for Russian workers plunged 13 percent last year. Millions of workers are frequently not paid on time, while prices of basic goods have soared. More than 500,000 teachers went on strike last September to protest unpaid wages and low pay.

In his election campaign against Yeltsin, Communist Party candidate Gennady Zyuganov has been exploiting the resulting discontent among working people in Russia. Thatcher described attitudes of workers opposed to the effects of "market reforms" as "an irrational nostalgia for a totalitarian order without totalitarian methods."

Moscow is increasingly becoming hostile to Washington, Thatcher warned. "Whoever wins the forthcoming Russian elections will almost certainly institute a more assertive foreign policy, one less friendly to the U.S."

"A revival of Russian power," she stated, "will create new problems — just when the world is struggling to cope with problems which the Soviet collapse has itself created outside the old borders of the USSR."

"The world remains a very dangerous place," Thatcher said, "menaced by more unstable and complex threats than a decade

Continued on Page 11

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Cuban doctors lend a hand in rural S. Africa

BY GREG ROSENBERG

NKANDLA, South Africa — High atop a mountain in the verdant landscape of northern KwaZulu-Natal province lies Ekombe Hospital. The 170-bed complex, run by the South African government, is the only full-service medical facility in reach for tens of thousands of blacks living in destitute rural villages that dot this rolling countryside. For more than two years, Ekombe had no doctor. In February, Dr. Abel González and a colleague arrived to assume full-time duties — from Cuba.

"The people here have good opinions of us," said González in an interview. The Cubans were greeted on arrival by ululating workers from the hospital kitchen. Ekombe — some 40 kilometers from the nearest paved road — lies in the heart of the old apartheid KwaZulu "homeland." The region is associated with strong support for the Inkatha Freedom Party, which actively opposed the deployment of Cuban doctors in South Africa. "I like to work in Africa," said González, who comes from Las Tunas province in Cuba, specializing in obstetrics and gynecology. "The people are suffering too much. Tuberculosis is very common here. The TB ward is full — all 30 beds."

An average of 100 people a day make their way to the hospital. González stressed that having trained doctors posted at this facility could often make the difference between life and death. "For example, in late April there was a big accident here involving a minibus taxi. Eight people were hurt and one killed. Without a doctor two or three more would have died."

Volunteered on request of ANC

González is one of 96 Cuban doctors working at hospitals and clinics throughout South Africa — 12 of them in this province. The Cubans volunteered for duty at the request of the African National Congress (ANC)-led government to provide health care in rural areas that face a critical shortage of trained physicians.

"We have economic problems in Cuba, due fundamentally to the U.S. government blockade of our country," González said. In addition to his first concern — providing medical care to those who need it — the doctor said that "my visit here permits me to help my country and my family." He sends the Cuban government and family members a portion of his salary, which is too low for many South African doctors who have left the state hospitals to seek more

lucrative employment in the private sector.

"Cuba helps many countries in Africa with health care," González said, consistent with the revolution's course of aiding the oppressed throughout the world. "Cuban blood was spilled in Africa. Many Cubans died fighting the [former] South African army in Angola. But without that, there would have been no liberation of Namibia — and no president Mandela."

Expansion of free health care

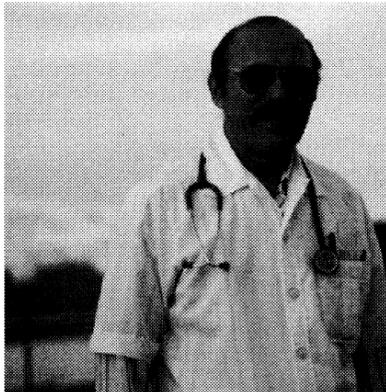
Lulu Madalane, coordinator of health policy for the ANC, enthusiastically offered to drive this reporter to visit another Cuban doctor working in Sebokeng township in Gauteng province. She reported that due to legislation enacted earlier this year, primary health care is now by law free to all South Africans. The challenge, Madalane stressed, is making that medical care accessible to all, especially in rural areas.

In the three years leading up to May, 3,411 nurses in Gauteng alone resigned from government hospitals. Most joined the exodus to the private sector in search of higher pay. Nearly 800 of the most experienced nurses quit their jobs in the past year. Plans are already under way to build new clinics and deploy mobile health centers in sprawling squatter camps that continue to grow throughout South Africa, as well as train more community health workers. In addition, the primary school feeding program, an initiative of the ANC, provides meals to 5.5 million schoolchildren free of charge.

"Bringing Cuban doctors here was an initiative of the ANC long before it got to government," she said. "Cuba offered, as did few other countries."

Madalane, one of the thousands of ANC members who went into exile as part of the battle to overturn apartheid, recalled the impact of hearing of the Cuban internationalist troops in Africa. Hundreds of thousands of Cubans volunteered to fight in Angola from the mid-1970s to the late 1980s, helping to repel successive South African invasions of that newly independent country.

Madalane was in Tanzania when she



Militant/Greg Rosenberg

Abel González, left, is one of 96 Cuban doctors who have already arrived to help staff hospitals in rural South Africa. Above are Cuban doctor Norys Mayo Castro (left) and Lulu Madalane, ANC health policy coordinator.

heard of the defeat inflicted on Pretoria's armies at Cuito Cuanavale in southern Angola in 1988. "This humiliated the racists," she said. "They thought they were the bosses around southern Africa and suddenly discovered they weren't — they were dying on the battlefield. They still don't want to talk about it! That history has to be taught in South Africa. Many of our own people still don't know," she concluded.

South African health minister Nkosazana Zuma announced June 3 that an additional 200 Cuban doctors would arrive this month to bolster the free health care program. Discussions are also being held with several European governments to see if their assistance can be secured.

'I want to help the people'

Norys Mayo Castro, who also hails from the Cuban province of Las Tunas, is the only physician at Empilisweni clinic, which serves the population of Sebokeng.

"I came to help the people," said the 30-year-old Mayo. The Cuban health ministry, she said, had last year asked for volunteers to work in rural South Africa. Those who offered to help had to pass a battery of exams, which included basic English, and tests of medical knowledge. Most, Mayo said, had previously served in Africa.

"The condition of the people varies. Some are very good. But many are very, very bad. We came to help the latter group. Especially those living in shacks — they have nothing.

"People come in with respiratory infections, especially tuberculosis, a number one health problem in South Africa. There are sexually transmitted diseases, malnutrition, and pregnant women with anemia.

"In Cuba," Mayo pointed out, "we provide preventative care. But here it's curative. I've tried to educate about preventa-

tive care, but it's not easy because of the living conditions. We must talk to the people about food, rest, vitamins. In Cuba, for instance, we provide vitamins to all pregnant women.

In April, Mayo saw 995 patients, and reported that in May the figure would rise.

Mayo added that in Cuba, she is a family doctor. "I would never have so many patients in a month. But I know everybody in my neighborhood — their diseases and histories. People with chronic illnesses are seen every three months. The healthy are seen twice a year."

Some nights, Mayo works at nearby Sebokeng Hospital. "There are many people with inflicted wounds, especially on the weekends, from bullets and knives. Wounds to the chest, back and abdomen. I saw some wounds like these when I worked in Zambia for two years — but I've never seen these wounds in Cuba.

Like González, Mayo is on duty six days a week, but in practice often works every day. She is the only doctor at the clinic. Primary health-care nurses are being trained to treat conditions like flu and hypertension. Both doctors report the supply of medicines and equipment is largely adequate to treat patients. Mayo sends 30 percent of her salary to the Cuban government and 27 percent to her family. The doctor is excited about a project she plans to initiate in the near future to begin making calls to people's houses and shacks in Sebokeng to carry out preventative treatment of tuberculosis.

People begin lining up as early as 4:00 in the morning at Empilisweni to see the doctor. "It is so crowded that sometimes they go home without seeing anyone. Sometimes it is not possible," Mayo said. "Cuba is not a rich country, but it is a medical power. In Cuba, I never turned anybody away. We are a socialist country."

U.S.-Cuba Youth Exchange gains momentum

BY BRIAN TAYLOR

NEW YORK — "Support the U.S.-Cuba Youth Exchange and help send youth to Cuba!" That's what Jason Corley said to spectators while marching in the Puerto Rican Day Parade June 9. Over a half a million people turned out for the event. As the July 1 deadline to have applications and money turned in for the Youth Exchange comes closer, young people throughout the country are reaching out to publicize, expand participation in, raise funds, and get endorsements for the trip to Cuba.

According to the Cuba Information Project, which organizes travel for the trip, over 130 youth had applied by June 10.

Seven people from the New York U.S.-

Cuba Youth Exchange marched in the parade together with the Housing Works contingent. The Housing works activists were focusing on AIDS and its effects in the Latino community, as well as protesting a ban on political issues by march organizers. All organizations with political messages were denied official access, so a few joined other contingents that were sympathetic.

A couple of the activists planning to go to Cuba received a good response from members of the ProLibertad Campaign, which is fighting for the release of all Puerto Rican political prisoners. Activists collected about \$25 in donations for their trip to Cuba in milk jugs labeled "Go See Cuba for Your-

self" as they passed out hundreds of flyers to marchers and observers.

"When was the last time you've been to Cuba?" barked a Cuban-American who opposed the Cuban revolution. He jumped over the police barrier, charged at the contingent, and began shouting, poking and pushing on the banner holders.

Almost immediately, marchers from the Nietos and Young Lords contingents and several others came to defend the Youth Exchange. "Back up man, they can be here like anybody else can!" shouted a youth from Nietos. Some of the spectators yelled, "Leave 'em alone." With this show of solidarity, the right-winger was subdued and the police, who watched the entire event transpire without intervening, eventually removed him.

"This past weekend marked a large success," said Ryan Lewis, referring to work being done in Cleveland. Activists building the Youth Exchange set up a literature table outside of the Labor Party Advocates convention there June 7-9. "We distributed several packets put together for donations," he said. One packet contained the thesis of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC) and a series of articles from the *Militant* newspaper covering the 17th Congress of the CTC which took place several weeks ago. The other was a collection of articles on the May Day mobilizations in Cuba, speeches by leaders of the Cuban Revolution, and information on the Youth Exchange. Young people planning to go to Cuba sold raffle tickets at a reportback meeting from the CTC congress June 9, which

were part of raising \$110 toward the trip over the weekend.

"Another victory was achieved when a young steelworker from Warren decided to come to Cuba with us," Lewis said. "He considered the chance to see Cuba a 'once in a lifetime opportunity,' and said if he couldn't get time off his job, he would quit it." Altogether, there are now four people in Cleveland going on the Youth Exchange.

Aislinn Pulley, a leader of the local Youth Exchange committee in Chicago reports that three people there are going on the trip so far. They are planning a host of events to raise money, including a June 16 barbecue and a June 26 showing of *Strawberry and Chocolate*, a popular Cuban film about the experience of homosexuals in Cuba. They also plan to march in the Puerto Rican Day Parade.

In Miami, one new person recently decided to go on the trip. Of the current eight participants, one learned about the youth exchange at a meeting of the Haitian rights group Veye Yo. They will be showing the movie *I am Cuba*, and organizing to have a party to raise money for the trip.

Some of the Youth Exchange participants have taken the initiative to go to national organizations and appeal to them to send delegations and endorse the trip. Reggie Mason of the New York U.S.-Cuba Youth Exchange, also president of the student government at Borough of Manhattan Community College, says he plans to attend the United States Student Association conference this month to put the issue of the Cuba trip on the floor.

Get your application in now for the U.S.-Cuba Youth Exchange

The National Network on Cuba is organizing a delegation of young workers and students from around the United States for a two-week trip to Cuba this summer. The group will spend most of its time in the provinces of Santiago and Guantánamo, with a few days in Havana at the end of the trip. In addition to time spent working with Cubans, participants will visit factories, farms, historic sites, and other places of interest.

The Youth Exchange is open to people between the ages of 15 and 35. The cost is \$855 from Montreal, \$600 from Nassau, Bahamas.

Applications for the trip are due by July 1.



For more information contact:
National Network on Cuba
 c/o Cuba Information Project
 198 Broadway, Suite 800
 New York, NY 10038

Working-class fighters and internationalists

James Harris, a unionist and member of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party, has been involved in the fight for Black rights, in mobilizations against imperialism and its wars, and in working-class politics for over three decades. Harris, 48, is a resident of Atlanta, a worker at the Hormel meatpacking company, and a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers union.

Harris helped initiate recent protests in Atlanta to condemn Washington's threats against Cuba and oppose the bipartisan drive to tighten the economic embargo on that nation. He has led union members of the Socialist Workers Party in stepping up the defense of the socialist revolution in Cuba among co-workers, and in selling revolutionary books and newspapers to fellow unionists.

This past April Harris was part of a delegation of workers from the United States who traveled to Cuba to participate in the 17th Congress of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers. The delegation also visited worksites, talked with fellow unionists in Cuba, and saw first-hand the fighting spirit of workers in Cuba in face of the U.S. threats and embargo.

Harris lived and worked in Detroit in the early 1990s and was a member of the United Auto Workers. He helped build solidarity with struggles by working people such as those of workers on strike against Caterpillar. Harris spent months in Peoria, helping establish a branch of the Socialist Workers Party there in response to the battle by members of the UAW against Caterpillar.

Born into a working-class family in Cleveland, Harris's first political activity was in the civil rights movement. With growing protests against racist discrimination, tens of thousands of Black families in the city staged a school strike in the early 1960s, setting up "Freedom Schools" to study African-American history.

On graduating from high school, Harris attended Cleveland State University, where he was a founding member of the Black Student Union. He organized fellow students into demonstrations opposing the U.S. war against the Vietnamese people as well as actions against racist practices of the college, which then had only a small percentage of Black students. Harris became a member of the Student Mobilization Committee Against the War in Vietnam and later served on its national staff in Washington, D.C.

Shortly afterward he joined and later became a leader of the Young Socialist Alliance. Fielded as a candidate for school board on the Socialist Workers ticket in 1969, he quickly decided to join the SWP.

A supporter of the Cuban revolution, Harris participated in the second Venceremos Brigade to Cuba in 1969 along with hundreds of other youth from the United States. Brigade members cut cane for a couple of months in an effort to maximize sugar production. Working along with Cuban workers and meeting volunteers from Vietnam, Korea, and elsewhere deepened his sense of internationalism.

Harris moved to Atlanta in the early 1970s, and joined in the struggle of the Black commu-

nity against police brutality. At the time a number of young Blacks had been killed by police SWAT units. Later Harris helped mobilize supporters of Black rights in Atlanta to join actions in Boston in defense of the battle for busing and school desegregation.

In 1977 Harris moved to New York to join the staff of the National Student Coalition Against Racism, which had helped lead mobilizations for school desegregation. He became a national chairperson of the coalition.

In the late 1970s the SWP responded to the first signs of growing capitalist economic crisis, employer attacks on the unions, and working-class resistance by organizing to get a big majority of its members into industrial unions. Harris helped lead this effort, becoming a production line worker at the Ford auto plant in Metuchen, New Jersey, in 1978 where he joined the United Auto Workers.

Harris later worked in a garment factory in Los Angeles as the party deepened its industrial turn by building fractions of party members in the garment unions. In Los Angeles he helped the branch reach out to the growing numbers of immigrant workers coming into the United States, and was the chairperson of the party in the city.

He also participated in brigades to defend the Nicaraguan revolution in the mid-1980s, and joined a delegation to visit revolutionary Grenada in the early 1980s to tell the truth about the first revolution in a Black and English-speaking country in the Caribbean.

He has traveled to Trinidad, Grenada, Zimbabwe, and South Africa to get revolutionary literature into the hands of workers and others.

Harris served for a time as the national organization secretary of the SWP. He was a staff writer for the socialist newsweekly *The Militant* in the late 1980s in New York. He helped cover the South African mass battle to bring down apartheid and the strike by members of the International Association of Machinists at Eastern Airlines. In September 1994, Harris traveled to South Africa to attend the Congress of South African Trade Unions convention.

A longtime advocate of independent working-class political action, Harris participated in the National Black Independent Political Party, formed in Philadelphia in November 1980.

Harris is also a member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the Atlanta Network on Cuba.

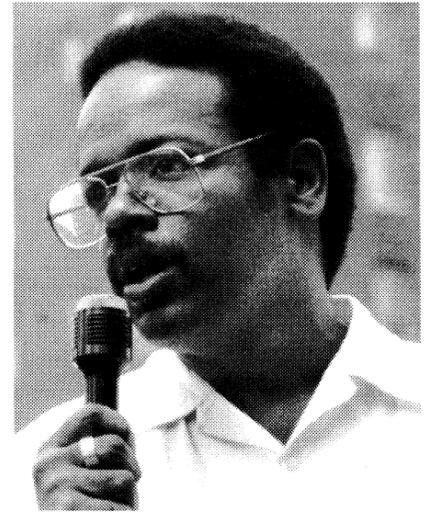
Laura Garza, currently a staff writer for the *Militant*, has a 25-year record in the fight for socialism—from labor struggles to battles for women's emancipation and Chicano liberation.

Prior to New York, Garza lived in Miami, where she was a production worker and member of the United Steelworkers of America. She helped organize meetings and protests against the U.S. embargo of Cuba, for the right to travel to the island, and in defense of free speech in Miami.

Garza visited Cuba several times, helping lead delegations of youth to learn about the revolu-

Join with the Socialist Alternative in 1996

James Harris for U.S. President



Laura Garza for Vice President



tion, and to report for the *Militant* during the "rafters crisis" and subsequent U.S. threats in August 1994. As the Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Miami in 1993, and a year later for U.S. Congress, she participated in debates and was an outspoken defender of the Cuban revolution. She advocated following the same road—that of workers and farmers taking power and overthrowing capitalism—throughout the world.

Garza built protests in support of abortion rights and joined in defending abortion clinics targeted by rightists in Pensacola, Florida, where two doctors and a clinic volunteer were murdered in 1993 and 1994. She joined others in initiating actions against police brutality in Miami and in defending the Haitian refugees and opposing deportation of immigrant workers. Garza opposed the U.S. government support to Haiti's ruling rich and military and stood up against Washington's 1994 invasion and occupation of the country.

Born in New York, Garza, 37, joined class-

mates at her junior high school in a walkout to protest Washington's war on Vietnam. Her family later moved to Chicago, where she involved fellow high school students in the fight for women's rights, getting young women to a conference in support of legalizing abortion. She joined the Young Socialist Alliance during this struggle.

Garza volunteered for months at the Washington, D.C., mobilization office for a march against the moves by the Carter administration to reintroduce the draft, part of Washington's response to the 1979 Iranian revolution and the anti-capitalist revolutions in Grenada and Nicaragua. Garza also joined the staff for a 1980 national mobilization against U.S. intervention in Central America.

She was elected a national officer of the Young Socialist Alliance in 1985, leading the organization in actions to demand that Washington break all ties with the racist regime in South Africa. Garza has traveled widely, helping lead teams of socialists to sell Pathfinder books, the *Militant*, and *Perspectiva Mundial* in Puerto Rico, Mexico, and across the United States. Following a Mexico City book fair last year, she took part in a *Militant* reporting team to Chiapas, where she participated in a peasant congress. She also attended the international women's conference in Beijing last September. Garza is a member of the National Organization for Women, an activist in New York in building solidarity with the Cuban revolution, and a member of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party.

Garza volunteered full-

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The working-class alternative to the

The Socialist Workers candidates for local, statewide, and federal office invite all who want to fight the reactionary policies of the parties of war, racism, and economic depression—the Democrats and Republicans and other “third” parties that accept capitalism—to join in campaigning with us in 1996.

The socialist candidates provide a working-class voice in this campaign. We advocate working people chart a political course independent of the two major capitalist parties. We need to rely on our own collective power, our unions, and actions in the streets to advance our interests as a class.

Our campaign stands with the struggles of the oppressed and exploited against the increasingly brutal assault by the wealthy minority the world over. We wholeheartedly and unconditionally support the right of Cuba to defend its sovereignty and socialism. We back the actions of the oppressed in this country, and stand shoulder to shoulder with all those who are fighting to lift up their conditions of life and labor.

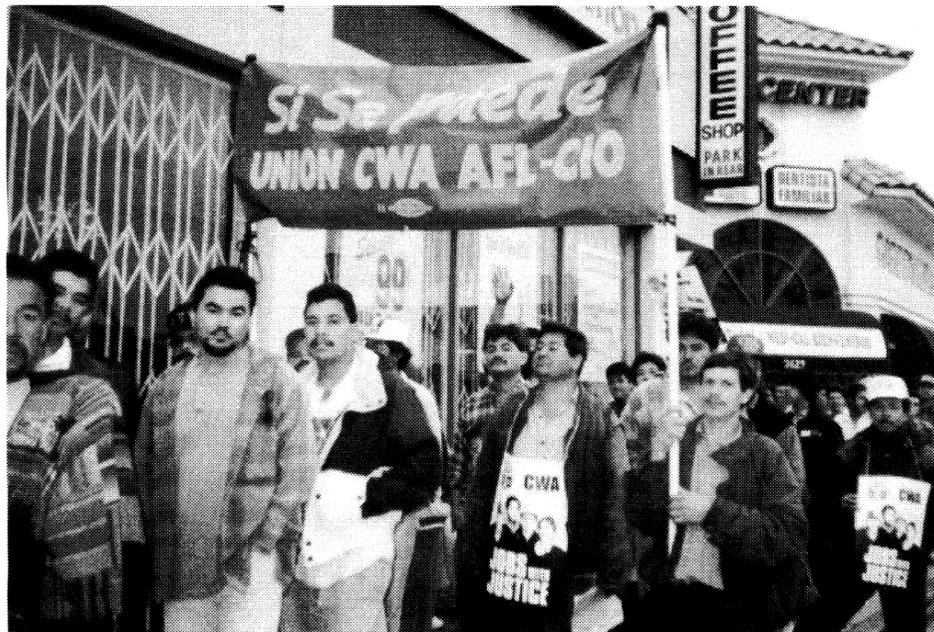
We invite all those who want to be a part of this campaign to attend the July 6-9 international active workers and socialist educational conference that will be held in Oberlin, Ohio. There, young people and workers from around the world will discuss how to build a revolutionary movement that will fight to take power



Laura Garza at a union rally in Florida.

the schools, to introduce “order and discipline,” and to promote “family values” as the answer to the social crisis created by capitalism.

Under the guise of “fighting crime,” Clinton recently put forward measures for a nationwide curfew for teenage youth. Legislation institutionalizing discrimination against gays by barring same-sex marriages is being prepared by



Truck drivers march for union recognition in Los Angeles.

out of the hands of the wealthy minority, to establish a government of workers and farmers, and open the fight for socialism.

Our opponents in this election—William Clinton, Robert Dole, Ross Perot, Ralph Nader, and others—acting in the interests of the wealthy minority, have stepped up their bipartisan assault against working people worldwide.

They continue their war preparations in response to the increasing world disorder, using threats or military force from Cuba to Liberia, from China to Korea, and by backing the Israeli regime's brutal assault on Lebanon. Tens of thousands of troops are stationed in Yugoslavia, in a drive to overturn the nationalized property relations and restore capitalism.

Both the Democrats and Republicans refuse to respond to the devastating drought across the lower Midwest in which thousands of farmers face losing their land. As the employers press forward their anti-labor assault, the policies of these parties reinforce the devastating effects of the capitalist economic crisis on our class.

Our campaign takes on the whole framework of how those who rule this country present world politics. The bourgeois politicians attempt to blame working people—those who create all the wealth—for the problems and breakdowns in society.

Part and parcel of this assault is what ultrarightist Patrick Buchanan has dubbed the cultural war—the propaganda offensive against abortion rights, to bring back prayer in

the leadership of both parties. New anti-immigrant laws are being drawn up that seek to enforce the second-class status this layer of the working class, while scapegoating them for what are really the ills of the crisis-ridden system of capitalism.

The Democrats and Republicans go after miserly payments to workers on welfare, promoting fake and abusive “workfare” schemes. After four years of doing nothing they enacted a paltry increase in the minimum wage, and then aim to divide workers even further by keeping a \$4.25-an-hour two-tier setup for those under 20.

Resistance of workers and youth

But the billionaire families who run this country, and the parties that do their bidding in Washington and in state houses across the country, are not having an easy time of it. Their dreams of a “new world order” have a different reality: a growing capitalist world disorder, in which new and unexpected crises emerge every day.

In the imperialist centers millions have staged strikes, protests, and street actions. These include mobilizations in France for a shorter workweek and in Germany against proposals to freeze wages of government employees; walkouts in the United States by auto workers at General Motors, building maintenance workers in New York, and truck drivers in Los Angeles; and rallies and one-day strikes in Canada to protest attacks on social benefits.

Chicanos and Mexicans have stood up to

defend their rights, and immigrants are increasingly demanding equality under the law. They are responding to Patrick Buchanan's ultrarightist immigrant bashing by saying, “My name's José. I'm here to stay!” Substantial actions in defense of Black rights have taken place over the past year, including those against police brutality, for ending the death penalty against Mumia Abu-Jamal, and in defense of affirmative action.

In Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union workers and working farmers are resisting the effects of the capitalist market system. Despite initial euphoria by the imperialists, capitalism has not been restored in any of these countries because tens of millions of people defend the social relations conquered with the abolition of the private ownership of the means of production. With the crumbling of the Stalinist regimes, working people there can now more easily join with the struggles of workers in other parts of the world.

The British rulers have been unable to stem the fight for Irish freedom. Nor have their counterparts in Canada rolled back the battle for independence of Quebec. The Palestinian and Lebanese people, in face of continued aggression by Tel Aviv, refuse to accept anything short of self-determination as their right. From Europe to South America to South Africa and Asia, working people continue to fight back in sometimes explosive and unexpected ways.

Internationalism, not nationalism

Depression conditions, social crises, and political instability push to the fore inter-imperialist conflicts between Washington and its competitors in Europe and Japan, and within Europe itself. Harsher nationalism and chauvinist appeals are the stock-in-trade of these politicians as they attempt to bring their respective populations behind the “national” interests, be they trading policies or war moves.

Underpinning this crisis are deflationary pressures spurred by the declining industrial rate of profit. In a world where billions live without basic necessities, capitalism has created a crisis of overproduction: too many goods are produced for the wealthy owners of capital to make a profit. This is the fuel for trade wars and conflicts between the imperialist powers; it is behind the competition for new markets; and it propels “downsizing” and other cost-cutting measures.

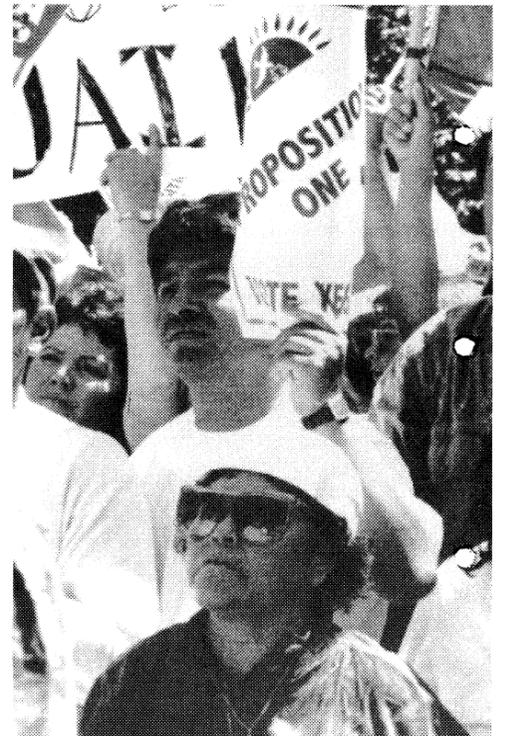
The U.S. government will more and more use its military power and economic might to gain advantage over its rivals, moves that will lead only to sharper conflicts in the future. The socialist campaign calls on the Clinton administration, one of the most war-mongering yet, to get its warships, bombers, submarines, troops, and hit squads out of every corner of the globe.

The conditions also breed ultrarightist and incipient fascist currents, such as that of Patrick

Buchanan, which seek to assemble a cadre that will fight in the streets to defeat future working-class struggles. They appeal to the resentments, fears, and uncertainties of layers of the population to advance their reactionary notions. They say openly and take to the logical conclusion what more “respectable” politicians say behind closed doors.

Defend the Cuban revolution

The example of the fight for sovereignty, independence, and socialism that Washington seeks to wipe off the face of the earth is that of revolutionary Cuba. Working people in Cuba are defending their revolution in face of U.S. threats, while continuing to stand at the head of the fight for socialism. We oppose the misnamed “Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act of 1996”—also referred to as the Helms-Burton law signed by Clinton. It reinforces the 36-year economic embargo of Cuba



Protest condemning police beating in Los Angeles.

and further restricts travel to the island. Such laws are a blow against the ability of workers and youth to learn for ourselves about the Cuban revolution. The U.S.-Cuba Youth Exchange, a brigade of young people that will visit Cuba in July at the invitation of revolutionary youth organizations in that country, is something every young person can join and help build as a way to strike a blow against these moves by Washington.

A centerpiece of the government assault is the chipping away at the social wage—entitlements such as Social Security, unemployment compensation, workers compensation, and Medicare and Medicaid that have been established through struggles of working people. The attacks on welfare are motivated by the same goal: shifting more of the wealth pro-



May Day, Havana, Cuba, 1996. Millions marched in defense of Cuba's sovereignty and social

parties of war, racism, and depression

duced by working people into the pockets of the wealthy class of employers, bankers, and coupon clippers. The socialist campaign demands cradle-to-grave coverage and expansion of Social Security to include free health care, and a living wage for those out of work. We oppose all steps to take away the meager benefits workers receive through AFDC and other welfare programs.

An action program

Our campaign is part of this working-class resistance and the preparation for bigger and sharper battles in the future. We put forward a program based on the interests of the vast majority, one that can unify working people in face of the nationalist framework of the Democrats, Republicans, Reform, and Green party candidates that pits workers in this country against their allies abroad.

This program begins with the working class

peting more and more among ourselves, we must join together and demand, "Jobs for All!" This can be done by a series of measures, such as shortening the workweek with no cut in pay and enacting a massive public works program to repair roads, and build schools, hospitals, and housing.

In a period of economic crisis workers' wages can also be devastated by sudden monetary inflationary surges, such as happened in Mexico at the end of 1995 with the devaluation of the peso. We demand cost of living allowances (COLA) be instituted to protect wages, pensions, and social security payments.

Affirmative action—creating a more level playing field in hiring, housing, and education—is the only way to organize a united fight against the downward spiral of wages, working conditions, and the standard of living. Affirmative action is necessary to defend us all. The employers profit from the oppression of Blacks, Latinos, and women, and use these divisions within the working class as a way to keep us from waging a united struggle for political power. One strong affirmative action measure would be to raise the minimum wage to union scale.

One of the chief targets of the ruling rich and their politicians is immigrant workers. They hope to dehumanize this layer of the working class as part of justifying lower pay, intolerable working conditions, and victimization of millions who labor for a living. The labor movement needs to join with immigrants who are organizing unions, marching in the streets to defend their rights, and standing up to reactionary proposals from the bipartisan majority in Congress. We encourage participation in the national October 12 action in Washington, D.C., to demand: "Equal rights for immigrants!"

The human toll capitalism is taking on Africa, Asia, and Latin America is unbearable for hundreds of millions. By every measure—infant mortality, caloric intake, real wages, ecological disasters—working people in the Third World are suffering some of the most severe blows of the crisis. This is accelerated by the onerous debts these countries owe to the imperialist banks and the attempts by the wealthy rulers to unload the burden of enormous interest payments on the toilers. A worldwide fight for cancellation of the Third World debt is vital.

In their drive to resolve the crisis of the profit system, the rulers will attempt to impose fascism and drag humanity into another world war. The wealthy minority will more and more come into head-on confrontation with working people and our allies who will battle to establish a government of workers and farmers—a government that for the first time represents the overwhelming majority of humanity. Such a revolution will join with the fighting people of Cuba and their leadership to open the struggle for a socialist world.

We especially appeal to workers, young socialists, and all youth repelled by the future capitalism offers.



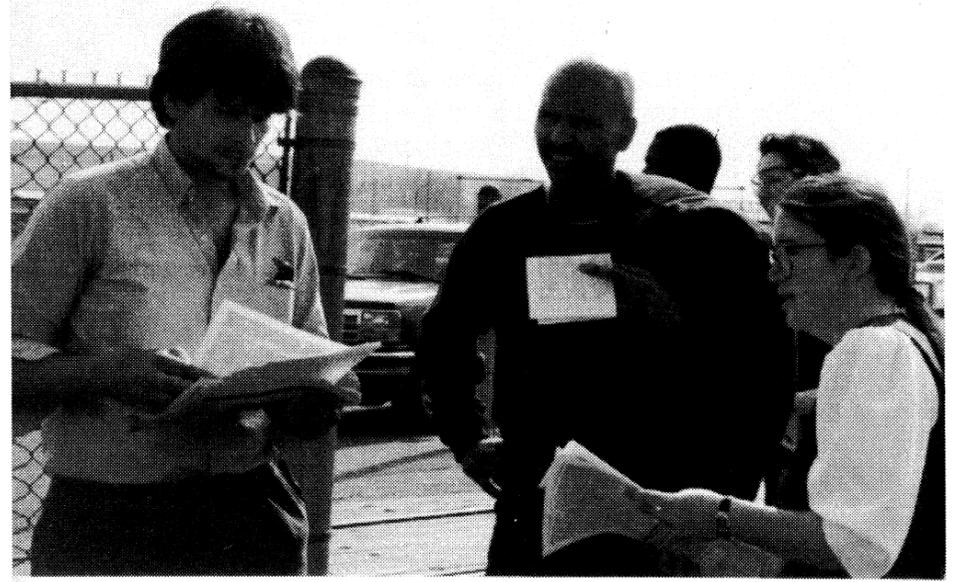
James Harris at protest to demand justice for Mumia Abu-Jamal. Selling revolutionary literature by Pathfinder, the *Militant* newspaper, and *Perspectiva Mundial* are central goals of the campaign.



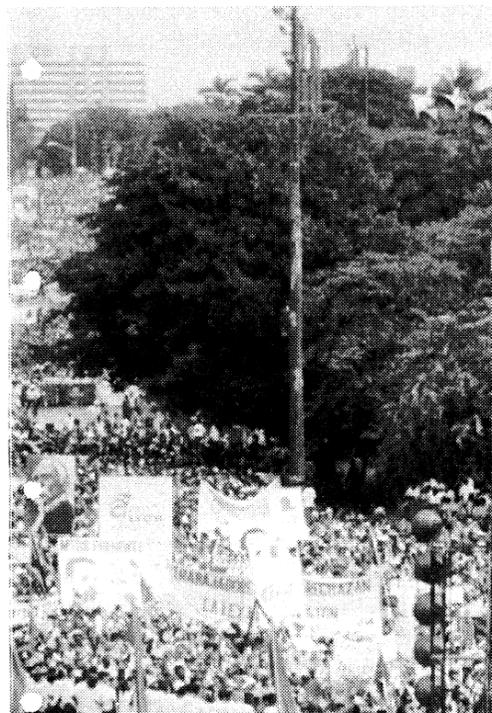
Views of two workers from Mexico

as an international class. We start not with national boundaries but with the recognition that society is divided: there is a class that owns the wealth and runs society, and a class that works and produces the wealth but has no say in how society is run.

Working people can unite on a world scale to fight for protection from the ravages of the universal crisis of the market system. Unemployment is the greatest single scourge of capitalism: competition for jobs is the greatest division sapping the fighting capacities of the working class throughout the world—both within and between countries. Unemployment, even in advanced capitalist countries such as Germany, has risen to the highest level since the Great Depression, and barely goes down in periods of temporary "upturn." Instead of com-



Laura Garza at Ford plant gate in Chicago



December protest in defense of abortion rights

Join with the socialist campaign in 1996

**James Harris for U.S. president
Laura Garza for vice president**



James Harris, a worker at the Hormel meatpacking plant in Atlanta, has a several decade record in the labor movement and the fight for the rights of Blacks, Chicanos, and women. He became active in the struggle to end Washington's war against the Vietnamese people, and has built actions against the U.S. government's continued military assaults abroad.



Laura Garza, currently a staff writer for the socialist newsweekly the *Militant*, is active in defense of the Cuban revolution, and has two decades of experience as a worker and unionist. Garza has helped build actions to defend abortion rights, in opposition to police brutality, and for equal rights for immigrant workers.

**The working-class alternative to
the parties of war, racism, and
economic depression**

- **Jobs for all!** ■ **Raise the minimum wage!**
- **Defend and extend affirmative action!**
- **Abortion is a woman's right!**
- **Equal rights for immigrants!**
- **U.S./NATO troops out of Yugoslavia!**
- **U.S. hands off Cuba! End the embargo and travel ban!**

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For local information:

'Our revolution is against imperialism'

In 1983, workers and peasants in the West African nation of Upper Volta, later renamed Burkina Faso, began a revolutionary transformation of their country under the leadership of Thomas Sankara. Burkina Faso, a former French colony, was one of the poorest countries in the world. Sankara was a low-ranking officer in the Upper Volta army and popular public figure. He was named prime minister in January 1983, and used his post to issue strong anti-imperialist statements and to urge the people of Upper Volta to organize themselves to defend their rights against both foreign and domestic moneyed interests.

Along with other radical-minded junior officers, Sankara came into increasing conflict with proimperialist forces in the government. On May 17, 1983, he was deposed as prime minister and placed under house arrest. Thousands of young people took to the streets demanding Sankara's release.

On August 4, 250 soldiers and other opponents of the regime freed Sankara and overthrew the ruling military regime. Sankara became president of the new National Council of the Revolution (CNR).

The revolution brought gains for the country's peasants and workers, particularly in the areas of health care, education, and popular organization. In action, it answered the lie of imperialist powers from Paris to Washington that their "aid" and intervention is needed to "protect" the people of Africa.

On Oct. 2, 1983, Sankara presented "The Political Orientation Speech" on behalf of the CNR in a national radio and television address, frankly stating the challenges confronting the revolutionary regime. Below we reprint excerpts of this speech, the entire text of which appears in *Thomas Sankara Speaks: The Burkina Faso Revolution 1983-87*, published by Pathfinder Press. It is copyright © by Pathfinder, reprinted with permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.



BY THOMAS SANKARA

The establishment of the CNR on August 4, 1983, and the subsequent installation of a revolutionary government in Upper Volta has opened a glorious page in the annals of the history of our people and country. However, the legacy bequeathed to us by twenty-three years of imperialist exploitation and domination is a heavy one. The task of constructing a new society cleansed of all the ills that keep our country in a state of poverty and economic and cultural backwardness will be long and hard.

In the 1960s, French colonialism — harried on all sides, defeated at Dien Bien Phu [in Vietnam], and in tremendous difficulty in Algeria — drew the lessons of those defeats and was forced to grant our country its national sovereignty and territorial integrity. This was greeted positively by our people, who had not been indifferent to this question but had instead developed appropriate resistance struggles. The decision by French colonial imperialism to cut its losses was a victory for our people over the forces of foreign oppression and exploitation. From the masses' point of view, it was a democratic reform, while from that of imperialism it was a change in the forms of domination and exploitation of our people....

Neocolonialism no different in essence

In essence, neocolonial society and colonial society differed not at all. The colonial administration was replaced by a neocolonial administration identical to it in every respect....

While Upper Volta is a paradise for the wealthy minority, it is a barely tolerable hell for the majority, the people.

As part of this big majority, the wage earners, despite the fact that they are assured a regular income, suffer the constraints and pitfalls of capitalist consumer society. Their income is completely consumed before they have even touched it. This vicious cycle goes on and on with no perspective of being broken.

Through their respective trade unions, the wage earners engage in struggles to improve their living conditions. Sometimes the scope of those struggles forces concessions from the neocolonial authorities. But they sim-

ply give with one hand what they take back with the other....

The peasants, the "wretched of the earth," are also a component of this big majority. These peasants are expropriated, robbed, molested, imprisoned, ridiculed, and humiliated every day, yet they are the ones whose labor creates wealth. The country's economy stays afloat despite its weakness thanks to their productive labor. It is from this labor that all those nationals for whom Upper



Volta is an El Dorado sweeten their lives. Yet it is the peasants who suffer most from the lack of buildings, roads, health facilities, and services.

These peasants, creators of national wealth, are the ones who suffer the most from the lack of schools and educational materials for their children. It is their children who will swell the ranks of the unemployed after a brief stint in classrooms poorly adapted to the realities of this country. It is among the peasants that the illiteracy rate is the highest — 98 percent. Those who most need to learn, so that the output of their productive labor can increase, are the very ones who benefit the least from expenditures for health care, education, and technology....

The revolution has as its primary objective the transfer of power from the hands of the Voltaic bourgeoisie allied with imperialism into the hands of the alliance of popular classes that make up the people. This means that the people in power must henceforth counterpose their own democratic and popular power to the antidemocratic and antipopular dictatorship of the reactionary alliance of social classes that favor imperialism....

All of the former political regimes sought to introduce measures to improve the management of neocolonial society. The changes introduced by the various regimes amounted to installing new teams within the framework of neocolonial power. None of these regimes wished to or was able to challenge the socioeconomic foundations of Voltaic society. That is why they all failed.

The August revolution does not seek to install just one more regime in Upper Volta. It represents a break with all previously known regimes. Its ultimate goal is to build a new Voltaic society, in which the Voltaic citizen, motivated by revolutionary consciousness, will be the architect of his own happiness, a happiness equivalent to the energy he has expended....

Need to advance women's emancipation

The weight of the centuries-old traditions of our society has relegated women to the rank of beasts of burden. Women suffer doubly from all the scourges of neocolonial society. First, they experience the same suffering as men. Second, they are subjected to additional suffering by men.

Our revolution is in the interests of all the oppressed and all those who are exploited in today's society. It is therefore in the interests of women, since the basis of their domination by men lies in the way society's system of political and economic life is organized. By changing the social order that oppresses women, the revolution creates the conditions for their genuine emancipation....

The process of revolutionary transformations undertaken since August 4 places on



Left photo: Ernest Harsch
Above, Cuban president Fidel Castro welcomes Thomas Sankara at José Martí Airport in Havana. Left, peasants planting trees at rally in Pibaoré, Burkina Faso. Under Sankara's leadership a campaign was waged to plant millions of trees throughout the country to halt the encroachment of the Sahel desert.

the agenda major democratic and popular reforms. The National Council of the Revolution is conscious that the construction of an independent, self-sufficient, and planned national economy will be attained through a radical transformation of the present society, a transformation that requires

the following major reforms:

- * Agrarian reform;
- * Administrative reform;
- * Educational reform;
- * Reform of the structures of production and distribution in the modern sector....

The reform of our national economy's structures of production and distribution aims to progressively establish effective control by the Voltaic people over the channels of production and distribution. For without genuine mastery over these channels, it is impossible in practice to build an independent economy that serves the interests of the people....

In the field of health care and social assistance for the popular masses, the objectives to be reached can be summed up as:

- * Providing health care available to everyone;
- * Initiating maternal and infant assistance and care;
- * Launching an immunization policy against communicable diseases through an increase in vaccination campaigns;
- * Making the masses aware of the need to acquire good hygiene habits....

In the field of housing, a field of crucial importance, we must undertake a vigorous policy to end real estate speculation and the exploitation of the workers through excessive rents....

One of the essential concerns of the National Council of the Revolution is to unite the different nationalities that comprise Upper Volta in the common struggle against the enemies of our revolution.... The CNR's policy aims to unite these different nationalities so that they can live in equality and

enjoy equal opportunity for success. In order to do that, special emphasis will be placed on:

- * Promoting the economic development of the different regions;
- * Encouraging economic exchange among them;
- * Combating prejudices among the ethnic groups, resolving the differences among them in a spirit of unity;
- * Punishing those who instigate divisions....

Internationalist perspective

Our revolution is an integral part of the world movement for peace and democracy against imperialism and all kinds of hegemonism. That is why we will strive to establish diplomatic relations with countries, regardless of their political and economic systems, on the basis of the following principles:

- * Respect for each other's independence, territorial integrity, and national sovereignty;
- * Mutual nonaggression;
- * Noninterference in internal affairs;
- * Trade with all countries on an equal footing and on the basis of reciprocal benefits.

Our militant solidarity and support will go to national liberation movements fighting for the independence of their countries and the liberation of their peoples. This support will be directed in particular to:

- * The people of Namibia under the leadership of the South West Africa People's Organisation;
- * The Sahraoui people in their struggle to recover their national territory;
- * The Palestinian people struggling for their national rights.

In our struggle, the anti-imperialist African countries are our objective allies. Rapprochement with these countries is necessary because of the neocolonial groupings that operate on our continent.

Long live the democratic and popular revolution!

Long live the National Council of the Revolution!

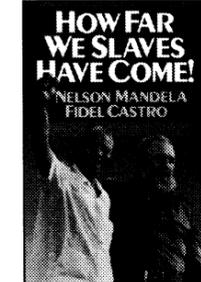
Homeland or death, we will triumph!

from Pathfinder...

Thomas Sankara Speaks

The Burkina Faso Revolution, 1983-87

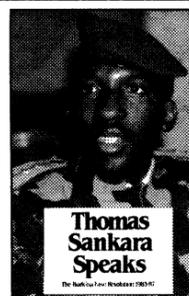
The leader of the Burkina Faso revolution recounts how peasants and workers in this West African country began confronting hunger, illiteracy, and economic backwardness prior to the 1987 coup in which Sankara was murdered. \$18.95



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UAW faces battle from auto giants

BY FRANK FORRESTAL

CHICAGO — Initial contract negotiations between the United Automobile Workers (UAW) and the Big Three auto companies — Chrysler, Ford, and General Motors — began June 10 in Dearborn, Michigan. The current three-year contract expires September 14.

"It will begin with a gentlemanly handshake, but the Big Three automakers and the United Autoworkers Union could end up butting heads before it's all over," reported the *Investor's Business Daily* June 10. All three auto giants will be seeking concessions from the UAW.

Reports in the big-business press indicate that Chrysler will be selected as the union's choice for negotiating a pattern settlement for the industry. All of the Big Three companies have said they would like to be chosen by the union.

GM has stated that it plans to go along with a pattern-setting agreement only if it meets its cost-cutting agenda. "General Motors is preparing to attempt the most significant departure from industry-pattern labor contract bargaining in about 17 years — even at the risk of a paralyzing strike this fall," wrote the *Wall Street Journal* April 26. "GM's new tough labor stance is as much a message to Chrysler and Ford as to the UAW."

"GM is prepared," continued the paper, "if pressed — to take a strike that could last longer than last month's walkout."

One of the auto bosses' goals is to hire new workers at lower starting wages, with lower benefits, and in plants with harsher working conditions. The Big Three are even floating the idea of demanding a six-year contract. Ford chairman Alexander Trotman declared, "My personal opinion is that longer is better than shorter."

Hundreds of thousands of workers will be hired in auto over the next few years. Today the average age of an auto worker is 45, reflecting the fact that for most of the past 15 years little hiring has taken place. Auto workers are retiring at a rate of 30,000 a year.

At its April 1-3 National Bargaining Convention in Detroit, UAW delegates adopted contract goals, a summary of which is printed in the May 1996 issue of the union's monthly magazine *Solidarity*. They included among other things provisions to curtail outsourcing, win annual wage increases, preserve COLA protection, and eliminate "two-tier" wage schedules.

UAW membership has fallen from 1.53 million in 1979 to 800,000 in 1996. According to a resolution at the National Bargaining Convention, the picture in the auto parts industry is one of "deunionization on a massive scale." About 20 percent of the workers are union members in a sector that has added 100,000 jobs over the last decade.

Japanese and European automakers employ more than 100,000 workers in the

United States. According to *Business Week* 92 percent of them are non-union.

Series of strikes over jobs, overtime

Since the 1993 contract UAW members have waged about a dozen brief strikes, including a handful of wildcats, against Big Three companies. Most of these have been at GM parts plants. The key issues in these strikes were outsourcing, failure to implement the 1993 contract in relation to jobs, excessive overtime, and health and safety.

In most of these short-lived strikes, the auto bosses acceded to UAW demands and promised to hire additional workers and curtail some outsourcing. "Halfway through the current three-year pact between General Motors and the UAW, it is clear that the contract, and the relationship it represents, stinks," editorialized the Jan. 30, 1995, *Automotive News*. "The UAW has GM over a barrel," the paper continued. "With lean production, a walkout at a single plant can cripple output at several plants." In a week and a half in late 1994, General Motor's stock plummeted 16 percent.

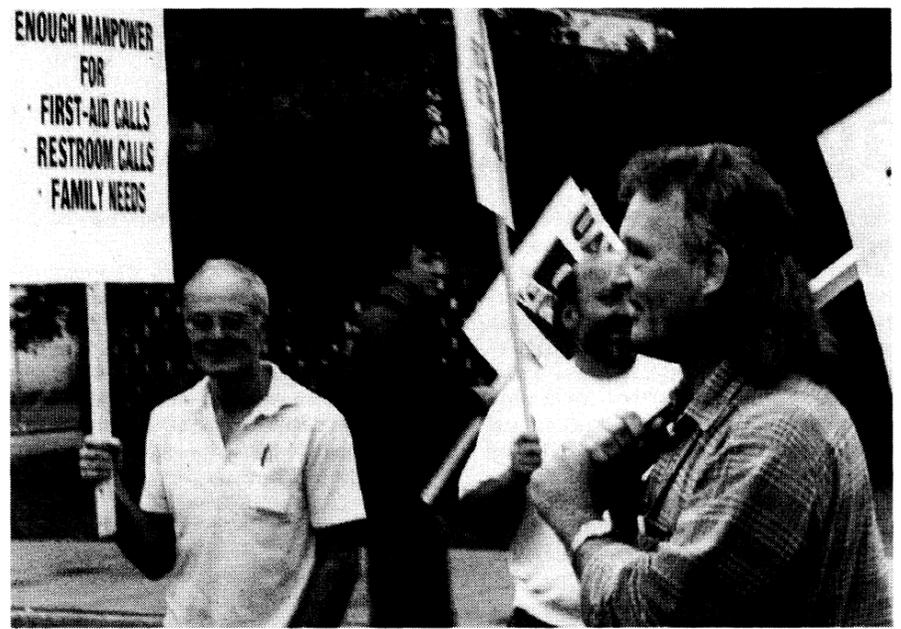
"The fact that virtually every strike ends the same way with GM accepting many of the union's demands — indicates a weakness in the company's labor strategy," wrote a reporter for the *Wall Street Journal* in early 1995.

Although the 1993 contract requires GM to hire one worker for every two that leave, the company has often not lived up to that provision. Following some of the strike agreements in 1994 and 1995, GM succeeded in reopening contracts and getting concessions.

The 17-day strike in March by 3,000 workers at GM's Delphi Chassis Systems in Dayton, Ohio, marked a shift in GM's stance toward the union. The strike was in response to GM's plan to outsource work to a nonunion supplier, which would result in cutting 125 jobs in violation of a 1994 agreement with the UAW.

The company was well prepared for the strike and showed its resolve by organizing what became in effect a countrywide lock-out. In all, 26 of GM's 29 assembly plants were closed, idling some 180,000 GM workers in the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

Not stopping there, the auto giant also attempted to cut unemployment benefits to



Militant/John Sarge

1994 strike at Flint, Michigan, GM plant demanded more hiring to spread work around.

laid-off workers. (This latter effort is still being played out. Kentucky, Michigan, and Delaware rejected GM's effort to cut unemployment benefits. Workers in Texas were refused compensation, no decision has been made yet in Ohio and Indiana, and so far workers at GM's Janesville plant in Wisconsin have been denied aid. The UAW is appealing the decision.)

Both the union and GM claim that each side won ground in the strike. *Solidarity* said the union was "buoyed" by its "recent strike victory at a GM plant in Dayton."

Despite losing \$900 million in profits on the strike, GM had the support of its board of directors and many on Wall Street. Although the company made some concessions, on balance the auto giant was successful in establishing its ability to continue outsourcing. "Wall Street cheered GM on, especially when it won a settlement permitting it to continue outsourcing," reported the *Investor's Business Daily*.

GM strives for higher profit rates

According to *Fortune* magazine, in 1995 GM's "sales reached \$168.8 billion and its profits \$6.9 billion — both records for GM or any other American corporation." Return on assets, however, "skidded downward, from about 17% in 1965 to below zero a few years ago, before nudging up to 3.2% last year." GM's market share of 33 percent in the United States has barely grown in 10 years.

GM bosses have their eyes set on Asia as a way out to salvage their faltering profits. "It is no secret that the days of substantial

growth in the U.S. automotive market are over — this is a mature market, so the growth must come from outside North America," said John F. Smith, GM's chief executive and president. In late May, GM announced that it had chosen Thailand as the location for a \$750 million assembly plant. GM hopes to double its share of the Asian market to 10 percent by 2005.

The company is currently undergoing radical changes in its financial structure. To return to profitability, GM plans to downsize itself by spinning off some of its component parts. This month it spun off Electronic Data Systems, which was bought in 1984 for \$2.5 billion from the company's founder Ross Perot.

Another target is GM's Delphi subsidiary, a vast network of 91 GM parts plants in which 73 percent of 68,000 GM workers are covered by the Big Three contract. According to *Fortune*, GM "would like to get rid of Delphi... Its products are pricey, reflecting the high wages and fringe benefits — \$44 an hour on average — paid to members of the United Automobile Workers. GM would like to be able to shop more freely in non-union precincts."

In its parts plants, GM has adopted the slogan: "Fix, Close, or Sell."

For example, the *Wall Street Journal* reported June 7 that GM obtained work-rule changes at its Allison Transmission plant in Detroit from the United Auto Workers, "even as both sides are girding for new contract talks nationally. In this case, the local agreed to negotiate and sign a new local pact early."

Virginia governor bans abortion insurance

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Despite majority sentiment by working people in support of a woman's right to choose abortion, capitalist politicians continue to chip away at this right.

In early June, Virginia governor George Allen unilaterally rescinded insurance cov-

erage of abortion procedures for the state's 100,000 government workers and their families. Reversing two decades of state policy, the Republican governor's order bans coverage except for instances of rape and incest. "There's no reason that taxpayers should subsidize it," Allen declared. "It's contrary to what I think is proper policy for government."

State workers in Virginia must use their own funds to buy coverage for dependents. Now abortion insurance for wives and daughters will be unavailable even when a family member on the payroll is willing to pay the full cost.

In Wisconsin the state legislature passed on April 30 one of the most restrictive laws in the nation aimed at limiting a woman's right to choose. This measure requires women seeking abortions to meet with a doctor at least two times, receive verbal and written counseling, and wait 24 hours before proceeding. The law also makes mandatory the distribution of a booklet to all women considering getting an abortion that shows various pictures of a fetus.

A federal judge issued a temporary restraining order preventing the state of Wisconsin from enforcing the new law. A U.S. district court will hold a hearing June 17 to determine whether the law should be put into effect.

Shortly after signing this restrictive law, Wisconsin's Republican governor, Thomas Thompson, urged party leaders to modify their stance on this issue to accommodate abortion rights supporters at the Republican national convention in August.

In a recent interview with the ABC television network, Republican presidential candidate Robert Dole also attempted to cater

his remarks towards the sizable number of Republicans who remain pro-choice. "We can have diversity in our party," he stated. "I don't want to build a fence around our party and say everybody has to agree with me on this issue."

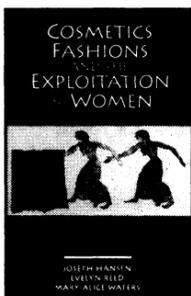
Dole then proceeded to issue a formal statement June 6 making it clear that he would "not seek or accept a retreat" from the current platform plank condemning abortion and pledging to seek a constitutional amendment to outlaw it.

Patrick Buchanan hailed Dole's statement "as expressing support for a pro-life plank that is undiluted or unaltered in any way."

An article in the *Washington Post*, noted that Dole's statement "seemed to be trying to square a circle. He is attempting to welcome moderates who support abortion rights, while at the same time insisting that the ban cannot be abandoned or in any way weakened."

Brian Williams is the Socialist Workers candidate for city council at-large in Washington, D.C.

from Pathfinder



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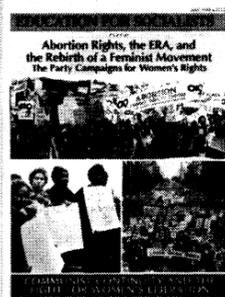
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Machinists strike at McDonnell Douglas

Continued from front page

laid them off. Since 1990 they have laid off thousands of workers. This is one of the reasons we are on strike — to fight for jobs.”

There are over 15,000 non-union employees, — supervisors, technicians, office workers, kitchen workers — still on the job. The company claims to be continuing production with some 1,500 salaried employees, engineers and supervisors.

Teamsters Union Local 610, which organizes 75 workers in the plant, is honoring the Machinists’ picket line. About 260 electricians, members of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 1, are still on the job. Many IBEW members did not cross the line the first couple days of the walk out. But when the local proposed jointly striking McDonnell, with both the IAM and IBEW staying out until both won a contract, IAM officials rejected the offer. Following that decision, the IBEW members voted not to strike.

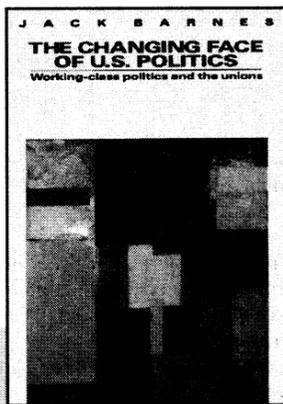
Dozens honk in support of pickets

At three separate stints on the picket lines, worker correspondents for the *Militant* noted only one negative comment by a passerby who shouted “get a job” compared to dozens of thumbs-ups signs, car horn honks, and shouts of “thanks” and “good luck” by passing drivers. Other union members in the area, including IAM Local 9 members, Teamsters who work at the airport, and United Auto Workers members from a nearby Ford assembly plant have dropped off coffee, hamburgers, and iced tea at the picket lines. Some have walked the picket line. Owners of local restaurants, taverns, and one car dealership have dropped off food at the union hall or offered discounts to strikers.

A court-ordered injunction barring mass picketing was slapped on the strikers hours after they walked out June 5. Any perceived violation of the injunction can subject the union to substantial fines. The IAM local has organized security teams to make sure the pickets don’t exceed the injunction limit of four per gate. In one incident, a strike supporter bringing coffee to a picket line was accused by company security of acting as a fifth picket. For this reason, strikers are asking supporters to check in at the union hall, where busses are organized to take them to the gates.

Tracy Caito and Jim Price of the union security committee explained that they are responsible for the safety of strikers and for

from Pathfinder...



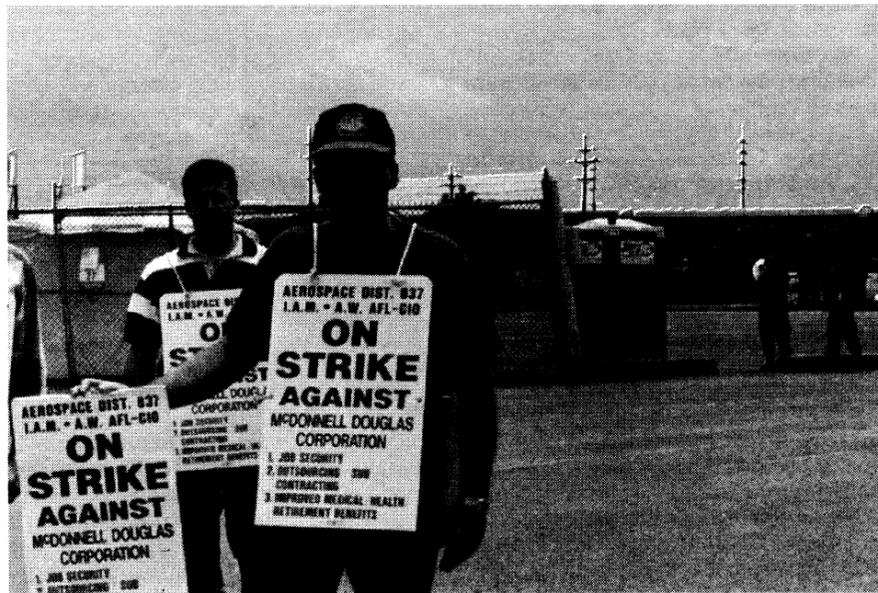
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Militant/Danny Booher

Strikers picket outside the plant in St. Louis. In back are company “security” forces.

logistics and support on the picket line and in strike headquarters. “We also keep an eye on the company’s newly hired security force, ADP, who follow our coffee trucks around and video tape the strikers on the picket line,” Caito said.

The strikers also face potential intervention from the U.S. government. McDonnell Douglas produces primarily military aircraft at its St. Louis facility. Customers for its T-45 training jets, F/A-18 and F-15 fighter jets, C-17 cargo planes, and AV-8B Harrier jets include the U.S. Air Force, Marines, and Navy as well as the governments of Israel, Finland, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, and Switzerland.

‘National security overtones’

According to the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, the Swiss government has written to the U.S. Department of Defense to complain about

the “greedy” strikers potentially delaying delivery of its orders.

The strike “is a setback for everyone and very traumatic for the workers involved,” declared Jim Talent, a Republican congressman from Missouri and member of the National Security Committee. “There are national security overtones.” Federal labor officials said if a situation is deemed a threat to national security the president can call in both sides and instruct them to resolve it or consider other measures.

Meanwhile, McDonnell Douglas president Herbert Lanese drew fire over remarks reportedly made during negotiations in April, trying to pit union members against their counterparts at McDonnell’s competitors. According to the June 7 *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Lanese said “You in the IAM think of the people in Boeing in Seattle and the people at Lockheed Martin as your brothers

and sisters. You have to look at them like I do, as your mortal enemy. I wish they were dead. I wish their children would starve to death. I wish they would lose their houses.”

Although Lanese later denied the remarks, Forrest Watson, a union negotiator who said he sat across from Lanese in the negotiations told the *Post-Dispatch* “That is exactly what he said. As a McDonnell employee, we would like to beat [Boeing and Lockheed] out of planes but as far as starving people to death, killing them, we don’t want that.”

During picket duty shift change one striker, a fork lift driver in the plant, offered her opinion on Lanese. “What gets me, is if Lanese thinks that about the Boeing workers and their families, you know he thinks the same thing about us McDonnell workers here.”

Commenting on the stakes in the strike, Price said, “This is not a McDonnell Douglas thing. This affects every other union in the U.S.”

“And not just in the U.S.,” added Caito. “We’ve already gotten a call from France. I’d say unions have to stand together not only here but in the whole world.”

A Father’s Day strike support picnic-rally is planned for Sunday, June 16, at the District 837 strike headquarters. Messages of support or contributions to the strike fund should be sent to: IAM Aerospace District 837, 212 Utz Lane, Hazelwood, MO 63042-2784. Checks can be made out to District 837 IAM and sent to the same address, attention Larry Meadows, Secretary Treasurer District 837. For information on the strike call 314-731-0603.

Danny Booher is a member of IAM Local 1018 at US Air in New York. Mary Martin is a member of IAM Local 1759 at Northwest Airlines in Washington, D.C. Jim Garrison, a member of United Auto Workers Local 110 at Chrysler in Fenton, Missouri, contributed to this article.

Washington asserts domination in Europe

Continued from Page 7

ago.” The future, she added, “might look like 1914 played on a somewhat larger scale.” 1914 was the year that the first world war broke out.

Besides instability in Russia, she said, the break-up of the Soviet Union has accelerated proliferation of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons in countries such as Iraq, Iran, Libya, China, and North Korea. “On present trends a direct threat to American shores is likely to mature early in the next century,” she warned.

Thatcher said capitalist powers in North America and Europe must seriously consider “pre-emptive military strikes” against such governments. But she implied that the world relationship of forces makes such actions by imperialist powers difficult.

“Given the intellectual climate in the West today, it is probably unrealistic to expect military intervention to remove the source of the threat, as for example against North Korea,” Thatcher said. Even in the case of Iraq, she added, “our success in destroying Saddam’s nuclear and chemical weapons capability was limited.”

Betrayal of the ‘West’

Thatcher assailed the European Union, dominated by Bonn, for its failure to incorporate the Central European countries into its structures and accelerate their integration into the world capitalist market.

As a result, Thatcher said, “The early enthusiasm for the West and Western institutions began to wane,” in these countries. “Facing tariff barriers and quotas in Western Europe, the Central Europeans began to erect their own. And those politicians who had bravely pursued tough-minded policies of economic reform... found themselves left in the lurch when the going got rough.”

The former British prime minister pointed out that in the last few years openly pro-capitalist politicians in Eastern and Central Europe have lost elections one by one “to be replaced by neo-communist governments promising the impossible: transition to a market economy without tears.”

In Hungary, Poland, and Bulgaria, for example, parties that descended from the former ruling Stalinist organizations — which have

adopted a social democratic posture and names — have won recent parliamentary elections. These parties support “market reforms” but at a slower pace. Millions of working people look at them as a lesser evil to the regimes that have tried to institute massive cuts in social services and whose policies have accelerated joblessness and other social ills. Even in the Czech Republic, touted by Thatcher and other capitalist politicians as the one country moving fastest toward capitalism, the pro-imperialist coalition of Vaclav Klaus lost its parliamentary majority in the May elections, while the social democrats gained more seats.

European Union doomed to fail

Thatcher also assailed those in the European Union who push for instituting monetary union among member states. Any such currency would have to be pegged to the German mark, the strongest in Europe, which the British bourgeoisie vehemently opposes.

“Across the continent businessmen and bankers increasingly question the economic need for a single currency at all,” Thatcher said. “It is essentially a political symbol — the currency of a European state and people which don’t actually exist, except perhaps in the mind of a Brussels bureaucrat.”

The national interests of each capitalist class also determine foreign policy, Thatcher pointed out.

“Perhaps the best example of utopian aims is multilateralism,” she said. “This is the doctrine that international actions are most justified when they are untainted by the national interests of the countries which are called upon to carry them out.”

The military intervention in Somalia under the aegis of the United Nations did not solve any problems for imperialism, Thatcher said, “since America and the UN were unwilling to govern Somalia for 30 years.” She also described the UN “peace-keeping mission” in Yugoslavia, led for a couple years by French commanders, as a “sorry episode.” Only the massive NATO bombing campaign and subsequent intervention by some 20,000 U.S. troops at the end of 1995 may salvage the situation, she said.

In contrast to the United Nations and the European Union, Thatcher exhorted the virtues of the Atlantic military alliance dominated by Washington. At the same time, she pointed to the growing problems within NATO since the crumbling of the Warsaw Pact.

“NATO is a very fine military instrument” she said. “But an instrument cannot define its own purposes, and since the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, Western statesmen have found it difficult to give NATO a clear one.”

The ‘English-speaking’ alliance

So what did Thatcher propose? Speedy expansion of NATO into Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic; extending NATO’s role so it can “operate out of area,” that is around the world, as long as U.S. generals call all the shots; and aiding Washington in developing a “ballistic missile defense” system that could shield imperialist powers from missile assaults from anywhere.

Carrying this out, Thatcher said, “raises, in my view, very serious doubts about the currently fashionable idea of a separate European ‘defense identity’ within the Alliance.... Like the single currency, it would have damaging practical consequences.”

The push by Bonn and Paris for such a “European” military alliance “contains the germs of a major future Trans-Atlantic rift,” Thatcher said. And the capitalist powers in Europe are too weak militarily to challenge U.S. superiority. “Even a French general admitted during the Gulf War the U.S. forces were ‘the eyes and ears’ of the French troops. Without America, NATO is a political talking shop, not a military force.”

The right-wing politician claimed that “the English-speaking peoples of the West” offer the best example of prosperity in the world today. She reiterated Churchill’s call for a special relationship between Washington and London, and said the essence of the Atlantic military alliance is, and must be, “America as the dominant power surrounded by allies which generally follow its lead.”

Thatcher’s blunt statements point to what was more veiled at the NATO meeting in Berlin: the crumbling of the Warsaw Pact has accelerated the disintegration of the Atlantic military alliance.

Cuban leader blasts tightening of embargo

Continued from front page

Communist Party of Cuba's Political Bureau, devoted most of his remarks to the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (Libertad) Act of 1996, commonly known as the Helms-Burton law. The measure tightens the 36-year-long U.S. economic embargo on the Caribbean nation. Among other punitive measures, it allows U.S. businessmen whose property was confiscated by Cuban workers and peasants after the 1959 revolution to sue companies abroad that invest in those properties.

The Cuban leader noted that a week earlier the Organization of American States had adopted a resolution widely interpreted as critical of the Libertad Act. Emphasizing that the OAS had "never before in its history made such a decision criticizing U.S. policy," he said U.S. officials had replied that "this was a U.S. law and they would continue to apply it regardless of the OAS or international opinion. This is a norm of conduct for the empire.... They have acted like this toward Cuba for more than 35 years."

Alarcón challenged the claim in the big-business media that the adoption of the Helms-Burton law was caused by the Cuban government's shootdown of two hostile U.S. planes violating the island's airspace on February 24. "The media insists that, had it not been for that incident, the president would have vetoed the law," he said. "But no one can quote a single statement [by Clinton] ever indicating his opposition to the bill."

The White House simply used the shootdown as a pretext to sign a measure it basically supported, Alarcón said. In fact, he pointed out, the Clinton administration "had already arranged a deal in the U.S. Congress as early as December 1995, well before the plane incident."

U.S. lies about 'civilian planes'

Alarcón meticulously dismantled the lie peddled by the U.S. government and major media that Cuba had shot down "civilian planes" in international airspace and killed innocent civilians.

The Cessna 337 planes flown by Brothers to the Rescue, a right-wing Cuban-American outfit, were not civilian aircraft. Anyone checking a well-known aviation reference book like *Jane's All the World's Aircraft* would see that the Cessna 337 "was created and conceived for military missions," said Alarcón, showing the audience a copy of the handbook opened to the appropriate pages. He pointed out that Washington had used such aircraft in its war against Vietnam and later in its military intervention against the revolutionary movement in El Salvador.

Another revealing fact was the efforts by Florida congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen in the early 1990s to get some of these leftover military planes for Brothers to the Rescue. Alarcón showed a copy of the July 19, 1992, issue of the *Miami Herald* with an article by David Lawrence, the paper's publisher, who had been invited to fly with Brothers to the Rescue chief José Basulto. The accompanying photo in the paper depicted the Cessna plane.

"You can see four letters above the num-

CALENDAR

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AUSTRALIA

Sydney

East Timor: Its future in the Asia-Pacific. Speakers from East Timor, Indonesia, Australia, Portugal. Fri., June 21- Mon., June 24. *University Hall, University of Technology, Sydney. Registration: \$30/\$15. Sponsors: University of Sydney School of Asian Studies; UTS, Institute for International Studies; University of New South Wales Human Rights Centre.*

With Che Guevara in Cuba and Bolivia. Speaker Leonardo Tamayo (Urbano), General in Cuba's Ministry of the Interior, fought alongside Che Guevara in Bolivia 1966-67. Sat., June 29, 2 p.m. *Waverly Library, 14 Ebley St., Bondi Junction. Tel: (02) 389-1111. Sponsors: Australia-Cuba Friendship Society, Waverly Library.*

ber of the airplane along with the Brothers to the Rescue logo, USAF, which stands for the United States Air Force.

"So apparently Ms. Ros was successful" in securing the military planes, Alarcón remarked. Brothers to the Rescue "was acting with impunity. They didn't even bother to erase those letters that identified them as U.S. Air Force airplanes."

Brothers to the Rescue was so brazen about its violations of Cuban airspace that they published a bulletin with photos documenting their provocations. Alarcón showed one issue of the bulletin with a picture of a July 1995 flight that, according to the description, had actually flown over the University of Havana.

After Clinton used the plane incident as an excuse to sign the Libertad Act in March, what happened? Alarcón asked. What did the U.S. media report?

Washington had initially gone to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to try to ram through a quick statement accusing Havana of shooting down civilian aircraft in international waters. That effort failed and the agency decided at a March 7 meeting in Montreal to launch an investigation of the incident.

Alarcón referred to a provisional, unpublished report by the ICAO investigating commission, which stated that the Cuban government had fully met the commission's

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

ALABAMA

Birmingham

A New Rise in Racism? What is behind the recent burnings of Black Churches? Speaker: Kari Sachs, Socialist Workers Candidate, 4th CD, member of United Steelworkers, Local 12014. Fri., June 21, 7:30 p.m. *111 21st Street South. Donation: \$4/\$2. Tel: 323-3079.*

FLORIDA

Miami

Lessons for Labor Today. Report on the McDonnell Douglas Strike and showing of the video: "Labor's Turning Point: The Minneapolis Truck Strikes of 1934". Speaker: Representative of Socialist Workers Party. Fri., June 21, 7:30 p.m. *137 N.E. 54th Street. Donation: \$4. Tel: (305) 756-1020.*

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requests for information and that, by the end of April, the U.S. government had failed to provide crucial information, including data from U.S. radar in Florida on February 24. Even after a one-month extension to early June, the missing information is still not forthcoming from Washington.

Facts 'not fit to print' in 'Times'

More recently, the Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) suspended Basulto's pilot license, an acknowledgment of Cuba's assertion that Brothers to the Rescue had violated Cuban airspace. The FAA cited violations from July 13, 1995, to February 24 of this year, Alarcón said.

The Cuban leader pointed out that the *New York Times* barely devoted a few lines on an inside page to the suspension of Basulto's license, although this move represented a damning admission that Washington had lied about the February 24 events. Apparently, Alarcón remarked, this news "was not fit to print" in such a major liberal daily.

Likewise, the president of Cuba's National Assembly underlined, no major U.S. capitalist paper has published the full text of the Helms-Burton law for the U.S. public to study.

In contrast, the Cuban press has published and distributed the complete text of the legislation. Over the last several weeks, Cuban

workers have organized discussions on the measure in every factory and other workplaces throughout the island.

"This is what democracy is all about," Alarcón stressed. He added that the Cuban government has taken a similar approach toward every major measure taken to deal with the country's severe economic crisis. "A government must be not only for the people but by the people," he stated.

Alarcón explained that in the United States, the government has not only launched attacks on social gains like medical care for retirees, but hasn't even pretended to consult working people about such measures.

"Here, no action the government takes has been done with massive involvement by the people," he said. "Thousands of meetings have been held, involving the entire people."

Alarcón addressed the audience on the irreplaceable role of those in the United States who are fighting Washington's attacks on the Cuban revolution like the Helms-Burton law.

"This requires a special effort that must begin by promoting greater awareness within the United States that the illegal policy against Cuba and the U.S. blockade of Cuba are important questions for U.S. society," he said. As long as Washington is able to carry out such attacks, "the people in the United States will never live in peace."

The Fight for a Free and United Ireland.

Speakers: representative of Socialist Workers Party, others. Fri., June 21, 7:30 p.m. 780 Tremont St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (617) 247-6772. Texas

Houston

Safety in the Refineries: An Accident Waiting to Happen? Speakers: Tim Webster, Chair, joint union safety committee, Exxon Refinery and member of Gulf Coast Industrial Workers Union; Wesley Carter, Chair, Workmen's Committee, Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union (OCAW) 4-227 on strike against Rhone-Poulenc; Carol Alvarado, Manchester Civic Association; and Jerry Freiwirth, member of OCAW 4-367 at Shell Oil. Fri., June 21, 7:30 p.m. 3260 South Loop West. Donation: \$4. Tel: (713) 349-0090.

WASHINGTON, DC

South Africa: The Democratic Revolution Advances. Eyewitness report from South Africa.

Speaker: Greg Rosenberg, just returned from that country where he reported for the *Militant*. Fri., June 21, 7:30 p.m. 1930 18th Street N.W., (entrance on Florida at 18th). Donation: \$4. Tel: (202) 387-2185.

BRITAIN

Manchester

South Africa Today. Speaker: member, Communist League. Fri., June 21, 7 p.m. Unit 4, 60 Shudehill. Tel: 061-839-1766.

The Crisis in the Tory Party. Speaker: member, Communist League. Fri., June 28, 7 p.m. Unit 4, 60 Shudehill. Tel: 061-839-1766.

CANADA

Vancouver

Update on South Africa. New Constitution: A historic gain. Speaker: Tony Di Felice, member, Communist League and International Association of Machinists. Fri., June 21, 7:30 p.m.

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The values system — "MIAMI (AP) — As divers raked the murky bottom of the Everglades for the remains of passengers in the ValuJet crash, lawyers circled the hotel



Harry Ring

where relatives were staying.... Some were handed fliers, some received flowers; many got phone calls and mailings."

McDonnell Douglas and

outsourcing — For the aerospace company, outsourcing is not a matter of principle, even if the issue sparked a strike at its St. Louis plant. For instance, earlier this year, it paid a fine for overpricing spare parts for federal contracts. A subcontractor had been making door hooks for \$389 apiece. The company decided to make them itself, billing the feds \$8,842 each.

Fact-of-life dep't — Even rich people find it tough to get housing in Singapore. So it didn't sit well when it was disclosed that Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew and his son had picked up a luxury condo at a \$700,000 discount. Formally retired as prime minister, but still the top

dog, Lee snapped back at his critics that this happens because, "I am me." He added, "It's not a level playing field."

Free-market medicine — Ivan Namihas, a southern California doctor, was convicted in federal court of conning nine patients into believing they had such diseases as cancer or AIDS and performing unnecessary laser surgery. Under federal sentencing guidelines, he faces six years, max.

Easy, by being a cop — "Workaholic Jim Slate was one of the best officers Merced ever had. So how did he wind up betraying his family, his town and his badge

by stealing cocaine from a bust?" — California news item.

The justice system — James Trimble, an Urbandale, Iowa, cop was busted last January while carrying a \$20,000 stash of methamphetamines. Trimble, who worked in a youth antidrug program, admitted lifting the drugs from the police evidence room. He wasn't charged with theft, and he wasn't tried on the drug possession charge in federal court where he might have drawn five to 15 years. Instead, he was tried in state court where he got probation.

Where the taking is easy — A public relations firm that does work

for the California transportation department billed the state for such "expenses" as football tickets, skiing and golf. Also, raises for employees. The principal raise went to Steve Tobia, the company owner. His wages increased from \$75 an hour to \$120.

A good learner — Michele Noble, a first-year high schooler, won the California History Day competition with a display on the late Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers. After visiting farm areas and interviewing farm workers, she commented: "They have one of the toughest jobs out there. [Now] when I go into the grocery store I think about all the work put into the food that's there. Food isn't just there."

Black activist in Toronto acquitted of frame-up

BY SYLVIE CHARBIN

TORONTO — A collective sigh of relief, applause and raised fists went up from some two dozen supporters present in the courtroom June 1, as the jury pronounced a verdict of "not guilty" on all three charges of sexual assault laid in February 1995 against Dudley Laws. The verdict came after 10 hours of deliberation.

Laws is a leading antiracist fighter here and founder of the Black Action Defense Committee (BADC). For more than a decade, BADC has waged a campaign against the killing of Blacks and other working people by the Toronto cops. This frame-up trial followed a series of legal charges against Laws because of his outspoken views about police racism and brutality in Toronto.

Outside the courthouse following the verdict, Laws said that he was pleased with the outcome of the two-week trial.

The woman who laid the charges, who is Black, testified that Laws raped her as often as three times a week from the time she was seven years old until she was 14, between 1968 and 1976.

Under questioning by the defense, the woman stated that she opposed Laws's political views, which she said promoted hatred towards whites. The woman, who is now in her 30s, lives in Thailand teaching English. At the time of the alleged assaults, Dudley Laws was working as a welder for a construction company, drove a cab and was an active member of the Universal African Improvement Association.

In lengthy testimonies describing their family life, both the woman's mother and brother vehemently denied that there was any sign that she was abused. Among those called to testify by the prosecution was a clinical psychologist who stated that the accuser showed symptoms similar to a sexual abuse victim. But under cross-examination he acknowledged he had never actually spoken with the woman.

The prosecution based its case on recent changes in Canadian law, which state that in cases of childhood sexual abuse, no physical or corroborative evidence — that is wit-



Militant/Colin McKay
Dudley Laws speaking at rally against cop brutality, October 1994.

nesses — are required to get a conviction. The presiding judge at the trial, Justice Victor Paisley, instructed the jury to carefully examine the credibility of both the accused and the accuser in rendering their verdict.

The mostly working-class jury was made up of six men and six women and included only three members of "visible minorities," none of whom were Black. Out of a pool of 140 potential jurors, there were only three Blacks. Outside the courthouse following the verdict, Charles Roach, one of Laws' lawyers, stated that if there had been Blacks on the jury, they would not have taken so long to arrive at a verdict. "Although the police can find large numbers of (Black) people to charge as defendants" he said, "they can find very few to bring here as jurors."

In another reaction to the not-guilty ver-

dict rendered by this jury, one Laws supporter exclaimed, "The message here is that there's hope for humanity."

Laws told the *Militant*, "When the charges were first laid, I thought this had to have been orchestrated by the police. I still feel that there was underlying police interference in the case."

Laws was sued in 1991 by the Metropolitan Toronto Police Association for libel, when after

a series of racist police shootings, Laws accused the Toronto police of being "the most murderous in North America." That suit was later dropped.

In February 1994, Laws was convicted on three counts of conspiracy to "smuggle aliens." Laws worked as an immigration consultant at the time. The trial revealed that Laws was the target of a massive entrapment operation organized jointly by the Metro Toronto Police and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, in collaboration with U.S. immigration cops and courts. A motion to stay the guilty verdicts against Laws on the grounds of police entrapment was dismissed by the presiding judge. He was handed a nine-month sentence in that case, which is still under appeal.

A 1989 secret police report revealed during the entrapment hearing documented police surveillance of 13 groups and 18 individuals — including Laws — who were active in the fight against cop brutality, racism, and apartheid in South Africa.

"It's not often in the day-to-day struggle that ordinary working class people win a victory" said BADC activist Lennox Farrell, at a victory celebration held at his home the day after the verdict was pronounced.

Laws thanked his numerous supporters and said that the verdict had given him "the freedom to continue my work" and that "the allegations will not impair my continued defense of the Black community."

Sylvie Charbin is a member of International Association of Machinists Lodge 2113 at Ford Electronics. Gary Kettner contributed to this article.

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

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Thirty-one hand-picked Negro victims of Tennessee's white ruling class have been standing trial since May 28 in Maury County courthouse, Columbia, Tenn., on a frame-up charge of "attempt to commit murder."

This is the second phase of a campaign of mass terrorism and murder launched against the segregated Negro community of Columbia last February. State troops, coming to the aid of a white lynch mob, blasted Negro homes and business with machine guns, shot and injured scores, invaded and ransacked homes, and drove the helpless Negro population into the streets. They mercilessly clubbed men, women and children, jailed more than a hundred and lynched two men in jail.

The trial is taking place in a Jim Crow courtroom where no Negro has ever served on a jury. Attorneys, provided by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, are introducing evidence proving that Jim Crow prejudice is so widespread that it is impossible to secure a jury that would give the defendants a fair trial.

While this mass frame-up is going on, not a single white hoodlum who participated in the February armed assaults upon the defenseless Negro population has been arrested and indicted. No action has been taken against the two officers of the "law" who shot two jailed Negroes to death in cold blood. The fascists who marked a large KKK on a casket in a Negro undertaking establishment are at large and continuing their sinister work of inspiring a lynch atmosphere.

Baltimore rally demands an end to the death penalty

BY CHESTER WILSON

BALTIMORE—Fifty persons gathered outside the Maryland State Penitentiary and the Maryland Correctional Adjustment Center, or "Supermax," June 1 to protest the death penalty and the ordered execution of Flint Gregory Hunt. Hunt, who had been convicted in 1985 for the shooting death of a police officer, was scheduled for the gas chamber the week of June 10 but on May 31 received a stay of execution.

Several speakers condemned the disproportionate use of the death penalty against Blacks. Fourteen of the 16 Maryland death row inmates are Black.

In 1995 a racial justice amendment was withdrawn from the state senate after a promise by Governor Glendening to establish a task force to study racial discrimination in the state's application of the death penalty. The governor has not commissioned the task force and refused to discuss the Hunt case. He declined to meet with Jesse Jackson, who spoke with Hunt and supports a commutation of his sentence.

The Hunt case demonstrates several other aspects of racism and prejudice against working people in the judicial system: he was denied competent counsel and an adequate defense; the prosecution tampered with witnesses; and the judge improperly instructed the jury.

In Maryland the barbaric conditions in special prisons like the "Supermax" have been condemned by a department of justice report.

After the speak out, the crowd marched around the "Supermax", chanting to those inside, "Keep the faith! Be Strong!" Afterwards the activists present agreed again to meet about the Hunt case and others, like that of Marshall Eddie Conway, a former Black Panther member. Conway has been jailed since 1970 on a frame-up stemming from the U.S. government's COINTELPRO operation carried out against a range of political groups. A demonstration to support Conway is planned on June 8 in Baltimore.

Chester Wilson is a member of United Auto Workers Local 239.

The disintegration of NATO

The crumbling of the Warsaw Pact has accelerated the disintegration of the reactionary Atlantic military alliance. NATO was already strained because of sharper imperialist competition among its members states and the shifts in alignments among the rival national capitalist classes.

The prospects for a united capitalist Europe with a single currency are pretty much nil. Instead, increasing rivalry and trade conflicts among the current members of the so-called European Union, and between them and the U.S. empire, are coming to the fore. Imperialism enters the 21st century in a weakened position. What's on the horizon is not a "New World Order" with Washington at the helm, but growing instability and capitalist world disorder filled with the prospect of world war.

This is what could be glimpsed through the diplomatic obfuscations, and some of the more candid remarks, uttered at the NATO meeting in Berlin. And this is what Margaret Thatcher, just like Richard Nixon four years ago — both heads of state who retired involuntarily — pointed to in her blunt speech at Westminster College.

The fact is that U.S. imperialism has lost the Cold War.

The Cold War was the term used — somewhat inaccurately, since it was dotted by a number of "hot" wars — to describe the strategic course forced upon the U.S. rulers and their allies coming out of World War II in face of the limitations imposed by the international relationship of class forces. These limitations ruled out for the foreseeable future the use of massive military force to accomplish Washington's goal of overturning the Soviet Union and Eastern European workers states and reestablishing capitalism there.

Washington was blocked from pursuing this goal by the refusal of the GIs in Europe and Asia to go back to war — this time against former allies, the Soviet Union and the workers and peasants of China. Thatcher described this period as the "fatal hiatus" of 1944-46 — fatal, that is, for the class she represents. The U.S.-led assault on Korea in 1950, which tested the "back door" approach to undermining or overthrowing the Soviet Union and the fledgling Chinese revolution, failed. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea was not overthrown and the fighting ended in a stalemate at the 38th parallel. Moscow's development of nuclear weapons in the 1950s chilled any idea of a direct military assault on the workers states.

Given these realities, Washington was restricted to using its military power to try to contain any extension of

the overturn of capitalist property relations. Its strategic effort to weaken the workers states became one of applying pressure on the bureaucratic castes to police the working class in those countries and keep them isolated from the struggles of workers and peasants around the world.

With the crumbling of the Stalinist regimes and their replacement by openly procapitalist politicians, and with prospects for a military assault against the former Soviet republics less feasible than ever, imperialism still faces the same challenge, but from a weakened position.

Capitalism won't return without establishing new relations of exploitation based on the crushing defeat of working people and the seizure of the means of production by a new capitalist class.

Nixon touched on that problem four years ago, when he pointed to the lack of what he called a "managerial class" in Russia. Thatcher, likewise, acknowledged the "absence of the legal and customary foundations of a free economy" — free, that is, for the exploitation of the labor of the toiling majority by a tiny propertied minority.

Unlike what Nixon suggested, however, imperialism was not, and is not today, in any position to buy its way back to capitalism in Russia, Poland, or even East Germany. Thatcher is pointing to what appears to be a less utopian perspective from the point of view of the exploiting classes. Shoot your way back to capitalism. That's what Washington and its allies are attempting to do in Yugoslavia, with very limited success so far.

But the battle over Yugoslavia, as well as the Central European workers states, is exacerbating conflicts between imperialist powers. That's what the row over whether or how fast to integrate Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic into NATO reveals. Thatcher's not so subtle anti-German and anti-French language also shows that inter-imperialist competition is becoming more and more the motor force of politics today.

In this world, imperialism confronts a new and more confident actor in the world class struggle: the working classes of Eastern and Central Europe and the Soviet Union, who are less isolated than ever from their brothers and sisters in the imperialist centers and elsewhere. Accelerating unrest in East Germany over economic and social conditions and mounting labor resistance across Germany to the assault by the bosses on wages, hours, and social security is a case in point.

That is the specter that haunts the bourgeoisie throughout Europe and across the Atlantic.

Support striking machinists

The 6,700 striking Machinists at McDonnell Douglas in St. Louis deserve the support of the entire labor movement and other fighters. By standing up to the aerospace giant, they have put themselves on the front lines of the resistance by working people to the bosses' drive to cut workers' wages, job conditions, and expectations.

McDonnell Douglas is trying to impose what every capitalist enterprise must do today under the pressures of intensified competition with rivals in the United States and abroad — cost-cutting, outsourcing, and job combinations aimed at reducing the workforce by another 1,700 workers over the duration of the proposed contract.

When McDonnell Douglas President Herbert Lanese advised the machinists to "think of the people in Boeing and Lockheed Martin... like I do, as your mortal enemy," he meant it. Working people recoiled from Lanese's statements. Although Lanese later sought to deny these comments, they accurately reflect the true colors of the capitalist bosses and their governments whether they be in

Washington, Bonn, London, Paris, or Tokyo. They try to convince workers to see each other as the enemy, and keep us competing for jobs, in order to better divide and rule.

When workers begin to fight for their rights and dignity, like those at McDonnell Douglas, they become open to seeing that, as one striker put it, "unions have to stand together not only here but in the whole world." Workers employed by McDonnell Douglas face the same enemy as those working at Boeing, Lockheed, Airbus, and other companies around the world — this capitalist system and the joblessness and worsening conditions it breeds.

Unionists and other people fighting against Washington's war moves around the world, against racism and attacks on immigrant rights, and in defense of affirmative action should get out to the picket lines to give solidarity to the McDonnell Douglas workers. We should demand the government end its picket line injunctions and threats of intervention against the strikers.

Support the McDonnell Douglas strikers!

Stop the church burnings now!

Continued from front page

these attacks. Meanwhile, he has served as pointman for reintroduction of chain-gangs and other abusive treatment of workers behind bars — a disproportionate number of whom are Black. Now, with more than 30 churches in ashes, several ultrarightists have finally been arrested under growing pressure from Blacks across the South.

Protest actions, picket lines, and speak-out events can help press forward an effective answer to the terror campaign. The actions can support the demand made by church officials to the Justice Department in Washington that the police cease harassing parishioners and running lie-detector tests on pastors, and instead find and prosecute the perpetrators of the violence. Any local church should be able to call on and receive federal or state police protection if needed or desired.

To claim, as the Clinton administration has, that the federal government, the FBI, the AFT, and other police agencies don't know much about this string of church burnings is sheer hypocrisy. Federal secret police agencies, and local and state cops, are involved in every rightist outfit in this country.

The intent of this campaign is clear: to intimidate African-Americans and others from fighting to defend their hard won rights and to responding to the devastating im-

pact of the capitalist economic crisis.

It is both the Democrats and Republicans who share direct responsibility for these attacks. Their bipartisan assault and increasing scapegoating of whole layers of the population—Black youth, "welfare mothers," immigrant workers, and others—for the social and economic problems caused by capitalism, creates a political atmosphere in which ultrarightists feel emboldened to carry out direct and brutal assaults on sections of the population.

President William Clinton says he will deploy more federal agents throughout the Southeast to investigate the fires. He also proposed changes in federal law to make it easier to prosecute those suspected of carrying out "attacks on places of worship."

But like the recently passed "anticrime," "antiterrorist," and "sexual predator" laws, Clinton's proposed law will be used to whittle away at democratic rights. No further laws are necessary to prosecute arsonists.

The labor movement, youth, and all fighters for social justice must join with Black organizations in demanding the arrest, prosecution, and jailing of those responsible for the arson attacks. It is only by keeping up the pressure through such actions that the government will be forced to put a stop to the arson.

Stop the church burnings now!

Yearn for more porous borders

Two letters came in this week questioning the *Militant's* stance on immigration. Reader Brian McGarity asks, "Isn't allowing non-tax paying foreign nationals to work in place of union brothers and sisters self-defeating?"

This is not a new discussion in the workers' movement. At the Stuttgart Congress of the Second International in 1907, Morris Hillquit, a founder of the U.S. Socialist Party, presented a nationalist view on the question. "Capitalism's importation of foreign labor cheaper than that of native-born workers," Hillquit said, "threatens the native-born with dangerous competition and usually provides a pool of unconscious strikebreakers. Chinese and Japanese workers play that role today, as does the yellow race in general. While we have absolutely no racial prejudices against the Chinese we must frankly tell you that they can not be or-

DISCUSSION WITH OUR READERS

ganized. Only a people well advanced in its historical development, such as the Belgians and Italians in France, can be organized for the class struggle."

Hillquit was answered well by Kato Tokijiro, a delegate from Japan. "The Japanese are under the heel of capitalism just as much as are other peoples," Tokijiro said, after explaining to Hillquit that he was influenced by the racist notion of the so-called yellow peril. "It is only dire need that drives them from their homeland to earn their livelihood in a foreign land. It is the duty of Socialists to welcome these poor brothers, to defend them, and together with them to fight capitalism. The founders of socialism, above all Karl Marx, did not address themselves to individual countries but to all humanity. Internationalism is inscribed on our banner." (The transcript of this debate can be found in *Pathfinder's Lenin's Struggle for a Revolutionary International* pp. 15-20.)

Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin amplified these points in a later article titled "Capitalism and Workers' Immigration" in the Russian newspaper *Pravda* in October 1913. "Only reactionaries can shut their eyes to the progressive significance of this modern migration of nations," Lenin wrote. "And it is into this struggle that capitalism is drawing the masses of the working people of the whole world, breaking down the ... national barriers and prejudices, uniting workers from all countries in huge factories and mines in America, Germany, and so forth."

Workers from neocolonial countries immigrate to North America, western Europe, Australia, and New Zealand today in order to escape the unlivable conditions created by imperialism in their homelands.

They are often battle-tested fighters and bring important experiences from the class struggle in their countries of origin, making the working class in the imperialist countries more international and for that reason stronger. It would be self-defeating for the labor movement to see them as "non-tax paying foreign nationals," rather than brothers and sisters who should have equal rights with native-born or immigrants with proper job documents.

Capitalism breeds competition among workers and reinforces prejudices. Rulers pit workers in capitalist countries against each other, against foreign born workers, and against workers in exploited countries, while trying to convince the working class some of us are to blame for all social ills, instead of seeing where the crisis really comes from — the innate development of capitalism.

"The bourgeoisie incites the workers of one nation against those of another in the endeavor to keep them disunited," Lenin explained. "Class-conscious workers" realize "that the breakdown of all the national barriers by capitalism is inevitable and progressive."

The bosses have no borders when they want to exploit labor. The national borders of the employing class in each country are defined by the area within which the bourgeoisie can use its currency and its army to protect its currency. The proletariat truly has no country and should not be deceived by the divisions the wealthy rulers seek to foster with their borders.

Unions in the United States should fight to organize and win equal rights for all workers — regardless of their country of origin or whether they crossed the border without checking in with the hated *la migra*. At the same time, the labor movement should call for the cancellation of the third world debt and offer its unconditional and active solidarity to struggles by workers in Mexico, Brazil, or anywhere in the world. Workers who live and toil in Mexico can take care of organizing themselves.

In reply to our reader from behind bars in Woodbourne — it was the imperialist powers, specifically the British colonizers, who ran the Maori off their land in New Zealand, not immigrant workers. Communists stand for the right to self-determination of the Maori people. But wouldn't Maoris in any powerful upsurge of their struggle against oppression reach out to and politically attract all those who truly want to fight against racism, national chauvinism, imperialist subjugation, and capitalist exploitation? Including immigrant workers demanding equal rights? Proletarian internationalism is a principle all workers and oppressed nations can be won to. That's what the Bolsheviks proved in Russia. — MEGAN ARNEY

Farm workers picket Prime mushrooms

This column is devoted to reporting the resistance by working people to the employers' assault on their living standards, working conditions, and unions.

We invite you to contribute short items to this column as a way for other fighting workers around the world to read about and learn from these important struggles. Jot down a few lines about what is happening in your union, at your workplace, or other workplaces in your area, including interesting political discussions.

balance precariously without ladders between two rows to get to the highest ones.

"Then when someone gets hurt, they say it's our own fault," Calderón explained. There have also been problems of sexual harassment on the job.

Unions represented at the Publix picket line included the Maritime Workers Union; Transportation Workers Union; United Teachers of Dade County; AFL-CIO Central Labor Council; Teamsters; Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees; and the American Fed-

fronted with this group of irate unionists, leaving the kitchen open for the visiting delegates to tour at their leisure," he added.

The determination of the strikers and support from other airport workers resulted in the removal of company goons by a court order, the right for union members to make random kitchen inspections, and a court prohibition of the use of scabs working off site.

The workers rejected a "final offer" by the company of a wage freeze for three years, no more shift premiums, reduced dental coverage, no more double time for overtime, and work rule changes that would amount to speed up.

Arlene Labrador, a former student activist in the Philippines and striker, said, "The manager called us a bunch of Filipino nannies and stupid drivers during a meeting before the strike. But we're going to stand up and fight."

Support from other airport workers has been outstanding according to Dixon, "Whether it be aircraft fuelers refusing to touch aircraft catered by CLS, or doughnuts received from ramp workers, or the simple act of walking the picket line with us in the wee hours, a strong message has been sent to our employer."

NZ meat workers fight worsening conditions

TARANAKI, New Zealand — "We are fighting for a collective employment contract," meat workers at Hawera Processors told a team of *Militant* supporters who visited their picket line May 25. The workers are one of two groups of members of the Meat Workers Union of Aotearoa in the Taranaki region who have taken action to defend their jobs, wages, and their union in recent weeks.

At Riverlands Beef in Eltham, 110 workers have been locked out for twelve weeks. Riverlands is de-

manding wage cuts averaging 36 percent across the whole plant. The company's contract offer would drop from about NZ\$23 per hour at present to about NZ\$15 per hour (NZ\$1 = US\$0.67). Laborers would drop from NZ\$17 to NZ\$12 per hour. The company is also demanding job cuts and increased output.

The workers have not had a cost-of-living raise since 1989. Since they are piece workers, all pay increases since then have been achieved by increasing output. In 1993 their piece rate was cut 7.8 percent.

The union members are picketing the plant. Freezers on the site are being operated by management staff to process production from the company's non-union killing plant at Bulls.

Meanwhile, at nearby Hawera Processors, 45 meat workers are into their sixth week of a strike. After the plant was privatized in 1989, the new owners began withholding union fees deducted from the workers' wages and refused to forward them to the union. Later the company de-unionized the plant and put workers on individual contracts.

When a night shift was hired earlier this year, their wages were significantly lower.

One worker told us that he was persuaded to go onto the night shift, and found that despite going up to a higher skill grade, his wages dropped by NZ\$200 per week. While most piece workers earn about \$16 per hour, one contract offered to nightshift workers guarantees them no more than the legal minimum wage of NZ\$6.25 per hour.

Pickers reported that occasionally they have processed double the number of carcasses per worker per day as the current industry norm. Nightshift workers have been denied pay for public holidays.

The strike began when the boss told the day shift they would be laid off, while the night shift would continue working. Workers on both shifts are supporting the strike, despite mounting economic pressures.

An early attempt by the company to keep the plant running with scabs was pushed back. The strikers have joined the Meat Workers Union.

Workers at both plants are beginning to win support for their actions in the local communities.

The Hawera strikers participated in a golf tournament put on by the company for its farmer-suppliers. They entered a team in the competition, and took the opportunity to hand out leaflets explaining their stand to the farmers participating.

The Eltham workers were planning to demonstrate outside a public meeting for the rightist politician Winston Peters when he visited the region.

The Meat Workers Union is organizing speakers from both facilities to tour the unionized plants, and collections to support the strikers have been organized in a number of plants.

Seth Galinsky, member of United Transportation Union Local 1138 in Miami; Ned Dmytryshyn, member of International Association of Machinists Lodge 721 in Vancouver, and James Robb, member of the Meat Workers Union of Aotearoa in Auckland, New Zealand, contributed to this week's column.



Tony Savino

May 31 rally defending farm workers' union rights at Quincy Farms in Florida

ON THE PICKET LINE

MIAMI BEACH, Florida — Seventy-five unionists and others picketed outside a Publix supermarket here May 31 demanding that the store stop selling Prime mushrooms, grown by Quincy Farms.

Quincy Farms dismissed 85 workers in March after they joined a lunchtime demonstration organized by the United Farm Workers of America (UFW) calling for higher wages and better working conditions. Twenty-five workers were arrested for "trespassing."

Five farm workers fired from Quincy drove 10 hours to be part of the May 31 demonstration outside Publix, the largest grocery chain in Southern Florida.

Signs in English and Spanish reading, "Boycott Prime Mushrooms" and "Support the Farm Workers" were held up along with dozens of red flags with the farm worker symbol, a black eagle in a white circle in the middle.

The picketers gave shoppers leaflets promoting the mushroom boycott.

"We want justice," Eudocia Calderón told the crowd. "We're the ones who pick the food people eat. We deserve a better wage."

The farm workers get paid piece rates and many make less than \$5 an hour. Calderón, 26, worked at Quincy Farms outside Tallahassee for eight years before she was fired. "It's not just wages," she said in an interview. "Working there is unsafe. There are many accidents."

The workers brought pictures taken at the farm to prove their point. They often have to pick mushrooms from planters stacked 15 or 20 feet high. They have to

eration of State, County, and Municipal Employees.

There were also members of the NAACP, the National Organization for Women, the Women's Political Caucus, and the Greater Miami Rabbinical Association. Laura Garza, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. vice president, also joined the protest.

Rebecca Flores Harrington, national vice-president of the UFW, said "We won't give up until the workers at Prime have a union." The UFW has been organizing picket lines and demonstrations around the state.

Catering workers strike at Vancouver airport

RICHMOND, British Columbia — On May 14, some 180 members of Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) Local 2213 went out on strike against Cathay, Lufthansa, Skychef Catering (CLS) at the Vancouver Airport.

The majority of strikers are women. The workforce is multinational and young, composed mainly of Fijian, Chinese, Punjabi and Filipino born workers.

"From day one the company brought in goons who tried to intimidate us. By the end of the first day several strikers had been pushed around, knocked down, and had heard racist abuse," explained CAW Local 2213 bargaining committee chairman Dave Dixon.

"On day two, dozens of delegates from the Canadian Labor Congress convention being held in Vancouver arrived to bring solidarity," said Dixon. The thugs "fled when con-

LETTERS

Immigration I

I just read an article in your June 10 edition on INS raids in the Twin Cities. I must admit the "Bosses" and the INS sure do seem to be co-conspirators, and the deceitful and dehumanizing way the INS is presenting itself is appalling. I have a question, though, regarding illegal foreign workers in our union factories and plants. I thought the whole idea behind unions is to protect the workers from being exploited by the bosses. Isn't allowing non-tax paying foreign nationals to work in place of union brothers and sisters self-defeating? I am in no way defending the trampling of human rights and Gestapo tactics, but don't you think trying to organize Mexico would be a more productive solution than simply defending the illegal practice of working with out papers?

BrianMcGarity
from e-mail

Immigration II

The position set forth by Terry Coggan in his essay "Immigration is a right" is confusing. He seems

to defend the right of anyone to immigrate to New Zealand, but he also defends the land rights of the Maoris, which means their right to stop anyone from immigrating into their land without their permission. This is a contradiction which needs to be explained. If his point is that capitalists should not be allowed to control immigration for their pursuit of private property, I heartily agree. But if he makes the right of anyone to go and live where they please into a sacred principle, he is being absurd.

Is Cuba supposed to allow unlimited immigration from Haiti and other neighboring countries? Even when we have world-wide socialism, where everyone who can work will be required to have some useful occupation, if there are no jobs available in an area people will not be allowed to immigrate there to live and work. And there will be other restrictions on immigration, such as the effect people and their activities will have on the environment.



We need to develop international labor solidarity to build up the working class and the economies of all countries, as well as demand that all residents of a country should have equal rights, even "illegal" immigrants. Many individual capitalists favor unlimited immigration,

because they can use the enlarged surplus labor pool to drive wages down. But the capitalists-as-a-class (the capitalist state) fears unlimited immigration, since it brings in masses of people who have no loyalty to their capitalist state, they wonder what all the Mexican immi-

grants will do, if it becomes necessary for the United States to intervene militarily in Mexico to keep that country under control.

This whole problem of immigration is very complex, and interwoven with the problems of nationalism and ethnic identity, as well as who "owns" or controls the land and water and other natural resources in different parts of the world. These problems call for different tactics to fit different circumstances. One only causes confusion by oversimplifying these problems, and setting up slogans and making them into principles instead of the tactics they really are.

A prisoner
Woodbourne, New York

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. 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.

France: workers rally against gov't policies on wages, unemployment

BY NAT LONDON

PARIS — A little yellow sticker summed up the mood of tens of thousands of angry workers as they hit the streets of Paris in a series of demonstrations the first week of June. "Juppé," warned the sticker, "the rail workers are back to kick your a...!!!" referring to Prime Minister Alain Juppé.

The June 7 Paris financial daily *La Tribune Desfossés* described the demonstrations of rail workers, gas, electric and telecommunication workers, teachers, and retirees as "impressive" mobilizations, preparing a "hot offensive" by the unions in the fall against the scourge of unemployment and government wage policy. "The Unions Send a Warning to Juppé for the Fall" said the paper's main headline.

On May 23, 10,000 workers demonstrated in Paris and thousands more in other cities demanding a reduction in the work week with no cut in pay to create more jobs.

Unemployment in France is at 11.9 percent and has hovered around this level for several years. Increasing numbers of French workers see a shorter work week as a solution to this problem. According to public opinion polls, 41 percent of the French population held this view in 1994. This figure rose to 51 percent last year and now stands at 60 percent. A majority of workers now believe that there should be no cut in pay if working hours are reduced.

On May 30, some 90 local actions drew tens of thousands of retired workers into the streets. One week later, 5,000 retired workers demonstrated in Paris. The retirees are protesting their declining purchasing power.

As part of the Juppé plan to slash social security, taxes have been raised on retirement pensions. Exemptions from paying some type of social security taxes, which are withheld from workers' paychecks, have been lifted. Last fall, massive strikes and demonstrations forced Juppé to back off on some of the elements of his plan. He abandoned his efforts to raise the retirement age for 5.5 million public workers. One million work days were lost during the December strikes alone.

On June 1, more than 10,000 teachers demonstrated in Paris to protest threatened cutbacks in public employment. Many of the banners angrily pointed to Juppé's recent remarks that the civil service system creates "bad fat." The prime minister announced budget restrictions to get rid of this "excess weight" that will result in layoffs.

Three days later, thousands of telecommunication workers took a turn in a one-day national strike and local demonstrations. According to management of France Télécom, some 32 percent of the 155,000 telecommunication workers walked off the job — slightly less than their last one-day strike April 11.

"We are all really worried about the restructuring of France Télécom and the privatization of its most profitable sectors," said one demonstrator, sporting a badge of the CGT, his union. "Workers will be forcibly transferred to other areas of France. A multi-tiered system will replace the current



Workers in France demonstrate in defense of public services, jobs, and wages.

system of public services as an equal right to everyone in the country."

The high point of the week of actions was the two massive demonstrations in Paris on June 5 and 6, first by 40,000 gas and electric workers from all over France followed by an equal number of railroad workers next day. Delegations vied with each other in ingenuity, with waves of giant balloons and banners, whistles, firecrackers, horns used by rail work crews to warn approaching trains, smoke grenades, and railroad flares. Demonstrators in hard-hats and costumes carrying all sorts of noisemakers and shouting "All together, all together" — the slo-

gan of last fall's strike wave — gave the two actions a spirited and combative air.

Didier, a member of the CGT and an electrical worker from Tours, saw the ending of the state monopoly in electricity as the first step towards privatization. Different rates would be charged for electricity in different regions "as is now done in Britain," he said. He also wanted overtime work to be stopped so that EDF, the state electrical company, would have to hire the unemployed.

Didier stopped by a table featuring copies of the Marxist magazine *Nouvelle Internationale* and books by Pathfinder Press to buy a copy of the theses of the trade

union congress recently held in Cuba. He and 200 other members of the CGT union at EDF had just come back from a trip to Cuba where they had participated in a marathon race and in the May Day demonstrations. Didier is now working on setting up a sister relationship between his union in Tours and unions in Camagüey, Cuba. He was very interested to hear about plans for a world trade union conference to be held in Cuba next year.

José Perez from Rouen, a leader of the rail strike last fall as well as of the previous rail strike in 1986, said there is a threat to rail as a public service. "They want to close thousands of kilometers of unprofitable lines, leaving many regions without rail service," he said. Gas, electric, and rail utilities, the post office, and the telephone system were all recognized as public services following the liberation of France from Nazi occupation near the end of World War II. They are state monopolies, and everyone is considered to have the right to access to these services at the same fixed rate.

Freddie Roberts and Terry Barrett came to the railroad workers demonstration. Both are among 500 Merseyside dock workers from Liverpool, England, who were fired last September for refusing to cross a picket line. They have been invited for an 11-day tour by the CGT and by rail workers in the new union SUD. They will be visiting Paris and Rouen in Normandy looking for support in their struggle. "We all have the same aim," Roberts said. "To make things better for the working class and to let the bosses know we won't be threatened and pushed around."

Nat London is a member of the CGT at the Renault plant at Choisy-le-roi. Jean-Pierre Dubois contributed to this article.

Sinn Fein protests exclusion from Ireland talks as rightists walk out

BY PAUL DAVIES AND PETE CLIFFORD

LONDON — "It is with frustration and a sense of anger that Sinn Fein views the opening of talks today in Belfast," said Belfast City Sinn Fein Councillor Pat McGeown June 10. He was addressing a London press conference at the House of Commons, on the opening day of talks organized by the British and Irish government at Stormont Castle in Northern Ireland. McGeown began a speaking tour of Britain as other Sinn Fein leaders demanded their inclusion in the talks from outside the gates of Stormont.

On the third day of talks, two right-wing parties, the Democratic Unionists and UK Unionists, stormed out of the talks to protest the appointment of former U.S. Senator George Mitchell as chair.

Explaining Sinn Fein's position, McGeown said, "We and our people are angry because while the British government declared that an elective process 'would lead immediately... to the convening of all party negotiations.' Here we are after an election with the British government denying the democratic outcome."

Speaking alongside McGeown at Westminster June 10, Labour MP Tony Benn said "to exclude [Sinn Fein] would be to disenfranchise all those who freely chose to vote in the recent Northern Ireland Forum elections.... The delay in advancing the peace process since the cease-fire has been due to the failure of the British government to respond to the opportunity."

Later that day, Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams, chief negotiator Martin McGuinness, and 15 other elected Sinn Fein officials were excluded from the opening of the

talks by the British and Irish governments on the grounds that the Irish Republican Army had not declared a cease-fire. They received a record high of 15.5 percent of the vote in the May 30 elections, the fourth highest vote among the different parties.

The elections were imposed by the British government in order to select representatives to participate in the June 10 talks. Attending the negotiations are nine parties, including two aligned with the rightist Loyalist death squads.

On June 5 an IRA statement explained it "will not be decommissioning its weapons.... It will never leave nationalist areas defenseless this side of a final settlement."

Prior to the meeting leaders of various unionist (pro-British) parties condemned the decision of the British and Irish governments to appoint former U.S. senator George Mitchell as chairperson of the talks. Deputy leader of the Ulster Unionists John Taylor complained, "This appointment is the equivalent of an American Serb presiding over talks on the future of Croatia." Democratic Unionist leader Ian Paisley said Mitchell would be "some sort of Pope sitting over all the talks."

Speaking in London, Sinn Fein leader McGeown pointed to how the British government had always "resisted the internationalization of the conflict in Ireland." The appointment of Mitchell, he said, "shows a sign of weakening on this question."

The first day of the talks turned into a debate over who would chair and what would be on the agenda. Paisley threatened that his party would walk out if Mitchell was in the chair. In response, after Prime Minister John Major's address, the chair was handed to Northern Ireland secretary Patrick

Mayhew. The question of the chair remained unresolved at the end of the session. The speeches of the British and Irish prime ministers were meant to be shown live on BBC, but the British government pulled the plug a half-hour before, fearing this wrangle would become a focus for TV coverage.

Instead the *Independent* reports, "While the Prime Minister was opening the talks, the cameras instead feasted on the strong simple image of the republicans being denied a place at the table."

In response to their exclusion, Adams and other Sinn Fein leaders fielded questions and interviews for several hours at the gates of Stormont. Adams issued the speech he had planned to make at the opening of the talks, entitled "Transforming Hope Into Reality." In the speech Adams outlined Sinn Fein's objectives. "It is our intention to put the union (with Britain) on the agenda. Negotiations are an area of struggle," he said. "The claim of the British government to sovereignty in Ireland, is the key matter which must be addressed in any negotiation." Adams added that "the whole issue of demilitarization needs to be resolved. This includes the release of political prisoners, disarmament, policing, the administration of justice and an end to repressive legislation."

In other developments, three days before the opening of the talks, British police seized five people in South Armagh, Northern Ireland, and one in London who they claimed were responsible for the February 9 bombing of Canary Wharf in the British capital. By June 9 they were forced to release two of those detained. Just weeks before, London admitted that forensic evidence used to convict several Irish prisoners had been extracted in a contaminated machine.

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