

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Cuban workers win battle of sugar harvest

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Protest denounces church burnings

BY MARTIN BOYERS

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina — Some 350 people held a protest meeting here at the Friendship Missionary Baptist Church to condemn the 18-month wave of racist arson attacks on about 40 Black churches in the South. Participants at the June 22 "Community Service of Unity" adopted a resolution condemning the burnings.

"We can't remain silent," the resolution stated. "We call upon the president of the United States and police agencies to capture, prosecute, and punish those responsible for those acts." Larry Hill, pastor of Matthews-Murkland Presbyterian Church, presented the statement. Matthew-Murkland's historic 1903 sanctuary was destroyed by a fire June 6.

Hill called upon state authorities to investigate racist and religious attacks. Other speakers at the meeting cited the support the victimized churches received from individuals and organizations throughout the world. They launched a drive to raise \$50,000 to rebuild the damaged churches.

Rev. John Mendez, representing National Council of Churches, described this as "one of the most important moments in the history of the nation.... Many politicians have decided that the way to get elected is to see who can be the biggest bigot of them all."

Meanwhile, a former union hall that was

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'Pathfinder mural stood as a beacon of hope'

BY MEGAN ARNEY

NEW YORK — "The Pathfinder mural proudly stood as a beacon of hope for all who had the good fortune to see its light," said Cliff Joseph, the artist who painted civil rights leader Martin Luther King and anti-apartheid activist Steve Biko on the mural. Joseph was speaking to some 150 people gathered June 23 at the yard in front of the six-story painting on the south wall of the Pathfinder building, located in Manhattan's Greenwich village by the Hudson river.

Union members, students, artists, people from the neighborhood, and others came to celebrate the mural's nearly 10-year history and the recent advances in production and sales of revolutionary books distributed by Pathfinder Press. The festive event included displays of the history of the mural, tours of the Pathfinder building — which houses the publisher's offices and printing plant — literature displays and a book sale, music, poetry, food, and a panel of speakers.

'Honorable removal of mural'

"I will always cherish the enriching experience of being a participant with brother and sister artists from around the world," Joseph said. Some 80 artists from 20 countries painted the mural, which features portraits of working-class leaders and revolutionaries whose works Pathfinder publishes. Joseph recalled the time when the mural was attacked by the editors of the *New York Post*

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U.S. out of Mideast now!

The following statement was released June 26 by James Harris and Laura Garza, Socialist Workers candidates for president and vice president of the United States.

Workers and farmers in the United States and throughout the world should demand the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops and military hardware from the Middle East.

The roots of the attack on a U.S. military installation in Saudi Arabia lie in the decades-long imperialist oppression and exploitation of workers and peasants in the region and the plunder of the natural resources in the Middle East that Wall Street considers as its own. The latest round of these attempts at domination have been the bloody U.S.-led assault on Iraq in 1991, Washington's backing of the colonial settler state in Israel, and the U.S. rulers' unceasing efforts to erase once and for all the legacy of the 1979 Iranian revolution.

Trying to impose a regime more subservient to Washington, U.S. bomber planes and armored vehicles mowed down more than 150,000 Iraqis, many of them fleeing civilians or soldiers, during the Persian Gulf War. Now, U.S. troops have set up a permanent presence in Saudi Arabia to defend capitalist control of the oil fields and an increasingly weak monarchy, and enforce sanctions against Iraq — an embargo that has led to the deaths of an estimated half million children since 1991.

These actions, along with Washington's military and economic support for Tel Aviv and its subjugation of the Palestinian people, are what have earned the U.S. government the enmity of the peoples of the Mideast.

Working people the world over should rejoice in the growing numbers of militants — from Saudi Arabia to Palestine and

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Reuters/Rula Halawani

June 18 protest in Ramallah, West Bank, demands release of Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli jails. One woman wears handcuffs to highlight her two brothers' plight. Workers should rejoice at growing resistance to imperialism, SWP candidates said.

U.S. base bombed in Saudi Arabia

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

A truck bomb exploded June 25 in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, demolishing an apartment complex that housed 2,900 U.S. military personnel and some soldiers from France and Britain. At least 19 U.S. soldiers were killed and more than 300 people wounded in the bombing, which left a crater 35 feet deep and 85 feet wide. Washington said all the casualties were U.S. personnel, but Saudi officials stated that about 150 of those wounded were Saudi.

The explosion occurred less than one month after the Saudi government beheaded four men convicted for the November 1995 car bombing of a U.S. military compound in Riyadh, the capital city. Five U.S. citizens and two people from India died from that blast. Saudi militants had warned they would attack Washington's military centers if the executions were carried out, reported the *New York Times*.

The explosion was among the most

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Hundreds rally for McDonnell strike

BY MARY MARTIN

ST. CHARLES, Missouri — Hundreds of striking machinists and supporters gathered at the Horse Palace here June 22 for a hog roast and support rally for International Association of Machinists (IAM) District 837 members who are on strike against McDonnell Douglas Corp.

No new negotiations are set in the strike, which began June 5 over job security, health insurance, and pensions. McDonnell's main goal is to eliminate 1,700 jobs through outsourcing and job combination. In the third week of the strike the company began to carry out its publicly announced plan to bring in replacement workers.

According to an IAM international union

official, Matt Bates, 47 workers from the company's nonunion aircraft plant in Mesa, Arizona, began work in late June in Building 27. Bates said they are assigned to do the work of 100 people who before the strike were spread out over three shifts.

Union president Jerry Oulson led the strikers in a moment of silence to commemorate McDonnell Douglas test pilot Jeffrey Crutchfield, who died June 19 when the F/A-18C Hornet Fighter plane he was flying crashed and burned. This aircraft was overhauled and put together again in the St. Louis McDonnell Douglas facility. Many strikers who had been working on this particular aircraft said they were horrified to realize that this plane, unfinished at the time of the

strike, was worked on and signed off by the plant supervisors and engineers.

Seven of these workers spoke to the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* about their concerns on condition of anonymity for fear of company reprisals. Media attention here has focused on the fact that the complex operations of aircraft overhaul and assembly cannot be easily or quickly handed over to untrained workers, including salaried engineers and supervisory personnel.

Striking flight mechanic Ron Bedsworth, who has several years experience on F-18s and experimental planes, told the *Militant* that safety questions in aircraft assembly should be paramount. "You've got to have shift tie-ins [shift change reports], final checks and double checks, and a second pair of eyes," looking at all aircraft assembly work. "If we had been in there, this wouldn't have happened," he said. "There is no way engineers would be as proficient in this work as someone who does it year in and year out. It is a travesty that the pilot had to lose his life."

The St. Louis Labor Council, AFL-CIO, had launched an appeal for all union organized workers in St. Louis to give \$5 each to the strike. The campaign, launched last week by labor council President Robert Kelley, is called "\$Five for the Fight."

Participants in the June 22 rally consumed eight donated hogs, all dubbed either Herb or Harry after McDonnell president Herbert Lanese and CEO Harold Stonecipher. Eddie Star, a steelworker and labor singer, was among the local artists who provided musical entertainment. A few speakers gave greetings to the rally including Dawn Donahui, a participant in the AFL-CIO program for youth called "Union Summer."

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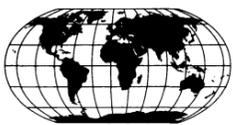


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S. Korean workers win strikes

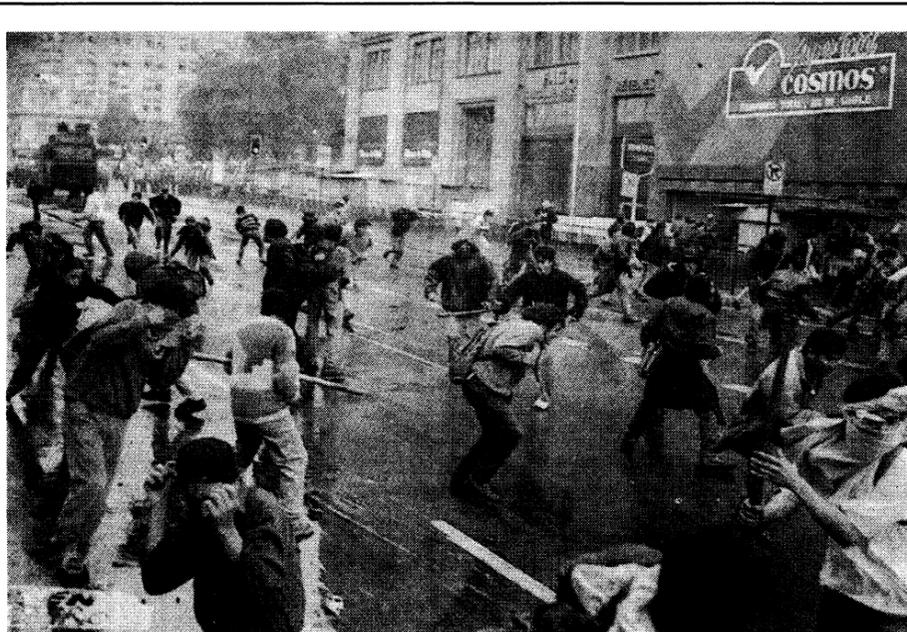
The South Korean government and major employers conceded major union demands on June 20 to avert strikes and other labor actions from spreading throughout industry. A day earlier, Seoul had declared walkouts by subway and telecommunications workers illegal and threatened to use police force to break them. But at the last minute, the government announced agreement to most demands by 48,000 unionists at Korea Telecom, the state telephone company, and the subway system in Seoul and Pusan, the country's two largest cities. These include reinstating 21 workers fired for supporting the Korea Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU) and an 8 percent wage increase. "We are taking a more mature attitude to labor relations," said a government spokesperson. The outlaws KCTU scored gains in the conflict. The union federation organized the industrial actions to push for higher wages and reforms in the labor laws, including its own recognition.

Workers at Mando Machinery, South Korea's largest car parts company, ended a three-day walkout after winning an 11 percent pay hike. That strike crippled the country's auto industry. Hyundai Motors Corp., for example, the number one carmaker, was forced to suspend production. At the second largest car manufacturer, Kia Motors Corp., workers also ended a three-day strike June 21 after winning most of their demands.

Political unrest in Indonesia

Government forces within the opposition Indonesia Democratic Party (PDI), moved against party leader Megawati Sudarnoputri. Police attacked a rally of some 5,000 people defending Megawati June 20, killing one, injuring nearly 130 people and arresting 73 protesters. The demonstration was protesting the military-backed faction's attempt to oust her as party leader.

The faction had launched a five-day congress — supported and encouraged by the government — with the aim of ousting Megawati and replacing her with a military sanctioned candidate. Some 2,800 soldiers



Police tear gas and water cannon a student demonstration in Santiago, Chile, protesting a new law on financing education. Thousands marched to the presidential palace in early June, where they pelted the police with rocks and Molotov cocktail.

were assigned to guard the PDI congress, which did dismiss Megawati and installed a new leadership to the liking of the ruling party and army. Indonesia has been governed dictatorially by president Suharto for 30 years, but his organization, the Golkar Party, slipped from 73 percent to 68 percent in the last round of voting.

House passes sanctions on Iran

On June 19 the House of Representatives unanimously passed economic sanctions against companies in third countries that do business in Iran and Libya. President William Clinton has endorsed the bill, which is expected to be easily approved in the Senate. If the bill is signed into law, it will impose at least two penalties on foreign companies investing more than \$40 million in Iranian oil and gas development. Sanctions include barring U.S. banks from lending more than \$10 million to those corporations, and excluding the companies from exporting any goods or

services to the U.S. In March, the Clinton administration signed into law even more severe penalties on companies investing in Cuba. Several European, Arab and other governments have denounced the U.S. trade offensive against their interests registered by these new measures.

Karadzic for president

Serbian Democratic Party leaders in Pale, Bosnia, announced Radovan Karadzic as their presidential nominee June 20. According to the Bosnian Serb news agency SRNA, Karadzic was the only nominee put forward. The U.S.-designed Dayton accords — which call for the partition of Bosnia and are being implemented by 20,000 U.S. troops stationed in the Yugoslav republic — prohibit Karadzic from running for office.

The chauvinist Bosnian Serb leader and his military chief, General Ratko Mladic, are charged with war crimes by an international tribunal set up in Hague by the imperialist powers intervening in Yugoslavia. Colum Murphy, a spokesman for Carl Bildt — the former Swedish prime minister who is overseeing the civilian implementation of the Dayton accords — said referring to Karadzic, "The man has to go. Sooner better than later."

Arab League meets in Cairo

Government representatives from 21 of the 22 Arab countries in the Middle East and North Africa concluded a two-day summit in Cairo June 23. The gathering included PLO chairman Yasir Arafat. Iraq was the only Arab head of state absent from the meeting.

The final communiqué called on the new Israeli regime to permit Palestinians to es-

tablish an independent state in the occupied territories with East Jerusalem as its capital and said renewed tension could not be avoided if Tel Aviv does not follow this course. "One-sided demands that harm security are not reconcilable with peace talks," responded Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Liberian refugee ship returns

After 22 days at sea, trying to find another country to port, the cargo ship *Zolotista* was forced to return to Liberia. The ship, which departed from Liberia on May 26 with 450 refugees fleeing the civil-war-torn country, was turned away by every state on the western shore of Africa. It was the second ship with refugees from Liberia to be refused by numerous countries. The first was the *Bulk Challenge*, with 1,800 people aboard, which was finally able to port in Ghana in May after being stranded at sea for two weeks.

Haitian paramilitary chief set free by Washington

Emmanuel Constant, former head of a hated paramilitary group in Haiti, was set free June 14 by U.S. authorities. He had been held for more than a year in a detention center in Maryland, pending a deportation order to Haiti issued by a U.S. immigration judge last year. Constant fled Haiti after being charged of supervising murders, rapes, and torture of opponents of U.S.-backed military regimes. He has also admitted to being a paid informant of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Immigration officials said Constant still faces deportation and is under supervision.

Ruling saps 'three strikes' law

California's Supreme Court ruled June 20 that judges have the right to disregard a defendant's previous record in deciding sentences. This decision strikes a blow against the "Three-strikes law" passed in 1994 that makes sentences after repeated convictions harsher, and says that those sentenced for the same crime for the third time may receive from 25 years to life.

Over 16,000 people have been sentenced to stiffer prison sentences under this law, and may now appeal those sentences. Critics say the law is used disproportionately against African Americans and other oppressed nationalities.

Cop charged in N.Y. beating

A grand jury has indicted a New York City police detective on a charge of first-degree assault. The jury indicted officer Constantine Chronis with assault rather than attempted first-degree murder. Chronis, who pleaded not guilty, is charged with holding witnesses at bay with a gun while his companion beat Shane L. Daniels, who is Black, outside a Westhampton Beach nightclub last month.

— MEGAN ARNEY

THE MILITANT

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Mural celebration

Continued from front page

and right-wing columnist Patrick Buchanan in 1989 and later vandalized with paint bombs, shortly after it was inaugurated. "There are those who opposed its message," Joseph said. They would have wanted a "violent destruction" of the mural. "Today, Pathfinder is organizing its honorable removal with the carefulness and love in which it was created."

Maggie Trowe, director of Pathfinder's printshop, also spoke. "We are celebrating many things today," she said. "The mural, the increased sales of Pathfinder books to fighting workers and youth around the world, and advances in organizing production of a steady stream of new books and reprints so that the young militants of today won't find a single revolutionary title out of stock when they reach for it."

Over the course of seven-and-a-half years since the project was completed, Trowe said, the wind, rain, and sun have taken a heavy toll on the mural's physical condition and appearance. Under the bright afternoon sun, those present could see the colors faded and the paint chipped or curling on many spots. At the event, guests also had a chance to buy a color poster that shows the mural in its initial condition.

"The mural once portrayed in vibrant color portraits a festival of the oppressed and exploited rising up," Trowe said. "But with the passage of time, it no longer conveys the same message it once did, and it can no longer be repaired. For that reason it will be taken down later this summer, and the wall will be covered in a way that will keep open the possibility of painting another mural in the future."

This decision coincides with Pathfinder's plans to repair the stress cracks in the wall on which the mural is painted, another reason requiring the mural's removal. The wall

must be fixed, Trowe said, because, "we are confident we will need this building and the book production it houses well into the twenty-first century." By the time the celebration began, some \$20,000 had been raised toward a \$100,000 capital fund for the building repairs. This figure rose to \$28,000 by the end of the event.

Participants also contributed to another fund to finance a billboard-size reproduction of the mural that will be mounted on the six-story wall where it is currently painted. Volunteers at the Pathfinder Mural bookstore, an outlet adjacent to the mural, announced later that \$3,000 has been raised toward the \$12,000 billboard fund.

Several artists who could not be present sent greetings. Carole Byard of New York, who painted Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman and Malcolm X on the mural, was one of them (see text of her letter below). Chris Spotted Eagle, a Native American filmmaker from Minneapolis, Minnesota, also sent a message. Sam Manuel, director of the mural project also addressed the gathering, explaining the origin, history, and purpose of the mural. "Fidel [Castro's] smiling face is only a stone's throw from Wall Street," he noted. "Isn't that getting in the face of the ruling rich?", some would ask us. Our answer is no! Nothing we did was for them. The mural was made for working-class fighters," he said.

Many tour facilities

Before the program began, and after its conclusion, many of those present visited the facilities inside the Pathfinder building. Over 75 people participated in a dozen tours guided by volunteers who work in the print shop and the editorial departments. Guests were able to see the machines on which the books are designed, printed, and finished, as well as the editorial offices of Pathfinder and the *Militant* newspaper. Two of the tours were given in Spanish for guests from the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico and Costa Rica.

Many young people came to the celebration, including three from Boston. One was Elaine Lowe, a 17-year-old activist preparing to help rebuild some of the Black churches that have recently been damaged or destroyed by racist arsons in the South.

When asked why she came to the celebration, Lowe explained, "I became involved with the Young Socialists in protesting [ultrarightist Patrick] Buchanan when he came to Lexington, Massachusetts, this winter. I really like the mural, the tour of the Pathfinder Building, and seeing books being made." Asked about the mural, she replied, "It's beautiful. It's the definition of artistic freedom, a way to express yourself through revolution. Even though the mural is coming down, people should still come and visit the place."

A highlight of the event was learning more about the history and future of Pathfinder. In her talk Trowe pointed to the publisher's ability in the last few months to produce more than a book a week. She added that the Pathfinder printshop has increased its production of books this year to 20 so far, compared with 29 during the en-



Militant/Eric Simpson

"The mural was made for working-class fighters," said Sam Manuel.

tire year in 1995.

"This month we are producing seven books," she said, "including *Labor's Giant Step, Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Spain, Socialism on Trial, Fidel Castro's Political Strategy, and The Marxist Theory of Alienation*." The shop is also reprinting issue no. 2 of *Nueva Internacional*, the Spanish-language sister publication of the Marxist magazine *New International*.

Volunteers in the shop are in the process of producing a CD-ROM with all the issues of *New International* and its predecessors since its founding in 1934, which will be available for sale by the end of the year. "This will make accessible to thousands around the world the invaluable contributions to Marxist theory and politics contained in the magazine," Trowe said. Those who toured the facilities had a chance to see a first-hand demonstration of how the new CD-ROM works.

Other speakers included Rafique Benali, a member of the Young Socialists from France, who met a Pathfinder sales team in Paris during the massive strike wave last fall, and Ray LaForest, an organizer for the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees in New York. LaForest said he first appreciated the importance of Pathfinder's publishing program when he began preparing a forum on the occupation of the Guantánamo Naval Base in Cuba by U.S. forces. When he asked for research material at other bookstores, he said, he was directed to Pathfinder.

Dave Prince, business manager of Pathfinder Press, told the crowd about the efforts of the publisher to increase sales of revolutionary books around the world. From picket lines to international book fairs, supporters of Pathfinder are finding more and more interest in communist politics, he said. Prince pointed to the importance of the main distributors of its books — the 36 Pathfinder outlets around the world. The newest

store just opened in Athens, Greece. Prince told guests that because Pathfinder has sold over 3,500 copies of *The Communist Manifesto* and 600 copies of *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* in the last year, they have had to go back to press on these and many more titles. "Pathfinder is making sure these books remain in circulation."

Artists perform

After the talks, musician, Robert McKenzie was introduced with several artists who donated their time and talent for entertainment. They included vocalist Carol Towner; Eric Levine, folk singer, Professor Louie, a poet; drummer Fast Eddie; and musicians Dan Furhman and Richie Ariza.

McKenzie, a 25-year-old auto worker at the General Motors plant in Tarrytown, New York, sang a tribute to the liberation struggle in Angola and the role of Cuban volunteers in defeating the invading apartheid army of South Africa. "I want to be part of the event, part of the struggle," he said. "The mural is standing up for poor people."

The celebration drew nine people from Philadelphia, four from Boston, and a few from as far as Toronto and Paris. Several passers-by were attracted by the festivities and joined in for a period of time.

For some in the crowd it was the first time seeing the mural first-hand. Jennifer Reeves came to the celebration after hearing about it from a friend. She said the mural is "amazing. I wanted to come to find out more about Pathfinder." Reeves and others pointed to the international and inclusive character of the mural depicted by the 150 portraits of revolutionary fighters.

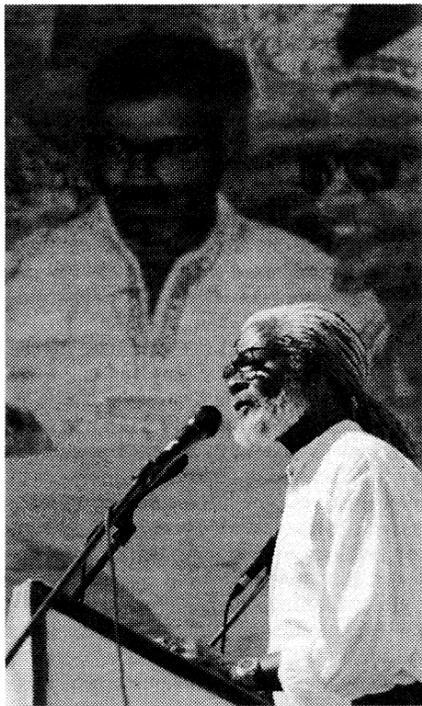
Truth must be told

Among the crowd were long-time residents of the neighborhood. One woman, who has lived nearby for nearly 30 years, said she remembers when the mural was being painted. Today, she sends many who visit her in the West Village to see the mural. "The more people, the better it is. I think people have to know what is going on. That's what Pathfinder stands for," she said.

Many young activists also came, including Lorena Gaibor, a national coordinator for the U.S.-Cuba Youth Exchange. Several pointed with pride to Pathfinder's motto, a quote by Cuban president Fidel Castro at the center of the mural: "The truth must not only be the truth, it must also be told."

Hiroko, a young immigrants rights activist from New York who is originally from Japan, was struck by the quote. "There are so many truths, but not many are told," she said. Hiroko brought her sister to the celebration, who was visiting from Japan, and translated for her during most of the event. "Sometimes the contents of these books are used by people," she stated. "That's what I like about Pathfinder, they just produce what revolutionary leaders said. If you just print their own words it means you trust that people have the ability to understand them."

Anyone who would like to make a contribution can contact Pathfinder, 410 West Street, New York, New York 10014. Contributions toward the mural reproduction and display of a history of the mural for the Pathfinder Mural Bookstore can be sent to that bookstore at 167 Charles St., New York, NY 10014.



Militant/Eric Simpson

Cliff Joseph speaks in front of mural

Jury orders damages in MOVE case

BY NANCY COLE

PHILADELPHIA — Eleven years after city officials dropped a bomb on the MOVE organization's house, killing five children and six adults, a jury found the city guilty of excessive force and ordered \$1.5 million in damages.

After dropping the bomb on May 13, 1985, officials deliberately allowed the fire to burn, leaving 61 homes destroyed and 250 residents of the block in the Black community homeless. When MOVE members tried to leave the burning building, they were fired on by police, and only two survived — Ramona Africa and 13-year-old Birdie Africa. This is the first court judgment against any of those officials responsible for the 1985 atrocity. Ramona Africa, herself seriously burned, was convicted of conspiracy and riot and spent seven years in prison.

The trial here, which began April 2, combined lawsuits by Ramona Africa and family members of two of the slain MOVE members against the city and former police and fire commissioners Gregore Sambor and William Richmond. Judge Louis Pollak dismissed charges against former Mayor Wilson Goode, declaring his decision to

drop the bomb was reasonable under the law. He found the decision by Sambor and Richmond to let the fire burn, however, questionable enough to send it to a jury.

The jury also imposed a penance on Sambor and Richmond in its June 24 verdict, ordering them to write a check to the plaintiffs for \$1 each week for the next 11 years. "Every time they sit down and write those checks, they will think about it," said juror Connie Erwin, noting the number was symbolic of the 11 people killed as well as the 11 years that have passed since the bombing.

While some supporters of MOVE's campaign to make the city pay a political price were critical of the relatively small award of damages, Ramona Africa declared it a victory. "This was not about money. MOVE doesn't give a damn about money," she told the media. "This was about a violent and vicious runaway government, this was about bombing and burning."

Nancy Cole is the Socialist Workers Party candidate for Pennsylvania attorney general. She is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 1776.

'An honor to paint mural'

The following is the message painter Carole Byard sent to the June 23 celebration of the Pathfinder mural. It was read to the audience by Brian Taylor, the program's chairperson.

I started out on the mural doing a portrait of Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman. It was an honor to paint people who inspired me so much in my life. Also I got to work on the ground.

I met so many wonderful people from all over the world. I already knew Dumile Feni [who painted Nelson Mandela on the mural] but I got to know him better. He suggested that I do Malcolm.

I thought of what an important figure in world history Malcolm was. But when Sam [Manuel] asked me to do his portrait, I said I don't think I can. It was three stories up.

But then I realized I had to do it in spite of my fear of heights.

Once I was up on the scaffolding it was beautiful. I wasn't afraid. The problem then was that I'm only 5 ft. 3 in. tall and Malcolm's head was 9 feet. I stretched a lot. It was a wonderful, wonderful experience.

The mural has touched a lot of people from all over. When people come to visit me even now they'll say they stopped by the mural on the way. When it's time for the next mural, count me in.

'Workers and farmers need to fight for power'

BY BILL KALMAN

DES MOINES, Iowa — "I really like what your campaign says about immigrant workers," Larry Ginter told Socialist Workers Party presidential candidate James Harris. "If we don't support these folks, it will be that much easier for the big capitalist corporations to come after all of us!"

Ginter, a hog farmer and leader of the fight in Iowa to defend working farmers against the big capitalist pork producers, had invited Harris to tour his farm during the candidate's visit to central Iowa.

The SWP candidate's Iowa tour began by participating in the delegation welcoming framed-up unionist Mark Curtis out of prison June 18.

The following day Harris met with the media including the *Des Moines Register*, the *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, *The Communicator*, and two radio stations.

Harris was able to meet with workers from Fawn Engineering in Des Moines, and the IBP packing plant in Perry, Iowa. Roberto, an IBP worker from Mexico, agreed with Harris's description of the declining world order of imperialism. "In Mexico, they charge prices based on dollars but pay us in pesos," Roberto explained. "The crisis is on top of us and we have to figure out how to survive."

"That's why my campaign points to the Cuban revolution," responded Harris.

Several campaign supporters accompanied Harris on a visit to Ginter's 140-acre farm near Marshalltown, Iowa, June 21. Ginter and his mother Alice, also active in farm protests, invited farmer Earl Sime of Story City to join in the discussion. Sime plants corn and beans and works with Ginter in the Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement (ICCI). Over a meal prepared by Alice Ginter, Harris heard about the situation facing Iowa farmers.

This past May saw record rainfall amounts that resulted in severe soil erosion in a third of the state's counties. Farmers can receive low-interest government loans to get through the bad spring only if each

county can prove a 30 percent loss in crop yields.

"I think farmers should be guaranteed income on top of our production costs," Ginter told Harris. "Everyone says that Freedom to Farm [the 1996 farm bill] lets us produce for the marketplace. But I got news for you, we don't; we take what we can from the six corporations that control food production in this country and around the world."

Harris answered, "That's why my campaign is raising the idea of workers and farmers fighting together against the ravages of capitalism, a system that turns natural disasters into social catastrophes. That's why we need a workers and farmers government, to defend the interests of the vast majority."

Sime took the opportunity of Harris's visit to show photographs he took of a hog manure lagoon that overflowed near his land due to the heavy rain. The runoff headed straight for a nearby creek.

"It's incredible," Sime said. "The head of the DNR [Iowa Department of Natural Resources] said there's no chance of environmental damage because the rainfall diluted the manure."

At a campaign meeting held at the end of his stay here, Harris shared a platform with Shirley Peña, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Senate in Iowa, and Richard McBride, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress in the 4th C.D.

A former packinghouse worker in the audience asked, "My 18-year old daughter wanted me to ask you, what can you offer people if you're elected?"

Harris responded, "The question isn't what I do, it's what you do that counts. As long as workers see elections as a way of fundamentally changing things, we're tricked. If elections really were a way of changing things, they would take them away from us. Great individuals don't make history, but masses of people do."

Bill Kalman is a member of United Transportation Union Local 867.



Militant/Bill Kalman
James Harris, SWP presidential candidate (left) at Larry Ginter's (center) farm near Marshalltown, Iowa. Farmer Earl Sime (right) is from nearby Story City.

Garza joins fights against cop brutality, for affirmative action

BY JIM ALTENBERG

SAN FRANCISCO — "This is a campaign of action," said Laura Garza. "We're interested in whether you will join in an effort to fight back against what the capitalists have in store for us." Garza, Socialist Workers candidate for vice-president of the United States, was part of a panel of fighting workers and young people who spoke at an SWP campaign rally at the Pathfinder Bookstore here June 22. The rally capped a five-day campaign tour of northern California. Fifty-four people attended the program.

Maithong Yang, who is active with the Young Socialists for Harris and Garza, told the rally that she first met Garza in Beijing, China, at the international conference on women held there last summer. Garza had a display of Pathfinder books set up outside one of the main tents, and "the books grabbed me." Yang looked up the Pathfinder Bookstore upon her return. "My life has been really exciting since then," she said. "It's exciting to be out there protesting."

A recent graduate of the University of California at Davis, Yang comes to San Francisco most weekends to campaign for the socialist candidates and sell subscriptions to the *Militant* newspaper. "I was blown away when I saw how open people are to seeing that there is another way than capitalism. America will never look the same to me again." She also explained that she is now working with others in Davis to build the U.S.-Cuba Youth Exchange trip to Cuba set for July 24-August 6.

Candidates William Clinton and Robert Dole have a lot in common, Garza said. They both agree that they should help the bosses in their assault on the workers' standard of living. Backed by both parties, the government goes after the few things in the budget that benefit working people: Social Security, welfare, Medicare. While in the Bay Area, Garza and Susan Zárate, Socialist Workers candidate for San Francisco Board of Supervisors and a member of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers, traveled to Fresno to join with a group of Chicano students marching 750 miles through the state to protest the attacks on immigrant workers and campaign in defense of affirmative action. Along the way they are holding rallies, registering people to

vote, and urging them to reject the misnamed California Civil Rights Initiative, an anti-affirmative action referendum.

Garza explained that in the face of a vicious drive against affirmative action in California, these students, members of the Chicano student organization MEChA, went to a number of groups proposing that something be done. Many told them that this is not the time. "But we did not agree," the students said. "We think this is a good time to fight." The march will culminate in widely-publicized protest actions at the Republican convention in San Diego August 12.

Garza supporter Ved Dookhum joined the march for four days soon after her tour. He sold several Pathfinder pamphlets to march participants along the way.

While in the area, Garza also joined fighters against cop brutality attending a grand jury hearing into the murder of Gustavo Soto Mesa by San Jose police. This was the first such grand jury hearing ever open to the public in San Jose, the fruit of a hard struggle by Soto Mesa's family and others willing to stand up to the city and police officials. Their protest actions have attracted others in the city who have been victims of police violence.

Jose Sandoval, of the Committee for the Defense of Human Rights in San Jose, joined Garza on the platform at the campaign rally. Speaking in Spanish, Sandoval said, "We seek justice for everyone without distinction. Previous candidates promise to solve problems. We ask the Socialist Workers candidates to take the people into account and together we will learn from each other how it is that we will solve our problems."

Steve Gordon, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress in the 8th C.D. and a member of the Young Socialists, also spoke. "Our campaign urges young people to read books, to educate ourselves on the struggles of the past and the system we see around us," he said. "We attend actions: against Buchanan; for gay rights; for striking janitors." Gordon urged rally participants to become active in the Socialist Workers campaign and Young Socialists. An appeal by the local campaign fund director, Toba Singer, raised more than \$1,400 in new pledges and contributions.

'Ask everyone to contribute'

BY GREG McCARTAN

"We are taken very seriously by the people we set out to reach," said James Harris, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. president, in a phone interview from the campaign trail. "Working people and many youth want to hear an alternative to what we face in society every day. People not only listen and discuss, but decide to get involved in activity with us and become a part of the socialist alternative itself."

"Laura Garza and I are encouraging all our supporters to use the final week of the fund

drive to organize to meet the \$90,000 goal by asking other supporters to contribute to the campaign," Harris said. "During our tour stop in Iowa, a farm activist gave a \$25 contribution before we had even asked for it. When we have set up tables with cans for money, more often than not we get contributions."

Some \$10,000 was sent in this past week, with supporters in Philadelphia, Atlanta, Peoria, Seattle, and Minneapolis-St. Paul leading the way. There is now \$50,674 in hand. Efforts by fund drive organizers in various cities to reach out more broadly with the campaign have paid off. Contributions have now come in from Colorado, Maryland, Oregon, and others states. Campaign backers in Boston say efforts along these lines in the last week will put them over the top in their \$3,500 goal.

The socialist presidential candidate noted, "There is more consciousness now on what it takes to finance a campaign," pointing to recent articles on how the Democratic and Republican parties go around laws that limit contributions to a candidate to raise millions of dollars.

"That is the way the capitalist system operates," he said. "The ruling class is going to fund the candidates they want, either through legal or illegal means, or through loopholes in their laws. Our campaign and our candidates are supported through our own resources, through small contributions by regular working people and youth who understand the importance of having a working-class voice in the elections."

"We continue to find enormous opportunities to build the Young Socialist everywhere the campaign goes," Harris added. "Of those who want to become part of the socialist alternative the greatest number are young people, many of whom want to learn more about or to join the Young Socialists in order to become more effective fighters today."

Contributions can be made payable to the Socialist Workers 1996 Campaign and sent to the address on the coupon at right.

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

	Goal	Paid	Percent
Philadelphia	4,700	4,362	93%
Seattle	5,000	4,595	92%
Atlanta	2,000	1,715	86%
Peoria	1,200	998	83%
Twin Cities	5,000	4,091	82%
Detroit	3,500	2,645	76%
Pittsburgh	5,000	3,725	75%
Boston	3,500	2,430	69%
Miami	2,000	1,270	64%
Salt Lake City	2,000	1,250	63%
Houston	2,000	1,225	61%
Newark	5,500	3,149	57%
Morgantown	500	250	50%
Brooklyn	7,000	3,375	48%
San Francisco	10,000	4,741	47%
Greensboro	1,500	690	46%
Washington, D.C.	2,000	800	40%
New York	7,000	2,796	40%
Los Angeles	8,000	2,827	35%
Des Moines	600	211	35%
Birmingham	3,200	1,098	34%
Chicago	5,000	1,240	25%
Cleveland	1,200	30	3%
Other		1,160	
Total	87,400	50,674	58%
Should be	90,000	81,000	90%

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 _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
 PHONE _____ UNION/SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION _____

Mail to: Socialist Workers 1996 Campaign, P.O. Box 2652, New York, NY 10009

SELL THE BOOKS WORKERS OF THE WORLD NEED

Join the campaign to sell Pathfinder books and pamphlets

In this week's sales column we feature a report on the sales of Pathfinder books and pamphlets at the American Booksellers Association convention.

BY JACQUE HENDERSON

CHICAGO—"Glad to see you here. These are great books. We've been carrying Pathfinder books in my store for some time and now the other stores in the chain have started ordering them," said a book buyer for a bookstore in Washington, D.C., as she stopped by the Pathfinder booth at the American Booksellers Association (ABA) convention June 15-17.

"Our first order of *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War* came in and I put it on the shelf just before I left to come here," she added. "I can't wait to find out how it's doing."

She was one of several hundred people who stopped by the booth at the three-day trade show, the largest in the United States. It was attended by independent bookstore owners and buyers, publishers, wholesalers, librarians, authors, and agents from across the US and around the world.

Those visiting the Pathfinder booth included booksellers, librarians, and publishers from Mexico, Colombia, Chile, China, South Korea, Japan, Thailand, and Russia, as well as from Europe and Africa.

The booth displayed the majority of Pathfinder's titles in front of three big displays on the Russian revolution, U.S. and world politics, and the Cuban revolution. It was staffed by volunteers from Chicago, Detroit, Twin Cities, and Peoria, Illinois, as well as a sales representative from Pathfinder's New York office.

Six independent bookstores placed orders for more than \$1,000. Some 150 people said they were interested in having a sales person from their area visit. Many more took catalogs.

Several bookstore buyers commented on the help they already get from local Pathfinder sales representatives. "We didn't see your people for quite a while," said a man from a bookstore in Provo, Utah. "But now

we have someone assigned to us who stops by every month or so. He's been a big help."

A librarian from a public library in the Midwest said she planned to reorder all of Pathfinder's Malcolm X titles. "They just keep disappearing," she said. "It's hard to get too upset about it when you know they're being read."

A buyer from a travel bookstore said they carry Ernesto Che Guevara's *Bolivian Diary*. A New York store specializing in Jewish history and culture placed an order for 13 books, including several copies each of *The History of the Russian Revolution* and *The Struggle against Fascism in Germany*, by Leon Trotsky, *The Jewish Question* by Abram Leon, and *Israel: A Colonial Settler State?*, by Maxime Rodinson.

Pathfinder's books in Spanish, French, and Russian were also popular. Two buyers said they planned to order some Pathfinder titles in Farsi for their store.

One woman who stopped to admire the new edition of *Teamster Rebellion* by Farrell Dobbs, explained how she first learned about the Teamster series, *Labor's Giant Step* and other Pathfinder books in college while studying labor history. "I found these books contained the material I needed," she said. "I make sure we carry them in my store."

June 23: 44: %
Should be: 77%

Monthly Sales of Pathfinder Books

	Through Pathfinder Bookstores			To Commercial Distributors			Total			Readers Club
	goal	sold	percent	goal	sold	percent	goal	sold	percent	members
AUSTRALIA	36	34	94%		7		36	41	114%	32
CANADA										
Toronto	90	63	70%	70	68	97%	160	131	82%	57
Montreal	72	55	76%	64	0	0%	136	55	40%	32
Vancouver	36	21	58%	28	1	4%	64	22	34%	56
Total	198	139	63%	162	69	75%	360	208	67%	145
Goal/Should be	220	169	77%	92	71	77%	312	240	77%	
NEW ZEALAND										
Auckland	65	43	66%				65	43	66%	38
Christchurch	28	12	43%				28	12	43%	13
Total	93	55	59%				93	55	59%	51
Goal/Should be	95	73	77%				95	73	77%	
SWEDEN										
Stockholm	40	67	168%	60	0	0%	100	67	67%	
UNITED KINGDOM										
London	95	99	104%	98	63	64%	193	162	84%	89
Manchester	46	37	80%	65	20	31%	111	57	51%	0
Sheffield*	14	0	0%	20	1	5%	34	1	3%	0
Total	155	136	88%	183	84	46%	338	220	65%	89
UNITED STATES										
Des Moines*	45	16	36%	35	158	451%	80	174	218%	21
Miami	35	42	120%	35	60	171%	70	102	146%	27
Boston*	65	23	35%	50	85	170%	115	108	94%	41
Atlanta	48	42	88%	32	11	34%	80	53	66%	39
San Francisco	95	48	51%	74	62	84%	169	110	65%	72
Los Angeles	120	86	72%	95	48	51%	215	134	62%	73
Washington, D.C.	54	52	96%	42	2	5%	96	54	56%	33
Philadelphia	63	20	32%	49	42	86%	112	62	55%	41
Cleveland	50	44	88%	40	0	0%	90	44	49%	18
Chicago	77	61	79%	60	3	5%	137	64	47%	8
Salt Lake City*	50	20	40%	40	18	45%	90	38	42%	40
Detroit	77	56	73%	60	0	0%	137	56	41%	47
Peoria	27	16	59%	21	3	14%	48	19	40%	19
Houston*	48	11	23%	32	13	41%	80	24	30%	35
Greensboro	41	23	56%	36	0	0%	77	23	30%	37
New York*	175	54	31%	175	41	23%	350	95	27%	77
Twin Cities	86	38	44%	67	0	0%	153	38	25%	58
Brooklyn*	165	59	36%	130	8	6%	295	67	23%	73
Newark*	171	27	16%	133	12	9%	304	39	13%	97
Seattle*	80	0	0%	60	17	28%	140	17	12%	61
Birmingham*	65	13	20%	50	0	0%	115	13	11%	54
Pittsburgh*	63	10	16%	49	0	0%	112	10	9%	32
Morgantown*	32	5	16%	25	0	0%	57	5	9%	19
Total	1687	766	43%	1355	583	42%	3042	1349	44%	1001
Goal/Should be	1800	1386	77%	1400	1,078	77%	3200	2464	77%	

* no new report

Pathfinder Press announces French-language edition of 'Action Program'

BY MICHEL PRAIRIE

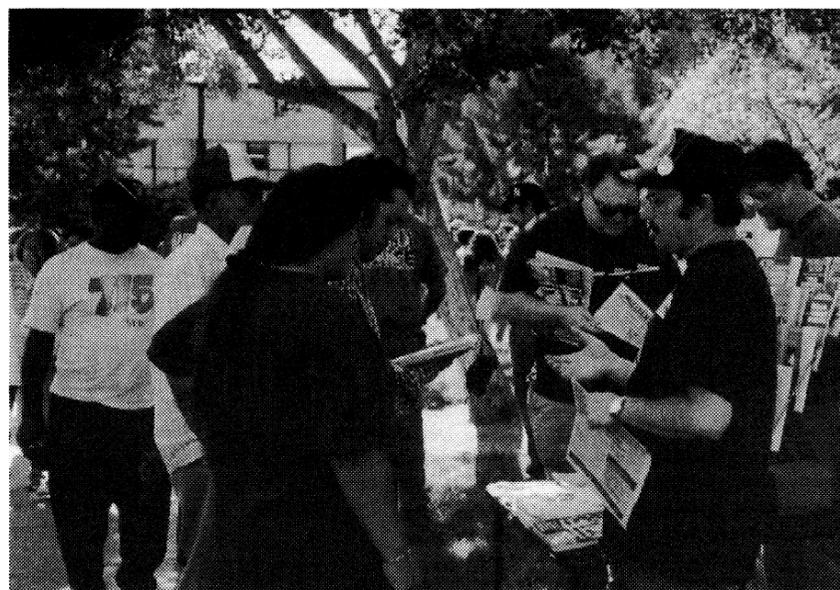
MONTREAL — Pathfinder has announced the upcoming release of a new French-language edition of the *Action Program to Face the Economic Crisis*. This 64-page pamphlet will have the same contents as the English- and Spanish-language editions by Pathfinder, with an attractive new color cover and interior design.

The *Action Program* presents a perspective that can unite working people internationally around a common struggle to defend themselves against the ravages of the capitalist depression. It outlines a perspective of an international fight by the labor movement to demand a shorter workweek with no cut in pay in order to create jobs; for affirmative action measures against discrimination on the job and elsewhere; and for the cancellation of the third world debt that bleeds workers and peasants dry in countries exploited by imperialism.

The program was issued in response to the crash of the New York Stock Exchange in October 1987. This near meltdown of one of the world's largest financial markets spread overnight to stock markets around the world, announcing the coming of an economic depression similar to the one that ravaged working people in the 1930s.

Since this pamphlet was first published by Pathfinder in 1988, millions have fought back—from workers and farmers in Brazil who are standing together to demand agrarian reform, jobs, and better working conditions, to workers and youth in France who mobilized last December against the austerity policies of the Alain Juppé government.

Immigrant workers in many countries have been in the forefront of this resistance,



Militant/Barbara Bowman

Selling *Militant* and Pathfinder books at union-sponsored rally in San José, California, June 10 demanding raise in the minimum wage.

such as those who recently protested the beating of two Mexican workers by the police in southern California. African-Americans and Chicanos in the United States are also standing up for equal rights. At the same time, Irish, Quebecois, Chechen, and Palestinian fighters stand firm in their battles for national liberation.

Since its publication, the *Action Program* was translated from English into Spanish, Icelandic, Swedish, and French. Thousands of copies have been sold around the world—at factories, mines, universities, colleges, and on street corners. The pamphlet has also been sold at protest actions organized by farmers and mobilizations to defend abortion clinics; as well as at demonstration against unemployment, police brutality, racism, and war.

The demands explained in the program have been an important part of several socialist election campaigns around the world, like the one currently led in the United States by the Socialist Workers Party candidates

for president and vice-president, James Harris and Laura Garza.

An initial French-language translation of the *Action Program* was published in 1988 and 1989 in the Montreal-based magazine *Lutte Ouvrière*. It was then reproduced in various forms in Quebec and in France. The new Pathfinder edition in French has been prepared for printing by a team of volunteer workers and students from Montreal, Paris, and Toronto, who scanned, reviewed, checked and rechecked the translations, and corrected the final text.

This addition to the French-language arsenal of the world communist movement will provide an opportunity to socialist workers to increase the overall sales of the *Action Program* in each of the languages in which it has been published, as part of the campaign to increase sales of Pathfinder titles to co-workers, strikers, and other fighting workers and youth.

Orders for bundles of the *Action Program* can be placed at the July 6-9 Active Work-

Pathfinder books sold to Co-workers

Unions	Goal	Sold	% sold	Readers Club
Canada				
IAM	13	8	62%	3
United Kingdom				
TCWU*	7	3	43%	0
AEU	10	4	40%	1
RMT	10	0	0%	1
UK Total	27	7	26%	2
United States				
UMWA*	5	3	60%	7
UAW*	100	25	25%	49
USWA*	58	11	19%	13
OCAW*	48	9	19%	27
UTU*	85	12	14%	40
UFCW*	6	0	0%	0
UNITE	42	5	12%	7
IAM*	71	0	0%	19
Total	415	65	16%	162
Goal/Should be	400	308	77%	

* No new report

As of 6/23

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—United Transportation Union.

ers and International Socialist Educational Conference in Oberlin, Ohio, or by writing to Pathfinder, 410 West Street, New York, NY, 10014.

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A Program for International Working-Class Struggle Today

\$3.00
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Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 8, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 to cover shipping and handling.

Cuban workers win battle of sugar harvest

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL
AND BROCK SATTER

URBANO NORIS, Cuba — In this sugar-producing town in Holguín province, as in many other parts of the country, working people have dubbed it *La Zafra de la Dignidad*, the Dignity Harvest.

"The sugar harvest has been a national battle," said Roberto Ricardo, secretary of the sugar workers union in this area. "Here in Holguín we came from behind. But we've just completed the harvest and produced 510,000 tons — the highest amount for any province so far.

"Now we've mobilized brigades to go to Las Tunas province and help finish the work there," Ricardo added.

Through an immense collective effort, workers, farmers, and other Cubans had harvested more than 4.4 million tons of sugar by the third week of June. They had initially expected to reach the national target of 4.5 million tons by mid-May. But the final part of the harvest has been rocky, with heavy rain slowing work in eastern provinces like Holguín and Las Tunas.

Still, Ricardo pointed out, "the harvest is already 1.1 million tons more than last year's," a substantial turnaround. This improvement has been decisive for Cuba's economic recovery over the past year.

Sugar production dropped steeply over the previous five years, reaching a 50-year low of 3.3 million tons in 1995. Production collapsed as shortages of fuel, fertilizers, pesticides, and spare parts for agricultural machinery mounted after the abrupt end in aid and trade at preferential prices with the

former Soviet bloc countries at the beginning of the decade. This economic crisis and the government's response to it is known here as the "special period."

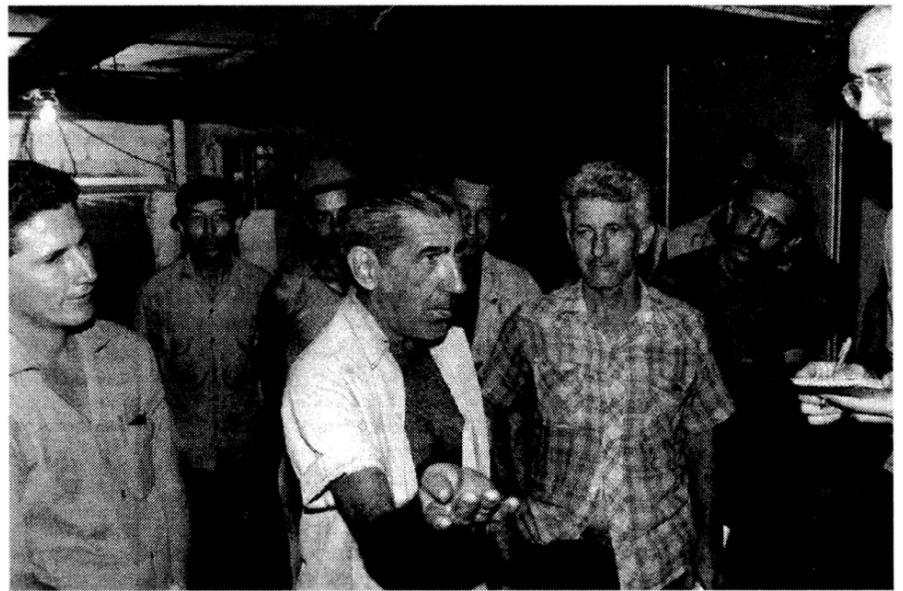
Mill workers here noted that the fight for the sugar harvest was a major part of the discussion at the recent convention of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC), the national trade union federation.

"At Urbano Noris we produced 119,000 tons of sugar — one quarter of the total for the province," said plant manager Jorge Díaz. This mill has achieved the highest production of any in the country, although workers at a couple mills in Las Tunas are still competing for that honor. With the harvest over, the mill is now undergoing thorough maintenance.

The Urbano Noris Agro-Industrial Complex here is a huge state enterprise with a workforce of 6,800. Some 1,200 of these are mill workers and most of the rest are agricultural workers. The complex includes two state farms, 16 Basic Units of Cooperative Production (UBPC), and five other agricultural cooperatives.

"Workers on the UBPCs here played a big role in the success of the sugar harvest. They were highly motivated," reported Eliécer Fonseca, general secretary of the municipal CTC. The government transformed most of Cuba's state farms into smaller UBPCs in late 1993. In these co-ops workers own their harvest, which they sell to the state, and decide themselves what to grow and how.

"Our challenge was not just cutting more cane but raising the mill's efficiency," Fonseca said. "The biggest problem wasn't the machinery, but how to train and orga-



Militant/Brock Satter

Sugar mill worker Omar Rodríguez (center) speaks to Militant reporters

nize the workforce. We prepared our troops politically. It took a lot of discussion."

A group of maintenance workers described the campaign it took to achieve the production goal. "We have machinery that's old. When it broke down, we would organize collectively to fix it," said Alberto Batista.

Mechanics would volunteer to work through the night to repair the machinery and get production up in time for the morning production shift. Some workers would

put in well over 24 hours and would have to be sent home, reported Batista.

"A lot of times we had to invent spare parts," said another worker, pointing to the U.S. company stamps on the pre-revolution machinery. Washington's trade embargo on Cuba limits the import of spare parts.

One innovation was a paint substitute workers concocted with oil and other compounds to protect the metal conveyor belts from rust. Workers who belong to the Association of Innovators and Efficiency Improvers (ANIR) helped repair turbines and other equipment, saving millions of pesos.

Luis Pérez, another maintenance worker, reported that they had found a way to repair a vulcanizing machine in the absence of spare parts. "This technique is one of our secret weapons against the Yankees," he declared.

Workers reported that on-the-job accidents at the mill were down by 50 percent over last year's harvest. Asked why, Omar Rodríguez replied, "Because consciousness

Continued on Page 10

Alarcón blasts U.S.-crafted report

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

HAVANA, Cuba — In a press conference broadcast live on television here June 24, Ricardo Alarcón accused Washington of lying and doctoring evidence to justify its slanders against the Cuban government around the February 24 shootdown of two hostile U.S. aircraft over its territorial waters.

Alarcón, president of the country's National Assembly, also presented his government's demand that the U.N. International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) take the necessary time to complete its investigation and not rush to vote on a report on its findings. He accused Washington of trying to tell the agency what to report and other abusive actions.

On June 20 U.S. undersecretary of state Peter Tarnoff had held a press conference at the White House where he quoted from the report, which ICAO council members had not yet seen. Tarnoff said the ICAO re-

port concluded that Havana downed the two "civilian" planes over international waters, not in Cuba's airspace.

Washington has used this claim to justify passage of the so-called Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act — also known as the Helms-Burton law — which escalates its economic war on Cuba.

The ICAO council convened in Montreal June 26 to discuss and vote on its investigation's findings. As we go to press, ICAO has not announced a decision.

"While Mr. Tarnoff was meeting with journalists at the White House," Alarcón said, "representatives of sovereign states on the ICAO council in the city of Montreal were wondering what had just been published that morning in the *Miami Herald* and reprinted in other U.S. media announcing Tarnoff's press conference and referring to the report," which they themselves hadn't received.

Members of Brothers to the Rescue, a

Miami-based group led by Cuban counter-revolutionaries with a long record of terrorist actions, piloted three Cessna aircraft that violated Cuba's airspace February 24. Two of the three planes were shot down after ignoring unambiguous warnings by Cuban

Continued on Page 10

'Our answer to Helms-Burton is success of sugar harvest'

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL
AND BROCK SATTER

HOLGUÍN, Cuba — "Our answer to the Helms-Burton law is the success of our sugar harvest," declared Feliberto Solano, a maintenance worker at the Urbano Noris sugar mill near this eastern city. "We are taking the first steps to economic recovery.

That's what Clinton can't stand," the 32-year-old worker said. He was referring to the measure, recently signed by U.S. president William Clinton, that tightens Washington's trade embargo.

"We're not afraid of this law. And if they [the U.S. government] ever try to invade, we'll do to them what the Vietnamese did," added Omar Rodríguez, another mill worker.

Throughout the island, the response of working people, youth, and other Cubans has been similar. "The government has translated and printed the full text of the U.S. law," said Frank Patterson, an economics student at the University of Holguín.

Another student, Wilson, added, "It has been discussed in the newspapers and on the radio and TV. An initial round of discussions was held in workplaces and schools. Now we're holding another round to get a deeper understanding about this law and U.S. policy" against the Cuban revolution.

Patterson explained that the Federation of University Students (FEU), of which he is a member, and the Union of Young Communists (UJC) recently organized seminars on the Helms-Burton law among students on campus.

"Then the FEU and UJC selected 64 of these students to form two-person teams. We had an intensive one-week discussion, two hours a day. Then we gave presentations to the university workers. Now we're going to make signs that explain different aspects of the measure," he said.

Patterson reported that "all the universities divided up the city of Holguín. Our campus was assigned a certain area. Now we're going to go to factories and other workplaces to initiate discussions on Helms-Burton. We're also going to high schools and neighborhoods. "Instead of attacking our revolution, which is an example of justice, why doesn't Clinton do something about the Black churches that are being burned down in his country?" Patterson asked.

There's still time to build trip to Cuba

BY BRIAN TAYLOR

There is still time left to get a few more young people signed up for the U.S.-Cuba Youth Exchange, July 24 - August 6. Local committees are continuing to meet new people interested in going on the trip, raise money, organize events, and make sure everyone going has a valid passport. The exchange is organized by a task force of the National Network on Cuba.

About 180 applications for the exchange have been sent in so far. While the deadline

for applications is July 1, organizers have decided to take additional participants up to the last minute, provided there's still room on the plane from Nassau, Bahamas. The task force organizing the trip decided that all travel will be through Nassau, since very few applicants indicated they wanted to travel through Montreal or Cancún, earlier considered as departure points.

Organizers from the Minneapolis-St. Paul area say they project a delegation of 30. About half are students at the University of Minnesota, who have formed Students for

Cuba and secured thousands of dollars in grants to make the trip. In addition, the local Cuba coalition has raised over \$700 for the Youth Exchange. The delegation includes a United Postal Service worker, a member of the Teamsters, and other workers. Seven Minnesota participants are Black, eight are Latino, and one is Korean-American.

Five people plan to make the trip from Detroit, including a Lebanese student. Activists have set a goal of getting 10 people to go on the trip from that city.

The Los Angeles delegation currently stands at 13. Many of the people going with that group are part of the immigrant rights struggle brewing in California. They've raised over \$600 and put out a 300 piece mailing appealing for contributions.

The San Francisco-based group Global Exchange is organizing a "Jammin in Havana" trip to Cuba earlier in July. About 10 participants in that trip have said they want to stay over to be a part of the Youth Exchange.

The New York U.S.-Cuba Youth Exchange just held a successful picnic event that raised \$200. They are projecting a dinner-dance June 29 and a poetry slam at the Nuyoriquen Poet's Cafe July 5. Three auto workers just laid off from the General Motors plant in Tarrytown, New York, are now planning to make the trip.

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 \$600 from Nassau, Bahamas.

Official deadline for application is July 1. Applications received afterwards are accepted on first-come-first-served basis.



For more information contact:

National Network on Cuba
c/o Cuba Information Project
198 Broadway, Suite 800
New York, NY 10038
212 227-3422

New 'Labor Party' won't run candidates

BY SUSAN ZÁRATE

CLEVELAND — Some 1,400 delegates and observers attended the founding convention of the Labor Party here June 6-9. The new party is structured as a group to put pressure on the Democratic and Republican parties, without running candidates of its own in the elections.

The convention was sponsored by Labor Party Advocates, an organization founded a few years ago with the backing of the top officials of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union (OCAW). Its leading figure is Anthony Mazzocchi, a former international officer of the OCAW and now assistant to the union's president Robert Wages.

Official delegations from the United Electrical Workers (UE), the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees (BMWE), and the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) attended the convention, along with many OCAW officials. The majority of the convention sessions were chaired by Wages.

Local officials from many other unions also attended, including unions representing automobile workers, machinists, steelworkers, government workers, teachers, and

social workers. Delegates were sent from many chapters of the Labor Party Advocates, organized on a geographic basis. Leading up to the convention, a number of groups calling themselves socialist or communist built the event.

Relatively few rank-and-file union members attended the convention. A group of young people who have signed on to the AFL-CIO's "Union Summer" campaign were present the first day or two, but their attendance dwindled sharply after that.

No to ban on endorsing Democrats

Almost all discussion and debate at the four-day convention centered on proposals for the new party's constitution and program. Early on, a proposed amendment to the constitution that would prohibit the Labor Party from endorsing Democratic or Republican party candidates was overwhelmingly defeated. Opponents of the amendment, including top officials of the OCAW, said such a decision would irrevocably split the party.

While the proposed program, "A Call for Economic Justice," included some demands favoring affirmative action, a shortened

workweek, and "an immigration policy that does not discriminate on any basis," no discussion on these issues reached the floor of the convention. Nor was there any discussion about Washington's deepening war drive, recent U.S. attacks against Cuba, nor any other international issues.

This narrow "American" focus of the Labor Party was pointedly raised by one convention participant at a reception hosted by the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC), which had a sizable delegation at the convention.

After an address by FLOC leader Baldemar Velázquez, María Guardado, an activist in an immigrant-rights coalition in Los Angeles spoke up. "I am a survivor of torture by the death squads in El Salvador," she said, noting that the CIA and other U.S. governmental agencies trained these murderers.

It is Washington's foreign policy and the economic stranglehold that U.S. big business maintains on the Third World that causes much of the misery around the world, Guardado explained. "There was one small reference to immigration policies in the [Labor Party] program document, but the fact

that workers are forced to come to the U.S. as a result of U.S. foreign policy isn't even being talked about at the convention.... The Labor Party doesn't have to be like the Democrats and Republicans who support such a foreign policy. And how about an end to the embargo against Cuba?"

On the third day, a proposal was issued jointly by the constitution and program committees which concluded, "The Labor Party will not endorse candidates of any kind, will not run people for office, and will not spend any Labor Party resources on electoral campaigns, at least until we prove capable of recruiting and organizing sufficient numbers of working people around a new agenda."

An amendment put forward by delegates from the longshoremen's union to soften this stand was defeated after long debate. Arguing against the amendment, Constitution Committee member Maryanne Young said, "If we are a unified voice, maybe one of those other parties would listen to us."

Throughout the course of the meeting, there was often acrimonious debate between the delegates from the international officialdom and the left-wing radicals and activists in the trade unions. A weighted voting procedure was established, however, which gave the officialdom virtual veto power on all questions. For example, a representative of each international union was given a voting card worth 100 votes. At-large delegates had cards worth only one-fifth of a vote. Other union officials got weighted votes in between.

Sweeny: 'Wrong time for labor party'

Recently elected AFL-CIO president John Sweeny spoke before the Cleveland City Club on June 5, but pointedly did not attend the Labor Party convention. In his speech Sweeny said this is the wrong time to be talking about a labor party. Forming a new party, Sweeny said, is "a monumental task and we only have six months until November." He continued, "Shame on us if we start splitting off or distracting our activists.... We should save the creation of a labor party to a non-presidential year." The AFL-CIO recently announced it was donating \$30 million to get President William Clinton and other Democrats elected in 1996.

Except for a special point on "solidarity" towards the end of the convention, there was little talk of ongoing labor disputes, despite the fact that a number of unionists attended from various strikes and lockouts around the country. Those who came looking for support included striking newspaper workers from Detroit and members of OCAW Local 7-517, who have been locked out by the UNO-VEN refinery in Lemont, Illinois, since March 24.

There was some debate over abortion rights. The original Labor Party platform included a vaguely-worded statement of support to "informed choice and unimpeded access to a full range of family planning and reproductive services for men and women." A delegate from the California Nurses Association proposed the party go on record as supporting a women's right to choose abortion. This was rejected. One local official of the OCAW declared, "While I'm for it, my members just wouldn't understand why this should be part of a labor party platform."

Susan Zárate is a member of OCAW Local 1-5, and SWP candidate for San Francisco board of supervisors.

SWP candidate gets good response

BY KATHY MICKELLS

CLEVELAND — "When 1,400 people gather to ostensibly discuss the idea of independent working-class political action, as a meatpacker, as a unionist, let alone as socialist candidate for president, I want to see this first hand," said James Harris. The Socialist Workers Party candidate observed sessions of the Labor Party founding convention here and met a variety of fighters and union activists.

Harris spoke with members of the Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers Union (OCAW) from Marcus Hook, Pennsylvania, who are fighting Tosco, the company that recently purchased the refinery where they work. When workers refused to accept deep cuts, Tosco shut the refinery down.

He was also introduced to OCAW workers from the UNO-VEN refinery in Lemont, Illinois, 460 of whom have been locked out by management since March 24. The company, a joint venture between Unocal and the Venezuelan state oil enterprise, had demanded a two-tier wage structure, a deep roll-back in seniority rights, and sweeping cuts in premium pay for overtime. When the union wouldn't knuckle under, armed company security forces escorted the workers to the plant gates. They warmly greeted Harris when he told them, "This is the first I've heard of your struggle but I want to get all the details so I can tell other working people about your situation and appeal for solidarity."

Jorge Cuellar, a transit worker from Mexico, was attending the Labor Party conference in the hope of winning solidarity for the struggle of Mexican transit workers. They are fighting privatization of the Mexico City transit system.

Harris introduced himself to Cuellar, saying, "We believe the most important thing for U.S. workers to learn is who are our friends and who are our enemies. Fighting workers around the world, like you, are our friends and the bosses in the United States are our deadly enemies."

Cuellar explained that the route on which he worked was sold off to a bus company which then abandoned the route. The workers went on strike. The government responded with a wave of arrests. Twenty-eight strikers were just released after spending 14 months in jail, he told Harris.

Cuellar had already stopped by the socialist campaign table outside the Convention Center and purchased a subscription to the Spanish-language monthly *Perspectiva Mundial*. He was not alone. Twelve participants subscribed to the *Militant* and two to *Perspectiva Mundial*. Over \$450 worth of Pathfinder literature was sold at the four-day convention, with titles on labor and Cuba topping the list of sales. Three copies each of *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War* and *Teamster Rebellion* were purchased along with five copies of the theses recently adopted by the Central Organization of Cuban Workers. The Pathfinder catalog was also a good seller.

Another worker who stopped by the table was Doug, one of 30 striking newspaper

workers from Detroit who attended the convention. The 30-year-old striker explained they came to reach out for solidarity and to have discussions with workers about the "way we can win. Do you have any opinions about what it takes to win a strike these days?" he asked the socialist presidential candidate.

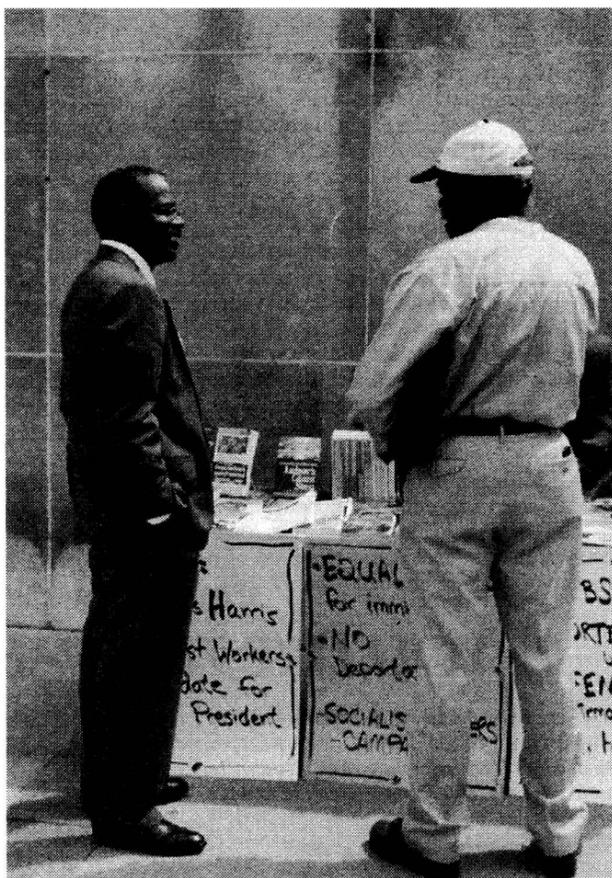
"You've taken the first step to charting a course to win — fighting," said Harris. "Without fighting, you can't even begin to pose the question of winning." Harris pointed to the recent trade union conference in Cuba as an example of the fighting capacity and capabilities of working people. "They're pointing the way for all of us. They've maintained their sovereignty and independence against great odds. Ultimately we need a workers and farmers government, like they have in Cuba," Harris said.

Accompanying the presidential candidate at the convention was Ryan Lewis, a Young Socialist and the Socialist Workers candidate for Congress from Kent, Ohio. Lewis also introduced Harris at a campaign event June 8 at the nearby socialist campaign headquarters. A few convention attendees participated in the event along with four high school students. Lewis, 20, recently joined the Young Socialists.

At the campaign meeting, Harris explained his view that, "a party of labor needs a program based on overcoming the divisions perpetuated by the bosses. A program that fights clearly for the oppressed, that stands for affirmative action, that calls for shortening the workweek and canceling the Third World debt." Any party aspiring to represent the working class, the socialist candidate continued, needs to "stand 100 percent on the side of the most oppressed, particularly immigrant workers, who are under increasing assault by the bosses and their government.

The starting point of OCAW and other union officials promoting the Labor Party is not the beating working people are taking, Harris maintained, but their own social status, generous salaries, and perks. Through this new formation they seek to reverse the fact that their influence within the Democratic Party on the wane.

"So even though the officials promoting the Labor Party use all kinds of militant sloganeering," Harris explained, "the real-



James Harris (left), SWP presidential candidate, campaigning at Labor Party Convention held on June 6-9.

ity offers working people very little." A genuine working-class party will come out of the massive struggles of working people around a program that clearly defines their interest in opposition to those of the ruling class and fights to win power, Harris stated.

Kathy Mickells is a refinery operator at Sun Oil's Marcus Hook plant and is a member of the OCAW.

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Bombing hits U.S. base in Saudi Arabia

Continued from front page

deadly assaults on U.S. military personnel in the Middle East since the 1983 bombing of a U.S. barracks in Beirut, Lebanon, that killed 241 Marines. The November explosion was the first attack against U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia in the 50 years Washington has organized military cooperation with the regime there.

"The attack appears to reflect the growing resentment... toward U.S. and other foreign military forces whose presence in Saudi Arabia has expanded greatly since the Gulf War," said an article in the June 26 *Wall*

Street Journal. Some 5,000 U.S. military personnel are stationed in the country. During the U.S.-led military assault on the Iraqi people in 1991, most of the air attacks were launched from the base in Dhahran, an oil center on the Persian Gulf coast.

Dhahran is the headquarters of the U.S. Air Force 4404th Air Wing, which enforces the ban on flights by Iraqi aircraft over southern Iraq that was imposed by Washington after the Persian Gulf slaughter. U.S. F-15 and F-16 fighter jets and British Tornado bombers operate out of the Dhahran facility, and U.S. soldiers man a battery of

Patriot surface-to-air missiles and a communications battalion there.

"We will pursue this," declared U.S. president William Clinton just before he headed to Lyons, France, for a summit meeting of the Group of Seven (G-7). "Those who did this must not go unpunished."

Officials of several other G-7 members — France, Germany, Japan, and the United Kingdom — also issued statements condemning "terrorism." British prime minister John Major stated, "We have had all too much of this sort of experience.... It might well have happened on the same sort of scale in Manchester a few days ago," he added, referring to the June 15 bombing by the Irish Republican Army in that city.

The Saudi regime has been plagued by rising unemployment and growing financial and political instability. Opposition to Riyadh's ties to imperialism and to the corruption and hypocrisy of the royal family has stepped up. Many militants from Saudi Arabia who fought the Soviet army in Af-

ghanistan during the late 1980s have challenged the legitimacy of the U.S.-backed regime in Riyadh. Three of the four men executed in May had participated in the Afghan war, according to the *Washington Post*. One said he fought on the side of the Bosnian army in Yugoslavia.

In March, Saudi border guards stopped a car packed with 85 pounds of explosives trying to enter the country from Jordan. Prince Nayef, the Saudi interior minister, warned on national television in April that the country was vulnerable to further attacks. Washington, with high stakes in maintaining stability, has beefed up the Saudi military to quell any serious challenge to the regime. Aramco, the state-owned oil company, and the world's largest oil producer, has its headquarters in Dhahran.

In other developments in the region, Palestinian fighters ambushed an Israeli army patrol along the border between the West Bank and Jordan June 26, killing three soldiers and wounding two.

Curtis congratulated on release

BY RAY PARSONS

CHICAGO — "Congratulations on getting released! We welcome you back to the fight." These greetings were sent to Mark Curtis by 26 participants at the 18th National Conference of Women Miners held recently in Birmingham, Alabama. Curtis was released from prison in Iowa June 18 and paroled to Illinois after more than seven years behind bars on frame-up charges of attempted rape and burglary.

"This is an example of what our main work must now be," John Studer said at the June 25 meeting of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee. "We need to win renewed support. Mark is out but is not free. He faces serious restrictions on his rights, as a parolee and convicted 'sex offender.'"

"The need for funds will continue," Studer added.

Curtis attended the June 25 meeting. In answer to a question from a young supporter, Curtis recounted the response he got from fellow prisoners the morning of his release. "I couldn't sleep, as you could imagine, and woke up before four.

"Later, guys were calling out from nearby cells, wishing me well. I wasn't allowed out for breakfast with the other prisoners, but a number of guys took the risk of stopping by my cell to say good-bye, leaving their state prison numbers and addresses of family so we could stay in touch. The guards came around to warn them away, but we got to talk anyhow.

"I got to walk across the yard on my way out, and many of my fellow inmates came over to say good-bye. Some even hugged me, which you don't see much in prison.

"For me—it's not that it was hard to leave,

but you wish you could take all these guys with you."

The June 25 gathering elected John Studer to continue as coordinator, Linda Jenness to serve as committee secretary, and Chris Naper as treasurer.

Protests condemn racist church arsons

Continued from front page

being restructured into a church building was damaged by arson in Shreveport, Louisiana, June 24. Rev. Bruce Lee Goss, pastor of the New Birth Temple Church of God in Christ, said the 70-member congregation includes both Blacks and whites.

Nearly a dozen people have been arrested in connection with the arson attacks. James Cavanaugh, a special agent in charge of the Birmingham, Alabama, office of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, told the *New York Times*, "We are still looking at the possibility of racial motivations."

Two young whites were recently arrested for the burning of two Black churches in Greeleyville and Bloomville, South Carolina. One of them was carrying a card identifying him as a member of the Christian Knights of the Ku Klux Klan when he was arrested. The two suspects reportedly attended a Klan rally weeks before the fires.

Virtually all of the people arrested in connection with the church fires have been white. "There is no evidence of conspiracy, but there is clear evidence of racism," Attorney General Janet Reno admitted at a meeting of business executives in Detroit.

Several hundred people came out to protest a rally of a dozen Ku Klux Klansmen held in Greenville, Texas, June 21. Two Black churches were torched by arsonists June 9 and 10 in that city of 23,000 people.

At the beginning of the rally Black and white antiracist protesters held hands in the air and chanted "Go home" and "Go back to Arkansas," referring to the Arkansas-based faction of the Klan who came there. Signs included, "Hate has no place in Greenville" and "Without unity there will never be any happiness." Some Klan supporters in the large crowd unfurled the Confederate flag, while a few antiracist protesters burned Klan literature.

The following day, some 150 Black and white area residents marched to the Greenville Municipal Building where a rally and workshops were held. The long-planned march and meeting of the Doers Club, a Black men's organization, took on a different character because of the recent events.

The march, which was originally planned around the issue of Black self-help and family values modeled loosely after the Million Man March in Washington, D.C., became a broader event to demonstrate unity against

the church burnings and the Klan.

"I want to see peace and unity in this city," Boots Loucks, a white antiques dealer, told the *Houston Chronicle*, explaining why she joined the march.

"There were rumors that the Klan would show up," said Anthony Harris, a faculty member at East Texas State University. "But they didn't. Maybe they got intimidated by us."

Bob Bruce and Lea Sherman in Houston contributed to this article.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

CALIFORNIA

San Francisco

Germany: Workers and Youth Protest Social Cuts. Speaker: Markie Wilson, *Militant* reporter recently in Germany, Socialist Workers Party, and member of United Transportation Union Local 1732, Oakland. Fri., July 12, 7:30 p.m. 3284 23rd St. (at Mission St.). Donation: \$4. Tel: (415) 285-5323.

CALENDAR

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis

Send Off Twin Cities Contingent of U.S.-Cuba Youth Exchange. Protest Government Harassment of Pastors for Peace. Sponsors: Twin Cities Cuba Network, Students for Cuba, La Raza Student Cultural Center, Young Socialists, Minnesotans for a United Ireland, Pastors for Peace, Arise! Bookstore, May Day Books, Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador, Puerto Rican Coalition, Socialist Workers Party, Uhuru Books, Resource Center of the Americas, others. Sat., July 20, 7 p.m. University Episcopal Center, 317 17th Ave. S.E. For more information, call (612) 893-0093.

Defend Immigrant Rights! A Community Speak Out. Protest recent INS raids in Twin Cities, oppose anti-immigrant legislation in Congress. Endorsers: Urban Coalition, Family Services Inc., Chicanos Latinos Unidos en Servicio (CLUES), Resource Center of the Americas, Casa de Esperanza, St. Stephens Church Hispanic Outreach and Organizing, Socialist Workers Party, others. Sat., July 27, 3 p.m. St. Stephens Church, 21st St. and Clinton Ave. S. For more information, call Urban Coalition Immigration Task Force (612) 348-8550.

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

Celebration of Friendship and Solidarity with Cuba. Benefit to help Philadelphia-area youth participate in July 24-August 6 U.S.-Cuba Youth Exchange. Food, live music. Sponsored by Cuba Support Coalition and U.S.-Cuba Youth Exchange. Fri., July 12, 8 p.m.-midnight. Painted Bride Art Center, 230 Vine St. Donation: \$10. For more information, call (215) 482-4685.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

March on Washington for Immigrant Rights. No to the deportations! Stop police brutality! Public education and health care for all! Sat., Oct. 12. For more information or endorse the March, call (212) 505-0001 in New York, or (213) 268-8472 in Los Angeles.

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Can you buy food insurance? — Responding to “continuing outbreaks of food poisoning,” the Congressional agency did a study which found that federal in-



Harry Ring

spection of food processing plants has dropped as much as 50 percent since 1989. Some plants are inspected every eight years.

Bombs, not blankets — The

Senate Armed Services Committee voted a \$267 billion appropriation for the war machine, 12.9 billion more than requested.

They also voted to ax the Pentagon’s homeless support program which consists of handing out some blankets and opening some armories in winter. The senators concluded that “providing \$3.5 million for this program qualifies as interference with military preparedness.”

No comment — In Omaha, Nebraska, the school board enforced its zero-tolerance weapons policy by upholding the one-year suspension of a student who brought a

kitchen knife to school to peel her orange.

Cops will be cops — Brig. Gen. Enrique Salgado takes over as chief of Mexico city police amid mounting concern about a wave of kidnappings, killings and drug scandal. Part of the problem, says one news dispatch, is the more than 100 police commanders retired by Salgado’s predecessor. Many turned to kidnapping and extortion.

Fire? Douse it with your 7-Up — Except in lavatories, no U.S. airliners have smoke detectors or sprinkler systems in the passenger section. Why not? The FAA doesn’t

require it. Further, adds a Boeing spokesperson, passengers noses are sufficient, “It doesn’t take long to figure out if there’s smoke,” she said. “They can tell in a minute.”

Hey, here’s one who kept his promise! — Arizona’s Gov. Fife Symington was indicted on charges of lying on loan applications and trying to use his office to get out from under a \$10 million loan. A real estate shark, he stumped on the promise that he would run the state like his own business.

Makes sense, no? — When you save up and buy a box of cereal, here’s how your dollars are divvied

up: 6.5 percent goes for the grain and 8.5 percent for other ingredients (mainly sugar); labor, a fast 6.5 percent; packaging, 11.5 percent; capital costs (?), 12.5 percent; advertising 37.5 percent; profit, a thumping 17 percent.

Beat the (Postal) system — Those clippings you’ve been intending to send, as soon as you get stamps? Bring them to the Oberlin socialist education conference. We’ll gladly accept hand delivery. And, for those who don’t get there, send your clips c/o Pathfinder Books, 2546 W. Pico Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90006, or fax to (213) 380-1268.

Greece: dozens at meetings on ‘To See the Dawn’

BY GEORGES MEHRABIAN

ATHENS, Greece — “The Russian toilers under Bolshevik leadership extended the hand of solidarity to the Muslim peoples of the old Czarist Empire, they supported their right to self-determination unconditionally irrespective of their leadership,” said Ma’ mud Shirvani. “It was thus that they were able to forge unity in the struggle against imperialism and the local landlords and capitalists.”

Shirvani was speaking at a public forum here June 6, titled “The struggles of the peoples of the East against national divisions, for unity, and freedom.” Nearly 70 people attended the meeting. Another 25 came to a similar gathering in Haniá, Crete, the next day. Shirvani spoke at these events as part of a four-day tour of the country June 4-8 to promote the Pathfinder book *To See the Dawn: Baku, 1920, First Congress of the Peoples of the East*. Shirvani co-authored the title’s introduction and helped collect documents for the book from archives in Baku, Azerbaijan.

How can peasants and workers in the colonial world achieve freedom from imperialist exploitation? How can working people overcome divisions incited by their national ruling classes and act together for common class interests? These questions — urgently posed today by the devastating social and economic consequences of the crisis of the market system — were addressed in 1920 in an unprecedented conference of 2,000 delegates representing workers and peasants of more than two dozen peoples of Asia, Shirvani said.

The congress was convened by the Communist International in Baku at a time when mass revolutionary struggles in surrounding Central Asia and in much of Europe, inspired by the victory of the 1917 workers’ and peasants’ revolution in Russia, gave hope of a new dawn for the world’s toilers, he noted.

To See the Dawn contains the complete record of the Baku congress.

The internationalism of the Cuban revolution, known widely today, is not an exception in history but the continuation of communist policy practiced under Lenin’s leadership, Shirvani said. Stalinist counter-revolution in Russia later reversed that course.

The Athens meeting was sponsored by the Network of Movements for Social and Political Rights and by Diethnés Víma (International Forum). It was held at the Bank Workers Union hall. Diethnés Víma has published in Greek Pathfinder’s *The Truth About Yugoslavia: Why Working People Should Oppose Intervention* and the article “Imperialism’s March Towards Fascism and War” from the Marxist magazine *New International*.

The audience reflected the changing com-

position of the working class in Greece, which, like other imperialist countries in the region, has become increasingly international. Toilers from throughout the Balkans, Caucasus, the Middle East, north Africa, and the Philippines are a growing percentage of the population in Athens and other major cities and some small towns.

One-third of those attending were immigrant workers: Syrians, Kurds, Turks, Ghanaians, Zairians, Eritreans, and others. Another 30 percent of the audience were youth from Greece. The meeting was held with simultaneous translation in English, Greek, Turkish, and French. The crowd included construction workers, airline workers, sailors, garment workers, and domestic workers.

As part of the program, Shirvani narrated a film shot during the Baku congress. “The Russian workers opened the way for the toilers of the Third World to pass over the stage of capitalism,” he said. “The delegates at Baku fought for the rights of women, and during the congress women were added to the Presidium.”

Pointing to the lessons of Baku for today, Shirvani referred to the battles for national liberation waged by Palestinian, Kurdish, Quebecois, Irish, Lebanese, and Chechen fighters. “Their struggles must be supported by the working classes of the imperialist countries unconditionally,” Shirvani stated. “The demonization of working people from these regions as ‘Islamic fanatics’ or ‘terrorists’ must be rejected and fought against.”

At that point, some in the audience walked out. “He would have us support Hamas!” said one person as he was leaving, referring to the Palestinian group that has taken responsibility for a number of bombings against Zionist targets in Israel recently. But the majority stayed on and continued the discussion. After the hall closed, two African workers and a Greek youth stayed outside to continue the exchange with Shirvani.

In addition to the forum, Shirvani visited a camp set up by 180 Kurds mostly from Iraq. The camp, which consists of dozens of shacks made from wood and cardboard, is in a central square in Athens. “We are refugees from [Iraqi president] Saddam Hussein’s repression, but because we are Iraqi and not Turkish Kurds they refuse to give us political refugee status here,” explained Ali, one of the young Kurds. Often, some political refugees from Turkey are given preferential treatment by Athens because of the Greek rulers’ territorial and trade conflicts with the Turkish bourgeoisie.

“We are human beings and we have a right to jobs and housing. We set up camp to demand that we be provided housing,” said Ahmed, another Kurd. “Now the police has given us four days to evacuate or else! But we will not move.”

Shirvani said that, in addition to the capi-

talist regimes in the region, Washington and other imperialist powers that assaulted Iraq bear fundamental responsibility for the oppression of the Kurdish people, including those who live in Iraq.

Another highlight of the tour was a house meeting held in Haniá, on the island of Crete. A construction worker from Syria and his native-born companion who is a student hosted the meeting. Both are leaders of the fight for immigrant rights on the island, the largest in the Aegean sea.

The Syrian worker organized 40 immigrants to fight and join the construction union, despite a ban on membership for “illegals.” Among immigrant workers, 96 percent are undocumented. “We have a real problem here,” stated the host. “Arrests of undocumented workers in Haniá have increased ten-fold in the last three weeks. We now have 60 arrests per week!”

The meeting was held on the front yard of the two-room farm house, where the hosts raise chickens and grow cucumbers and mulberry trees. Some 30 fruit crates had been neatly placed to serve as seating. Nearly 25 people attended, 17 of whom were immigrants from Algeria, Libya, Iraq, Kurdistan, and Syria. Most worked in construction or agriculture. Translation was provided in English, Greek, and Arabic.

A good part of the discussion focused



Militant/George Mehrabian
Filipino garment workers protesting deportations in Athens, Greece, July 1995. A number of immigrant workers attended the meetings where Ma’ mud Shirvani spoke.

on the position adopted by the Baku congress on Zionism. “The delegates strongly condemned the Zionist plan to settle Palestine,” Shirvani said. “This would divide the Jews from the toilers in the region and make the settlers the tools of imperialism, the worst anti-Semites. Events since have definitely confirmed this assessment.”

After the formal conclusion of the meeting, two young women asked Shirvani many questions on what is a communist approach to women’s liberation. Several people stayed late into the night to continue the discussion and exchange of experiences.

During the course of the tour, nearly a dozen Pathfinder books were sold, including five copies of *To See the Dawn*, as well as seven copies of the *Militant* and 27 copies of a bulletin with translations of *Militant* articles into Greek.

— 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —

THE MILITANT
Published in the Interest of the Working People
Price 10¢
July 9, 1971

Thousands of homosexual men and women participated in gay pride demonstrations over the June 26-27 weekend, marking the second anniversary of the June 1969 Stonewall uprising when Greenwich Village gays fought back massively for the first time against police harassment.

The demonstrations were larger than last year’s in both New York and Los Angeles, and actions also occurred this year in Chicago and a number of smaller cities.

The largest demonstration was the Christopher Street Liberation Day march and gay-in in New York City. The march began from Christopher Street at 2 p.m. with between 5,000 and 10,000 people, by the time the first contingents began streaming into the Central Park Sheep meadow two hours later, the size had swelled to at least 20,000.

Banners identified groups from New York and other cities, including Hartford and Bridgeport, Conn.; Boston; Washington, D.C.; Baltimore, Md.; Ithaca, Albany and Syracuse, N.Y.; Delaware; Ohio; Canada and other places.

The march capped a week of gay liberation activities.

THE MILITANT
PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE
NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS
July 6, 1946

On June 28 came an announcement by Acting Secretary of State Acheson that United States marines will be held in China. This was the official response to last week’s demonstration of 100,000 Chinese in Shanghai who carried placards reading: U.S. Army — Go Back to Your Home Sweet Home,” “Down With U.S. Dollar Diplomacy,” and “Americans, Don’t Participate in the Chinese Civil War.”

Acheson reached a new high in brazen effrontery by “explaining” that American boys are being held thousands of miles across the Pacific Ocean to guard “supply lines from coast producing areas to the great coastal cities, an essential service that should continue.”

American troops right now are protecting the holdings of the Anglo-American imperialists in China.

Wall Street has more ambitious plans in China than simply clearing the Chinese away from the flag of Standard Oil and the other companies. Wall Street is backing up Chiang Kai-shek. This reactionary regime would collapse overnight if American troops were withdrawn.

Wall Street considers China one of the great prizes of the Second World War. Its resources are among the richest in the world.

for further reading from Pathfinder

To See the Dawn Baku, 1920
First Congress of the Peoples of the East \$19.95

Part of series “The Communist International in Lenin’s Time.” Other volumes include: *Lenin’s Struggle for a Revolutionary International* \$32.95 * *The German Revolution and the Debate on Soviet Power* \$31.95 * *Founding of the Communist International* \$27.95 * *Workers of the World and Oppressed Peoples, Unite!* 2 vols. \$65

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 8, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Fax: (212) 727-0150. Also available in Spanish, French and Swedish. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 to cover shipping and handling.

Defend civil rights for gays

As the *Militant* goes to press, activists are gearing up to attend the Gay Pride festivities in New York City. Hundreds of thousands have joined such mobilizations over the years, combating discrimination against gays and lesbians and transforming the consciousness of millions of working people on this question. These actions have been instrumental in winning recent gains, such as the Supreme Court ruling overturning an antigay law in Colorado.

This year's parade comes at a time when the Clinton administration is leading the bipartisan drive against gay rights. Recently, President William Clinton said he would sign the Defense of Marriage Act, which would bar same-sex marriages. His administration also crafted the latest ban on gays and lesbians in the military. These attacks — along with "anti-terrorist," "anti-crime," curfew, and "sexual predator" laws — are part and parcel of the employers' assault on the rights of working people.

The capitalist rulers need to hold up scapegoats for the

social and economic devastation that their system generates. Hence the bipartisan chorus for "family values" and against affirmative action, abortion rights, and civil rights for gays. Discrimination against gays and lesbians is founded on the oppression of women and the institution of the family. Attempts to push back women's rights and affirmative action, like the Defense of Marriage Act, are attacks that aim to increase divisions within the working class as a whole.

Unions should take up the fight for democratic rights for gays and lesbians, along with demanding equal rights for immigrants, women, and Blacks. Any discrimination hinders working people's democratic rights.

As Washington beats the war drums in Yugoslavia, Asia, and the Middle East, there is political polarization and a rise of rightist groups around the world. We urge our readers to join in events like Gay Pride, and link up with other fighters who want to end discrimination and oppression.

U.S. troops out of the Mideast!

Continued from front page

Ireland — who resist imperialist subjugation and press the struggle for national liberation. It is this resistance — and the possibility that more bellicose actions by the new Israeli government may turn it into open rebellion by million of toilers in the region — that made representatives of the capitalist regimes at the Arab League summit in Cairo nervous. It is the same resistance that makes Washington, London, and other imperial masters tremble.

Meeting in Lyons, France, U.S. president William Clinton, British prime minister John Major, and the heads of the other "Group of Seven" states immediately declared they would step up actions against so-called terrorists. Major commiserated that the British Crown too has had problems with those who protest imperialist occupations, most recently those fighting for Irish self-determination.

The biggest perpetrators of terrorism on a world scale — the ruling classes from Washington, Paris, London, and Tokyo — will now try to justify taking measures that will further impinge on the democratic rights of working people under the guise of fighting terrorism. They will try to impose more policies like Paris's *Vigipirate*, under which soldiers have stopped and harassed some 2 million people on the streets, especially targeting North African immigrants. Clinton recently signed a so-called counterterrorism bill that seeks to deny immigrants the right to appeal and can label them as supporters of terrorism based on evidence that can be kept secret.

Our campaign urges working people the world over to

oppose such attacks on democratic rights and to stand in solidarity with those fighting to remove the boot of imperialism from their necks. We should speak out against Washington's attempts to strangle those governments that refuse to bow to U.S. dictates, including Iran, Libya, and socialist Cuba.

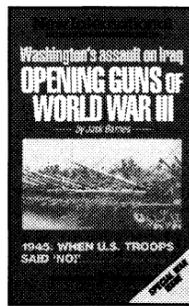
Above all workers and young rebels today need to be armed with the facts to understand what is happening in the world, why, and what we should do about it. Our campaign supporters will be stepping up sales of socialist literature, such as the issue of *New Internationalist* that contains "Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's assault on Iraq." And we pledge to join with other fighters to demand: U.S. troops out of the Middle East! End the sanctions against Iraq and Iran now!

for further reading

in *New Internationalist* no. 7

Washington's assault on Iraq Opening Guns of World War III

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 8, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 to cover shipping and handling.



Cuban leader blasts UN report

Continued from Page 6

air traffic controllers and air force jets. The third plane, piloted by the group's head, José Basulto, returned to Florida. The Cuban government reports that this invasion of Cuban airspace was the 10th such violation over the past 20 months. Washington has acknowledged many of these violations but refused to stop them.

Alarcón noted that ICAO launched its investigation March 6. The Cuban government promptly provided all evidence it had. This included the original tapes of radio communications between the Cuban pilots and air traffic controllers and the Brothers to the Rescue intruders, Cuban radar data, interviews with those involved in the incident, personal items from the four crew members who died in the shootdown, and debris from the wreckage recovered in Cuban waters. "By March 30, 1996, the Cuban authorities had fully complied with all the requests by the investigating team," Alarcón stated.

In contrast, the Cuban leader said, Washington stonewalled for two months, has refused to provide certain data, and may even have altered some recordings of radio communications in its possession. After failing to meet deadlines in May and then June for providing information, U.S. authorities never turned over data from its radar in Florida on the February 24 flights. Washington claims the data was erased 15 days after the incident.

During visits in Miami and Washington, D.C., ICAO investigators interviewed only one person besides U.S. government and military officials: José Basulto.

The commission's findings repeat assertions by U.S. government officials as facts, without independent corroboration, Alarcón said. For example, the ICAO report asserts Washington's claim that the U.S. fishing boat *Majestic Seas* was fishing tuna near the Havana harbor on February 24 and its crew members saw and heard the Cessnas being shot down over international waters. But the report never refers to a single interview with the vessel's crew or passengers.

U.S. authorities provided a copy of a tape of radio transmissions between Cuban air force pilots and traffic controllers, which has a portion that differs from the Cuban recording. But Washington has refused to turn over the original tape and ICAO investigators did not interview any of the U.S. technicians involved to corroborate its authenticity, unlike what the commission did in Cuba,

Alarcón pointed out.

What did U.S. authorities do for two whole months? Alarcón asked. "One day you'll read in the press — I don't know if they'll refer to it as Basultogate, Airgate, or Gusanogate," he said, "revelations about what exactly they did, how they did it, who they bribed, who they bought off, who erased certain tapes, and who fabricated other tapes." ICAO investigators acknowledged during the council's June 26 meeting in Montreal that they were never given the original radio tapes from U.S. authorities.

While the ICAO report treats uncorroborated U.S. claims as good coin, it refers to any Cuban statement with the qualifier "according to Cuban authorities," Alarcón noted. It also omits important evidence presented by the Cuban government.

The report makes no reference, for example, to a documentary film Alarcón handed to ICAO investigators showing U.S. military officers training Brothers to the Rescue pilots in Florida. The film was shot by Juan Pablo Roque, who was a member of the Brothers and returned to Cuba just before February 24. The report does not mention photographs published by the *Miami Herald* showing Brothers to the Rescue planes with U.S. Air Force insignia, or any of the voluminous documentation of Basulto's long record of counterrevolutionary activities throughout Latin America, often organized by the CIA. It instead refers to Brothers to the Rescue as a humanitarian group using civilian planes.

On the other hand, the investigating commission spent seven days meeting in Montreal behind closed doors with U.S. government officials.

It remains to be seen, Alarcón said, "whether those who vote [in the ICAO council] will permit a decision to be made under the U.S. boot, following U.S. orders, or whether they will do what they have to do: allow adequate time and create the necessary conditions for a serious investigation." Alarcón pointed out that after hampering the investigation for two months, Washington was suddenly demanding the council take action in one day on a 200-page report its members received a day earlier.

"Why press the [ICAO] members to take position on a report they received at the last minute?" Alarcón told Radio-Canada in Montreal June 26. The U.S. delegation, headed by transportation secretary Federico Peña, has pressed for a quick vote.

What's in a name?

"Why does the *Militant* always use the formal first names of politicians?" asked Jane Peterson in a letter printed on the facing page.

Capitalist politicians use informal names and nicknames to try to portray themselves as ordinary people with common lives like the average worker or working farmer, not representatives of the wealthy class. The bourgeois media

DISCUSSION WITH OUR READERS

go along with the scam. But the *Militant* doesn't. In fact, we always stress that they are not part of the same class, they are from the enemy class. They are our mortal class enemies.

Peterson writes, "Everyone but the *Militant*" uses the names "Bill, not William" Clinton and "Bob, not Robert" Dole. There is at least one other working-class publication that also uses formal names like "William Clinton" in referring to the U.S. president. And probably for the same reasons as the *Militant*. That paper is *Granma*, the newspaper of the Communist Party of Cuba.

— MAURICE WILLIAMS

Sugar harvest

Continued from Page 6

went up. Now we're taking better care of the equipment and improving our work methods."

Another front in this battle is the KTP combine factory in the city of Holguín. It had been shut down for a couple of years for lack of parts but is now cranking out new harvesters. At a June 20 municipal conference of ANIR, Justo Max, a mechanical engineer, described how he headed a team that redesigned the KTP-2 combine.

"We redid the hydraulic system, improved the belts, and replaced the old Soviet engine with a Cuban Taíno motor, which has better fuel consumption," Max said. "The redesigned model, KTP-2N, has 50 percent higher productivity." It is considered one of the main achievements of the year.

In Holguín province, as elsewhere, city workers, youth, and retirees mobilized by the thousands to help with the harvest alongside the regular cane cutters. "People came here from the city of Holguín to work in the fields. They brought their own resources from their workplaces, such as trucks and food," said Fonseca. "We also got volunteers from Santiago, Villa Clara, Granma, and elsewhere."

Workers at the Oil Distribution Center in the city of Holguín, a workforce of 340, were among those who volunteered. They are members of the Chemical, Mining, and Energy Workers union.

"At this plant five workers were released to work in the harvest on a permanent basis," said Julio Garrida, a member of the provincial secretariat of the CTC who accompanied us to the facility. "But we sent additional brigades of 20 for shorter periods of time. Almost all the workers here contributed in one way or another."

With the end of the harvest, many workers at this plant have volunteered for the weeding. Garrida said, "We're organizing brigades of 25 to join the weeding for periods of 4-5 days. Different factories are assigned certain areas of land. This plant has 4.5 caballerías [150 acres] of cane to weed in the month of June."

Students mobilize for planting, weeding

Garrida added, "We had something like 2,000 workers mobilized for the sugar harvest. But then Holguín got hit by heavy rains, which prolonged and jeopardized the harvest. So more than 20,000 people mobilized rapidly." Holguín is a city of 300,000 and the province has a population of 1.1 million. The Communist Party, CTC, and other organizations made a call for mass participation in the harvest and spring planting, which overlapped. "The people were like a giant locomotive," said Frank Patterson, a student at the University of Holguín. "Here on campus, departments were shut down on a rotating basis because so many students and professors went into the fields."

"We were called urgently because the rain and mud made it impossible for the combines to get into the cane fields. The cane had to be cut and taken out by hand or by oxen. We were up to our knees in water," Patterson said.

A leader of the Federation of University Students, Patterson is now building the Student Work Brigades (BET), which will help with the weeding, currently behind schedule. "More than 90 percent of the students here have signed up for the BETs in July," he said. The two-week brigades are expected to mobilize 235,000 high school and college students throughout the island.

Hundreds of working people from Holguín have now mobilized to Las Tunas, the final front in the harvest battle. "We've sent five cane-cutting brigades from various unions to Las Tunas," Garrida reported. One of them is the Calixto García brigade, made up of members of the construction workers union.

Omar Rodríguez, a maintenance worker at the sugar mill in Urbano Noris, commented on the discipline and creativity that working people demonstrated in the 1996 harvest. "Like Fidel [Castro] said, some day they'll have to build a monument to the special period. We've accomplished things we didn't know we could do before."

Thousands of postal workers strike in Britain

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

tween the union and the company leading up to the strike ballot.

Royal Mail attempted to bait workers into the deal by offering a 40-hour-week and a rise in base pay from £183 to £211 (£1=U.S.\$1.54). But workers point out that the unpaid overtime and the loss of many shift and other incremental payments under the Agenda cancel

bor. All workers are in the same situation, we will win justice."

Tereso Espinoza, also a janitor in Local 1877, said, "We need to unite, our fight is not in vain. I ask co-workers that we all unite under one banner and don't get discouraged because we can win."

Janitors throughout the Bay Area are on strike in support of Local 1877. In Santa Clara County alone, 1,000 janitors were on their second and third nights of strikes. Two hundred also struck in Oakland. Organizers noted that Bay Area solidarity was growing, as shown by various building trades honoring picket lines throughout the Bay Area. They also stated that other cities were preparing to join the struggle including Los Angeles, Portland, Denver and New York City. Organizers exclaimed in reference to the companies with whom they are negotiating, "if they want war, we're going to give them war."

ON THE PICKET LINE

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.

MANCHESTER, England — Postal workers in the United Kingdom walked off the job June 20 in response to attacks on their rights and working conditions at the state-owned Royal Mail. On June 2 the Communications Workers Union (CWU) announced that its members had voted in favor of a strike by a 68 percent majority.

"If they want a fight, they've got one," said Ged, a worker at a postal depot near Manchester. The unionists are fighting against the company's attempt to implement its "Employee Agenda," a series of measures aimed at increasing profits through downsizing, speedup, and work rule changes.

Workers currently have a six-day, 41.5-hour workweek, with a 5:30 a.m. start time. Under the "Agenda," workers would have no guaranteed start or break times, but instead would be "flexible" on a day-to-day basis. Royal Mail said "not many shifts would start before 4 a.m." Workers would be required to show "constantly improving performance" towards a "100 percent efficiency 100 percent of the time" goal. Seniority would be abolished. Employees would be required to work unpaid, upon request, for an extra 15 minutes per day.

"They'd walk all over us," said Dave, a young worker involved in his first of a series of disputes be-

these out. One-third of the workforce would be directly impacted under the new conditions.

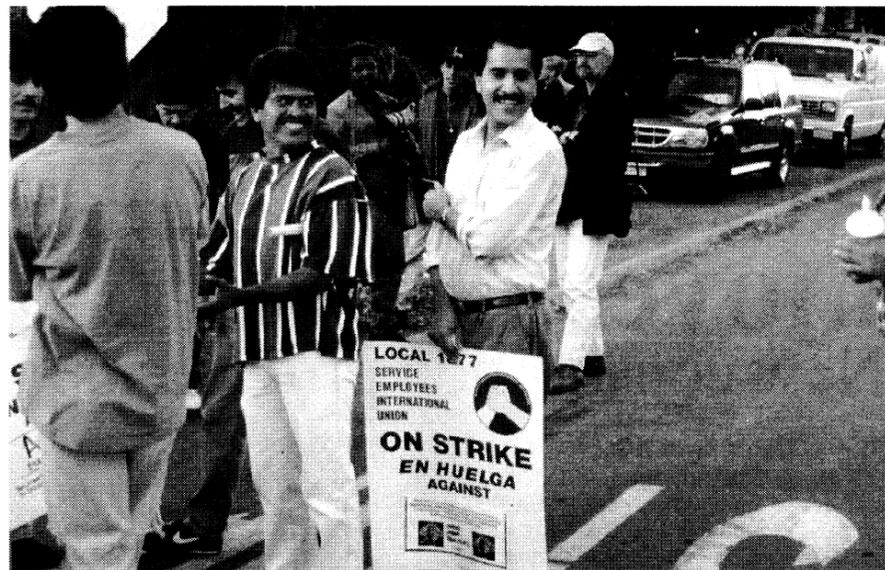
Unionists have countered with an agenda of their own. The CWU is demanding a 35-hour, five-day workweek, the pay rise suggested by the company, greater job security, and a rejection of the Royal Mail's "Agenda."

Many thousands of postal workers participated in unofficial walkouts leading up to the strike.

Janitors fight for raise, no abuse of immigrants

LOS ALTOS HILLS, California — A candlelight vigil and protest was held by Justice for Janitors here June 13 in support of Service Employees International Union Local 1877. More than 200 demonstrated outside the home of John Chambers, CEO of Cisco Corporation, a janitorial contractor. The workers are fighting for a 20 percent wage increase over four years, health coverage, a training trust fund subsidized by employers, a limit on workloads, and guarantees against harassment for undocumented immigrants.

Speaking to the crowd of workers, Juana Escamilla, a janitor in Local 1877, stated, "I am a single mother of three children working for wages which make it difficult to take care of three children." She spoke of the need for family health care, which with her high rent she could not afford. In conclusion she said, "We are fighting for justice for everyone, winning with our own la-



Janitors for Justice demonstration in Los Altos Hills, California June 17. Unionists in the Bay Area are supporting their fight for higher wages and immigrant rights. Militant/Osborne Hart

Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE) from major companies like Jack Victor and Golden Brand. Many came in buses, while others walked from nearby companies. They rallied at Phillips Square and picketed the nearby Bay and Eaton's — major buyers of Peerless suits — chanting "What do we want from the Bay, Justice!, What do we want from Eaton's, Justice!, What do we want, Justice!"

Speakers at the rally included John Alleruzzo, from UNITE; Richard Tremblay, president of the Montreal Labor Council of the Quebec Federation of Labor; and Robert White, president of the Canadian Labor Congress, which has 2 million members. White announced that the CLC would help organize demonstrations in other cities.

Alvin Segal, the president of Peerless, says American companies angry about his competition are behind the unionization drive. According to Segal, "Everything that has been reported is false. Because they aren't able to compete with us, they are attacking us this way."

Man Le Slin, one of the workers fired at Peerless, gave the workers' side of the story at the Militant La-

bor Forum in Montreal on June 7. Speaking through an interpreter she explained, "Because I spoke a different language, they always found trouble for me. When I began to work at Peerless I lost all my freedom and liberty. When we asked for our basic rights we got fired from the factory."

"I have seen many cases where supervisors would treat women particularly badly because of language and because they are women. I have seen a woman fall down and managers still wanted her to work instead of letting her go home. I will continue the fight. I will go to every city where Peerless clothes are sold," she concluded.

Peerless is under investigation by the Quebec Human Rights Commission for a record number of complaints of discrimination and harassment.

Pete Kennedy, member of the CWU in Manchester; Steve Gordon, a Young Socialist in San Francisco; and Tony Sanchez, member of UNITE and the YS, and Joe Young in Montreal contributed to this article.

500 rally in Montreal to back garment workers

MONTREAL — On June 4, about 500 workers rallied here to support 19 workers fired from Peerless Clothing. The workers were sacked for organizing a union to replace a company association called the Fraternity. Two thousand workers speaking 35 languages are employed at Peerless, the largest clothing manufacturer in Canada. Wages and working conditions are much worse than in unionized companies.

Most of the demonstrators were members of the Union of

LETTERS

Politicians' names

Why does the *Militant* always use the formal first names of politicians? The use of Bill instead of William Clinton or Bob instead of Robert Dole does not imply familiarity, if that is the reason you choose to use those names. These names are not nicknames used by friends or those in agreement with their politics. They are the forms of their names used by everyone but the *Militant*! People are accustomed to hearing and reading Bill, not William and Bob, not Robert. As a matter of fact, two people who are new readers of the paper asked me why you call him William Clinton. It's politics that distances you from Clinton and the rest.

Jane Peterson
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Caribbean economic crisis

"The question of the unequal distribution of wealth in the Caribbean remains unanswered. The neo-liberal economic order has failed and our struggle remains for a new system for an independent people," explained Sam Maharaj, the General Secretary of the All Trinidad Sugar and General Workers Trade Union at a Militant Labor Forum in Los Angeles.

Maharaj had met trade unionists from Los Angeles and other U.S. cities at the congress of the Cuban trade unions in Havana in May, and was anxious to develop international solidarity. He opened his presentation by saying, "Our struggles

are virtually the same, whether you are a cane cutter in Trinidad, a Third World country, or you're a machinist in Los Angeles, the capital of the Third World."

He gave a history of British colonialism and then explained the reason for the renewed interest by major capitalist sugar firms, like the British company Tate and Lyle, in Caribbean sugar production (most major firms were bought in 1975 by the Trinidad government). The reason is the impact of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank's "prescription for economic development," which caused massive layoffs through the privatization of previously nationalized industries, cuts in social benefits, union busting, and severe economic hardships for farmers.

In Trinidad and Tobago, 25 percent of the 1.2 million people live below the poverty line, and the percentage living in absolute poverty is over 15 percent. Maharaj said many Caribbean governments were hoping to establish a NAFTA-type relationship with the U.S. to aid in job creation and economic development.

"The trade unions are the only organizations that have been able to unite the Indians (brought by the British as indentured laborers) and the Africans and the only social organizations that stand up against privatization and for social justice," he added. The major unions like the sugar and oil workers were built through struggles in the 1930s. The sugar workers won year-round



employment, big wage increases and benefits, and equal pay for equal work for women.

Maharaj expressed his admiration for the Cuban revolution, and the "happiness" of the Cubans as shown by their patriotism and their efforts to improve efficiency for the benefit of all the people. It was his first trip to Cuba, although other union members have received training there. He plans to participate with a larger delegation in the International Labor Congress to be held in 1997 in Havana.

Mark Friedman
Los Angeles, California

Fight political deportation

On May 30th, 1996, Julián

Calero-Salazar, a Peruvian citizen residing legally in the United States, was arrested by agents of the FBI while he was attending an on-going hearing on his application for political asylum at 26 Federal Plaza, New York City. There was not a legal warrant for his arrest, except a request for his extradition by the Peruvian government headed by Peru's dictator Alberto Fujimori. If he is deported, the U.S. Government will be delivering an innocent man to be imprisoned for life and most likely to be tortured and killed.

Julián has been unjustly accused of being a member of the Shining Path in Peru which is a total falsehood. The problem began in the peasant community of Curi, a highland near Lima. In 1989, cattle and

other livestock were stolen from Julián's farm and the thieves were arrested by the community. The police, historical allies of thieves and landowners in the area, entered the community of Curi and threatened to kill Julián and his family.

There is no due process for this law abiding poor man who was illegally arrested in the United States and is being kept in isolation at the Metropolitan Correctional Center (MCC) in New York City under the inmate number 43027-054. The press does not report that Julián was legally working in this country, meeting his legal obligations, and paying taxes like any working-class person. He is well liked by friends and neighbors in his new home in the village of Wilton, Connecticut. Supporters are gathering 5,000 signatures asking the U.S. Government to release Julián now. The press falsely states that Julián was arrested while trying to "submit his application for political asylum," but the reality is that his application was being processed by the INS since 1994, and he personally attended previous hearings.

Friends of Julián Calero-Salazar
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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.

Struggle to win abortion rights moves forward in South Africa

New constitution provides openings to legalize right to choose

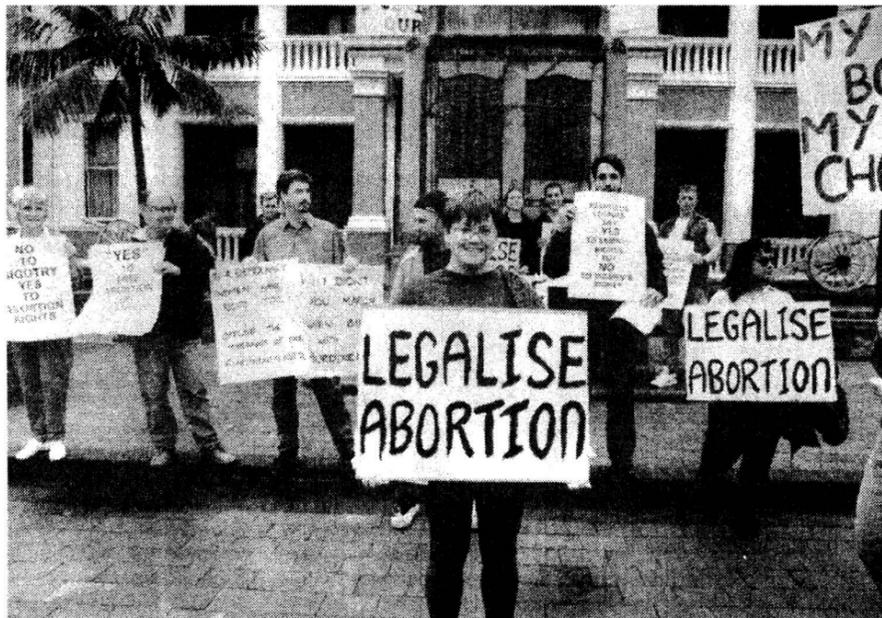
BY GREG ROSENBERG

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — Every year in South Africa, nearly 300,000 women have an abortion. Last year, only 2,180 of these procedures were performed legally.

While not specifically addressing abortion, the bill of rights in South Africa's new constitution lays the groundwork for an amendment in existing legislation that could legalize the right to abortion. Representatives of women's rights organizations say such a bill could be introduced in parliament later this year. The constitution establishes the equality of women before the law. It outlaws discrimination on the basis of "race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language, and birth...."

"Everyone has the right to bodily and psychological integrity, which includes the right...to make decisions concerning reproduction," states an article in the bill of rights. "Everyone has the right to have access to...health care services, including reproductive health care."

In an interview here, Michelle O'Sullivan, a leader of the Reproductive Rights Alliance, a coalition of 22 organizations, explained that supporters of a woman's right to choose are encouraged by the constitution, and the proposals of the Parliamentary Ad Hoc Select Committee on



Pro-choice rally in East London, South Africa, December 1994.

Abortion.

The committee recommended that the apartheid-era Abortion and Sterilization Act of 1975 be repealed. New legislation would provide for abortion on demand up to the fourteenth week of pregnancy, and under specified conditions will also legalize abortion between 14 and 24 weeks. The committee urged that the existing requirement

that two doctors be consulted prior to performing an abortion be ended; and that a wide range of health workers should be trained and authorized to perform abortions.

"The bigger problem is whether services will be available," said Chris Diamond of the Abortion Reform Action Group. "I want to know what will happen to a woman who has walked 10 kilometers [1 mile = 1.6 km]

to a clinic, and she's 12 weeks pregnant."

Under apartheid law, women could only obtain abortions if the pregnancy involved a serious threat to the woman's life; if the woman was judged to be at risk psychologically; if the baby was likely to be deformed; if the pregnancy was caused by rape or incest; or if the woman was deemed mentally unfit.

In practice, this meant that hundreds of thousands of women each year — nearly all of them Black — were compelled to submit to the hazards of back-alley abortions. In 1994, for example, 44,686 women were admitted to government hospitals to be treated for complications arising from incomplete abortions — the vast majority of them illegal.

Ninety nine percent of these women were Black. More than 400 of the women admitted to hospitals died each year. Many more deaths occur outside hospitals, particularly in rural areas where access to clinics has been severely limited.

These figures mirror recent statistics that give a picture of the brutal realities of life for hundreds of thousands of women throughout sub-Saharan Africa. On average, nearly 1,000 for every 100,000 women in that part of the continent die during pregnancy and childbirth. It is estimated that one-third of these deaths are caused by illegal abortions.

"Safe, legal abortion must be located as part of a reproductive health care package," said O'Sullivan. "However, the package does not end with the provision of health care services, but must extend to the improvement of socio-economic conditions for South African women."

The parliamentary committee roughly reflected the proportional makeup of parties in the South African government. Members of the African National Congress were a majority. While abortion rights are a subject of debate in the ANC, the organization is on record as favoring a woman's right to choose. The National Party, African Christian Democratic Party, and others bitterly oppose granting such a right.

"There will be a constitutional challenge to this legislation when it is passed," O'Sullivan said. "And there will be a debate as to whether it will be integrated into the free public health service. But it is likely that it will be." Primary health care is now free to all South Africans.

Canada: thousands rally for women's rights

BY ANNETTE KOURI

MONTREAL — Thousands of people rallied in Quebec City on June 2 and in Ottawa on June 15 to push for women's equality and express their anger at the growing conditions of poverty facing women in particular and an increasing percentage of working people today.

In Quebec City, over 2,000 women, who had spent the previous 24 hours as part of a human chain surrounding the National Assembly, joined the rally.

"I was impressed by all the people who were there," said Solange Proulx, a steelworker who was taking part in her first demonstration.

These actions were called by the National Coalition of Women against Poverty, which groups some 75 local and regional organizations. The same coalition had organized a major woman's march last year with the theme of "Bread and Roses."

Francoise David, the spokesperson for the coalition, stated, "Together we will continue

to fight, to act, to explain, to convince. Fourteen times, if necessary, like the suffragettes," referring to those who led the fight to give the right to vote to women.

The Ottawa rally was the culmination of a cross-country action, billed "Women's March Against Poverty — For Bread and Roses, For Jobs and Justice." It was organized by the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) and the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC). Organizers said 50,000 people participated in the whistle-stop rallies held as the march made its way to the capital.

"This whole event was inspired by what the women did in Quebec," said Zonny Woods, a young woman who helped organize the cross-Canada march.

Sunera Thobani, president of NAC, stated, "We say put the interests of women and children before the interests of banks and corporations in this country"

Contingents from many of the major trade unions were prominent in the crowd.

Domenico Iozzo, a steelworker, said he turned down overtime in order to come to Ottawa. "I don't regret it for a minute. We don't like what the government is doing. Women are being treated very poorly. If we don't stand together, we're lost."

The NAC held its annual general meeting after the march. The discussion at the gathering reflected the desire of the majority to continue protest actions like the Women's March Against Poverty.

Annette Kouri is a member of the Steelworkers Union at Distex. Joanne Pritchard in Toronto and Victoria Mercer in Montreal contributed to this article.

General strike in Brazil calls for jobs, land, higher wages

BY HILDA CUZCO

Three major union federations in Brazil, the United Federation of Workers (CUT), Union force, and the General Confederation of Workers (CGT), organized a general strike on June 21. The action was called to protest the austerity policies of the government and demand jobs, higher wages, and land reform.

The strike had its main success in Sao Paulo, the most important industrial city, where 30,000 auto workers paralyzed the Volkswagen and Ford plants. Almost half of the 11,000 buses that circulate in the city normally were idled. But banks, gas stations, and supermarkets remained open.

The Movement of the Landless Rural Workers (MST), which has been leading the struggle to distribute land to peasants and landless workers, took part in the industrial action.

In Brasilia, the capital, trade union officials reported more than 50 percent of public sector employees honored the strike. On the day of the walkout, around 150 people

marched toward the presidential palace for a demonstration. In a news conference carried on national CBN radio, Vicente Paulo da Silva, head of the CUT, said that it was wrong to judge the strike on the "numbers who turned out." He also added that the labor action had "made demands for more jobs, better salaries and speedier land reform a matter of public debate."

In Rio de Janeiro, local trains did not run and most of the public schools were closed. In Belo Horizonte, Recife, Salvador and Porto Alegre, the strike was partially honored.

Organizers estimated that at least 8 million workers would participate, but were not sure of the actual turn out as the government had threatened to fire workers. Private employers announced they would deduct two days of wages for those who did not report for work.

Brazilian president Fernando Henrique Cardoso criticized the walkout, stating, "Strikes will not result in the creation of new jobs."

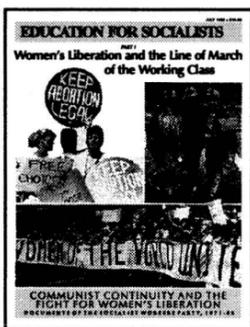
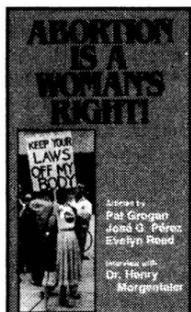
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