

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Paul Montauk, 1922-98: cadre of Socialist Workers Party

— PAGES 8-9

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 62/NO. 36 OCTOBER 12, 1998

## Socialists say: Cancel Caribbean debt now!

### Hurricane devastation is a social disaster

The following statement was issued by Al Duncan, Socialist Workers candidate for governor of New York.

The Socialist Workers campaign demands the U.S. government send immediate, massive aid with no strings attached to the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Puerto Rico, and other nations in the Caribbean where Hurricane Georges wreaked devastation on the lives of millions of human beings.

We also demand cancellation of the foreign debt of all the countries in the region, and the end of Washington's criminal economic embargo against Cuba.

In face of catastrophic losses estimated at \$3 billion, Washington's miserly relief "aid" to the Dominican people — \$500,000 so far, perhaps a few million dollars later —

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### U.S. and Cuban gov'ts have opposite responses

BY SHIRLEY PEÑA AND RACHELE FRUIT

MIAMI — During its devastating five-day sweep through the Caribbean, Hurricane Georges hit the region's three most populous islands along with smaller islands in the eastern Antilles. The official death toll was more than 300. Initial figures on damage to agriculture and local infrastructures



Militant/Rafael Alvarez

Hurricane Georges's destruction was magnified by conditions of imperialist exploitation. Above, rally demanding better health services, roads, and lower electric rates in June 1997 in San Francisco de Macoris, Dominican Republic.

run in the billions of dollars, and the toll in the livelihood of millions of people is only beginning to be felt. As the storm left the Caribbean it clipped the Florida Keys on its way up the Gulf Coast to Louisiana. The hurricane was a natural occurrence, but its social impact varied tremendously, especially between Cuba and the other Caribbean nations. While no area that fell in

Georges's path was spared, the island of Hispaniola — where 15 million people live in the Dominican Republic and Haiti — suffered disproportionately.

Government officials in the Dominican Republic alone reported around 200 deaths, and some 800 are missing. On September 28 the *Wall Street Journal* quoted an unidentified U.S. agency as saying the death toll might exceed 500.

In some areas, entire villages were swept away by overflowing rivers. More than 200,000 people remain in shelters.

Much of the country has been left without electricity, and government officials estimate it will take weeks to restore service, especially in the rural areas.

Losses to the Dominican Republic's infrastructure and agriculture alone are estimated at \$3 billion, more than the nation's entire operating budget for 1998. Some 90 percent of the nation's crops were wiped out, including basic products such as rice, plan-

Continued on Page 6

## Conservatives suffer blow in German elections

BY CARL-ERIK ISACSSON

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — German chancellor Helmut Kohl and his Christian Democratic Union (CDU) suffered a defeat in the September 27 elections to the German Bundestag, the lower house of parliament.

The Social Democratic Party (SPD) received the biggest vote and its candidate, Gerhard Schröder, will now become chancellor.

Workers' resistance to the capitalist economic crisis, including unemployment higher than any time since the 1930s, and the continuing inability of Germany's rulers to incorporate the former East German workers state as part of a stable, prosperous imperialist power were the main factors in Kohl's defeat.

The combined vote for the CDU and its sister party, the Bavaria-based Christian Social Union (CSU) was 35.2 percent, down from 41.4 percent in the elections in 1994. This was the first time in more than five decades that the CDU/CSU received less than 40 percent of the vote in the federal elections.

The Social Democrats got 41 percent of the vote, up from 36.4 percent four years ago. The gap between the two main parties was much bigger than any polls in the last weeks had predicted.

Kohl, who was chancellor for 16 years,

has in recent years stood at the head of government attacks on social entitlements such as unemployment benefits and pensions, as well as the attempt to lower sick leave payments to 80 percent of a worker's wages. In demonstrations and rallies against these at-

Continued on Page 12

## Illinois: striking miners win solidarity

BY JOHN STUDER AND ALYSON KENNEDY

FARMERSVILLE, Illinois — The 350-coal miners on strike at Freeman United's three mines in Southern Illinois are stepping up efforts to get the word out about their strike and win solidarity.

Freeman United forced the members of the United Mineworkers of America (UMWA) out on strike when it demanded the miners take cuts in health care for retirees. The mining company, a subsidiary of General Dynamics, dropped out of the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA) and their negotiations with the UMWA in June 1997 and is demanding to negotiate a separate, "more competitive," contract with the miners union. The old contract expired August 1. The UMWA miners agreed to continue working and negotiated for weeks until it became clear the company was not going to budge on its take-back demands. The strike began September 11, and covers UMWA Local 1969 at the Crown 2 mine in Virden, Local 12 at the Crown 3

Continued on Page 11

## Young Socialists organize for convention

BY CARLOS HERNÁNDEZ

LOS ANGELES — Young Socialists leaders from 13 cities participated in an expanded meeting of the organization's National Committee September 19-20 to discuss the work of the YS leading up to its convention, which participants decided to hold in Los Angeles December 4-6.

For two days, YS leaders discussed the need to build chapters of the Young Socialists that make collective decisions, have a serious approach to finances, and put recruitment to the organization at the center

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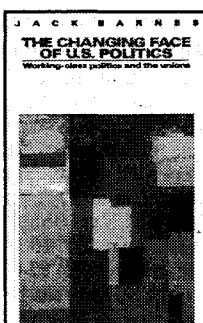
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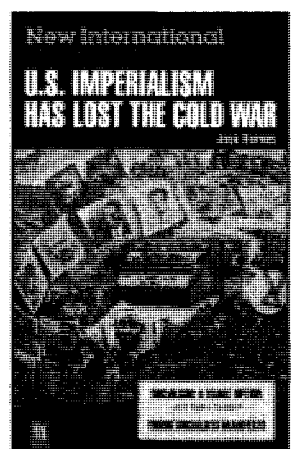
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### Moscow may default on loans

The Russian government announced September 24 that it may default on its long-term debt to foreign investors — estimated at \$158 billion — unless it receives further loans. Moscow already owes \$600 million in unpaid interest to Bonn and other governments. That same day, the International Monetary Fund announced it would not continue payments of a pledged \$22.6 billion loan unless Moscow implemented more capitalist-oriented policies, such as cutting social welfare benefits. Instead, fearing more strikes and protests by workers, the new Russian prime minister, Yevgeny Primakov, said he'll pay wage arrears to workers and soldiers and offer compensation to offset the effects of inflation, which leapt 67 percent in September. The Central Bank announced that price hikes may approach 300 percent by the end of the year. Some foreign capitalists are attempting to recover losses invested in Russia. The U.S. investment bank Lehman Brothers Holdings won a London court order to freeze the accounts in Britain of two major Russian banks, totaling \$113 million.

### Japan's car sales plummet

Japan's largest carmakers reported a dramatic drop in sales in August. Honda Motors saw its sales dive the furthest — 13.1 percent in Japan and 35.6 percent overseas. Toyota's domestic sales fell 10.7 percent, and its exports 25 percent, and Nissan's sales fell too. All three companies cut their production.

### Jobless totals rising worldwide

Up to one-third of the world's 3 billion workers will be either without a job or underemployed by next year, according to forecasts published by the International Labour Organization. That means 150 million people by the end of this year, with a further 25 to 30 percent of workers underemployed — between 750 million to 900 million people. By the end of the year the unemployment rate in Indonesia is expected to reach 12 percent, three times the rate in 1996 and in Thailand nearly 2 million people will be without a job. In central and eastern Europe joblessness will rise from zero per-

### Hundreds of Hmong, others protest racist remarks



Nearly 300 people protested 92 KQRS radio in St. Paul, Minnesota, September 26. The action was called by Community Action Against Racism (CAAR), a recently established group led by youth from the Hmong community, to protest racist remarks made by a KQRS talk show host.

cent a few years ago to 9 percent; and in the European Union states just over 10 percent of the population does not have a job.

### UK cops hold 'antiterrorist' raid

Seven men of Middle Eastern origin were arrested in London September 24 in a "antiterrorist" raid by British police and held for interrogation. *Al-Ahram*, an Egyptian newspaper, reported that one of those arrested is Adel Abdel-Meguid Abdel-Bari, head of the International Office for the Defense of the Egyptian People in London. Using a bombing in Northern Ireland as the pretext, the British government recently passed laws it termed "draconian" that, among other things, restrict the right to silence for those arrested on suspicion of "terrorism."

### U.S., E.U. clash at meeting

At a World Trade Organization meeting

September 22, Washington and the European Union accused each other of "legal harassment" and "delaying tactics" over EU banana imports. Hoping to further open up European markets, the U.S. government is seeking to end the EU's preferential banana trade agreements with several Caribbean nations. The WTO has ruled in favor of U.S. agribusinesses, which have substantial holdings in Latin American banana production, giving the go-ahead for U.S. and South American capital to seek "compensation" and authorized "retaliation for lost trade."

### France: strikes protest austerity

Partial strikes affected airports, schools, hospitals, and prisons across France September 24, as unionists protested the government's austerity measures. State-owned Air France was forced to cancel some flights as pilots began a two-day strike protesting salaries, schedules, and working conditions. About 3,900 unionists at Orly airport went on strike from 7:00 a.m. to noon; and some of the 100 firefighters joined the walkout, forcing the closure of one of the airport's two runways.

### Ecuador: workers and students protest price hikes, call strike

The decision by the newly elected government in Ecuador to raise prices on gasoline, electricity, and public transportation has sparked a wave of protests by workers and students since September 16. They are demanding the government suspend all price increases, especially a 400 percent hike in cooking gas and a 350 percent rise in elec-

tricity rates. Police assaulted a September 24 demonstration in the capital, Quito, with tear gas. Some demonstrators responded with Molotov cocktails. Six people were injured and 20 arrested.

The United Workers Front (FUT) announced plans for a general strike October 1 along with other organizations of workers, indigenous peoples, students, and teachers. The Federation of Oil Workers at the state-owned Petroecuador oil company also announced September 25 that it will strike October 1 over the price increases, despite the government threats to apply an emergency decree to force them to work under military laws.

### State employees stage two-day national stoppage in Colombia

Thousands of people marched September 25 during the second and last day of a national strike against the government's planned austerity measures. Workers are demanding a readjustment of the salaries for 1999 at least to level with the inflation — estimated at 18 percent. The government offered a 14-percent increase of 14 percent. "The people of Colombia are not responsible for the crisis," said Wilson Borja, president of the state employees union FENALTRASE, which organizes 650,000 workers. Other protest marches took place around the country.

### Court upholds U.S. military policy against homosexuals

A Federal appeals court ruled September 23 that the U.S. military's long-standing policy of banning homosexual activity and its policy of "don't ask, don't tell" is constitutional because of "special circumstances." The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit said that individual rights traditionally have been curtailed in the armed forces. The move overturns two rulings by a Federal District judge who struck down the military's policy. That 1995 ruling said the policies violated the constitutional guarantees of equal protection and free speech under the First Amendment. As it stands, military policy will in effect discharge anyone who is found to have engaged in homosexual activity, including holding hands and conduct that takes place off base and in private.

### New Illinois law requires HIV-positive notification

In a move that attacks democratic rights, the Illinois Public Health Department announced September 24 that it would track those infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. At least 31 states already require that the names of people who test positive for the virus be reported to health officials. At least 29 states have passed laws making it a crime to knowingly transmit or expose others to HIV. Similar laws are pending in 16 states. The state of New York recently passed a law also requiring partner notification.

— MEGAN ARNEY

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# Basque fighters call mass demonstrations for independence, political prisoners' rights

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

MADRID — Herri Batasuna, the leading political party in the struggle of the Basque people for national unity and independence, has called mass demonstrations for early October. These actions are in response to what Herri Batasuna leader Joseba Permach describes as the "negative" attitude of the Popular Party (PP), the governing party in the Spanish state, and the Socialist Party (PSOE), the main parliamentary opposition, to the cease-fire declared by the armed independence movement, Basque Homeland and Liberty (ETA).

"The vast majority of Basque society has already declared itself in favor of a political and democratic solution and we must now work toward advancing a process of peace based on the will of the Basque people," Permach declared at a September 22 press conference in San Sebastián. Prime minister José María Aznar and Socialist Party leader Joaquín Almunia responded to the ETA initiative with calls that ETA give up its arms and declare a permanent end to violence before any dialogue be opened.

Jon Gorrotxategi, another central leader of Herri Batasuna, which means Popular Unity, announced that the demonstrations will take place in the four Basque provincial capitals. The action in Pamplona (Iruñea in the Basque language) is set for October 2, and the protests in San Sebastián (Donostia), Bilbao (Bilbo) and Vitoria (Gasteiz) will be the next day.

The call for the October mobilizations followed a demonstration of 4,000 people in Bilbao September 19 demanding the return of Basque political prisoners to the Basque Country, or Euskal Herria. Nearly 600 prisoners are dispersed, some hundreds of miles from their families; 535 are held in jails throughout Spain, including the Canary Isles; the remainder are in France. In a major operation, the French police arrested 14 Basques on September 1 in the latest of the joint Madrid-Paris actions against the Basque people. Euskal Herria straddles the current border of Spain and France.

## Rights of prisoners, end censorship

The Bilbao demonstration was called by Senideak, the Association of Relatives of Basque Political Prisoners, Refugees and Deportees. Participants included representatives of Herri Batasuna, Left Unity, trade unions, and social movements. Also present were two representatives of Irish political prisoners held in jails in Britain and Ireland, Frances McHugh and Patricia Moore.

Speaking on behalf of the families, Senideak spokesperson Tomás Karrera said they consider an end to the dispersion not a gesture but a "right owed to the prisoners, their families, and the entire people." Karrera and other speakers pointed to the opportunity opened by the ETA cease-fire.

Aitor Jugo, coordinator of a prisoners amnesty organization in Vizcaya, described the situation as "the fruit of 20 years of struggle." He called on the government to put an end to its own violence against the Basque people.

At a September 23 meeting in defense of press freedom and freedom of expression hosted by the Committee for Solidarity with the Peoples here in Madrid, Pepe Rey, the former editor in chief of *Egin*, a pro-independence daily newspaper closed down by the Spanish government July 15, chronicled the recent attacks on democratic rights in the Basque country. These culminated in the closure of the paper and of radio *Egin*. They included the arrest and imprisonment for seven years of the 23 members of the national leadership of Herri Batasuna for the "crime" of "intending to show" a video that contained footage of alleged members of ETA. Those imprisoned were banned from standing for office while in prison. Five already held seats in the Basque regional parliament.

"In addition to these 23, seven other people are in prison just for their ideas," said Rey, referring to people arrested following the police raid on the *Egin* offices, in which files and property were destroyed and machinery confiscated. Rey spoke of the police torture of Basque independence fighters and the corruption by the ruling political parties. "On the other side are the working people of Euskal Herria" who were the



Demonstration of 4,000 in Bilbao September 19 demanded the return to the Basque Country of Basque nationalist prisoners dispersed throughout Spain and France.

base of *Egin*'s 50,000-strong circulation.

Support was built block by block, town by town. This meant that within two days of the closure of *Egin* a substitute daily paper, *Euskadi Information* was launched. "The aim is twofold," the former editor said, "to rebuild the paper and to stimulate mobilizations, debate, criticism, and self-criticism." As part of this a festival, *Egin Dugu*, has been called for 27 September. "*Egin Dugu*," Rey explained, "was a phrase coined at the time of the shutdown by one of the paper's workers. It means 'we will do it.'"

## 'The Basques have seized the initiative'

This sense of optimism is strong among Basque nationalists. "The Basques have seized the initiative" declared union leader José Elorrieta in an interview with *Euskadi Information*. Elorrieta is general secretary of ELA, the bigger of the two principle trade union organizations in Euskal Herria. The other union is known by its acronym LAB. Both organizations participated in the discussions that culminated in the Lizarraga Agreement (also known as the Estella Agreement), which was the political forerunner of the ETA cease-fire.

"We must mobilize around the Lizarraga agreement," Elorrieta declared. In this "we have the great advantage that the overwhelming majority of the people who live here [in Euskal Herria] have decided to live here, and it's logical that they'll take steps to acquire maximum sovereignty and participate in decision-making."

The Lizarraga agreement was concluded September 12 through discussions among 23 Basque political parties, trade unions, prisoners rights groups, and other organizations. Among them were the bourgeois nationalist Basque National Party (PNV), the largest party represented in the Basque regional parliament with 22 seats; Herri Batasuna, which holds 11 seats; a third nationalist formation, the Basque Union (EA) with 8; and Left Unity, the electoral formation led by the Communist Party, with 6

seats. The agreement cites at some length the current developments in Ireland in which both sides "were conscious that neither were going to win militarily." It provides for peace through inclusive negotiations leading to a political settlement in which "Euskal Herria must have the final word and decision-making power."

The Popular Party and the Socialist Party opposed the Lizarraga declaration. The Socialist Party of Euskadi is linked to the Socialist Party of Spain and, with 12 seats, forms part of a coalition government in the Basque parliament along with the PNV and EA. The PP has 11 seats in the Basque parliament.

## Spanish gov't tries to take hard line

The PP and PSOE had previously headed up the Pacto de Ajuria Enea. Last year, after the government-sponsored anti-nationalist mobilizations that followed the alleged kidnapping and killing by ETA of a PP municipal councilor, signatories of the pact endorsed a special accord, seeking to politically isolate Herri Batasuna by uniting all parliamentary forces that had backed the demonstrations. These included the PNV, Left Unity, and others. Following the ETA cease-fire, the PP called for a meeting of the signers of the Pacto de Ajuria Enea, but has been unable to achieve this.

At the same time the government has declared itself against any political concessions to the Basque people in return for peace. Prime minister Aznar, in Peru at the time of the cease-fire declaration, went on TV to declare that Spanish people should not be lulled into joy by the cease-fire. "Caution and prudence" should be the guiding principles, he said. Minister of the Interior Jaime Mayor Oreja has issued a series of statements saying that the "state can't declare a truce toward the terrorists" and the "detentions will continue." He claimed the ETA cease-fire was the result of the independence movement's political weakness, the firm policy of the government and security forces, and the anti-nationalist mobilizations

of hundreds of thousands of people last year.

The Socialist Party echoed the government's watchwords of "caution and prudence," saying "socialists won't make do with a cease-fire, we want peace," demanding that ETA give up its arms.

However, more light continues to be shed on the PSOE government's role in the kidnappings and assassinations of Basque independence fighters in the 1980s. Former Minister of the Interior José Barriouneo Peña and former Director of State Security Rafael Vera were arrested and sentenced each to 10 years in prison for kidnapping and misappropriation of funds during the Spanish government's dirty war against the Basque nationalist movement. At least 27 Basque nationalists were murdered by PSOE government-backed death squads.

In his statement on the ETA cease-fire, the first minister of the Basque parliament, José Antonio Ardanza of the PNV, declared, "We are on the threshold of peace once and for all and we can't lose it." At the same time, Ardanza proposed to postpone until the year 2000 serious negotiations over Euskal Herria. Such a delay until after this year's Basque elections and next year's municipal, European elections, and possibly a general election, is needed, the PNV leader said, in order to consolidate the cease-fire and give "confidence" to other parties.

The Communist Party of Spain issued a statement September 19 during its annual Fiesta in Madrid, at which retiring General Secretary Julio Anguita was the main speaker. In his hour-long address, he made no mention of the Basque struggle, save to say that there are sections of the Spanish constitution that need modifying. In its written statement, the Communist Party says that the cease-fire is, in principle, positive. It calls for the return of the political prisoners and dialogue, and concludes with an appeal for a Federal Spanish State.

In its cease-fire declaration ETA reaffirmed its goal of overcoming the institutional and state division of the Basque nation and its fight for Basque unity and sovereignty embracing the provinces of Araba, Bizkaia, Gipuzkoa, Lapurdi, Nafarroa, and Zuberoa. It declared that there's a head-on clash between the project of Basque independence and the designs of the Spanish and French states. Referring to the magnitude of the step taken by the armed organization, the statement calls for an equivalent step to be taken in response: "We are at the threshold of achieving our liberty thanks to the generosity of thousands and thousands of brave Basque men and women."

Herri Batasuna emphasized that the cease-fire declaration did not mean that peace has broken out in Euskal Herria. HB leader Permach cited as evidence to the contrary the Basque political prisoners dispersed in the French and Spanish states, the presence of Madrid's repressive police and civil guard, and, above all, because the Spanish and French governments refuse to recognize that the Basque people "have the right to freely decide their own future."

## Federal Reserve Bank of N.Y. organizes bailout of speculative fund to forestall wider collapse

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

The Federal Reserve Bank of New York arranged a \$3.5 billion bailout September 23 of the speculative fund Long Term Capital Management to halt its collapse, which investors feared would have caused massive disruption in markets around the world.

Some 16 major banks and investment firms were involved in the deal, including J.P. Morgan, Chase Manhattan, UBS of Switzerland, Merrill Lynch, Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, and Goldman Sachs. The financial institutions agreed to put up roughly \$100-\$300 million each in return for an equity stake in Long Term Capital Management.

LTCM had a massive portfolio of stocks and bonds, which totaled up to \$1.25 trillion. It made hedges, or bets, on this scale

with loans that amounted to between 50 and 100 times its capital. The crisis was provoked when all bets began going the wrong way at once.

"The recent turmoil in financial markets, particularly the collapse in Russia, led to staggering losses for Long-Term Capital," the *New York Times* reported September 25. The hedge fund lost 44 percent of its net asset value in August following Moscow's announcement that it would default on some of its foreign debt and devalue its currency. Some 18 percent of LTCM's losses came from investments in "emerging markets," which included Russia. Moscow's total foreign debt is estimated at \$158 billion.

At a September 28 news conference U.S. secretary of treasury Robert Rubin tried to reassure investors that the near-bankruptcy of Long Term Capital would not provoke a

deeper financial crisis. Meanwhile, Congressional hearings are scheduled for October 1 to investigate how the speculative fund threatened the stability of the entire financial system.

In the wake of Long Term's financial disaster, Morgan Stanley Dean Witter & Company announced September 24 a 5 percent drop in net income. UBS A.G., Europe's largest bank, reported that same day that it expected a third-quarter loss of \$721 million related to Long-Term's near-collapse.

"We were reminded in the most eye-opening manner of what happens in a financial crisis," remarked Hugh Johnson, chief investment officer of the First Albany Corporation. "This is one of the ways financial crises can get transmitted around the globe."

# NI fund needs money now!

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

This week \$1,230 was collected for the New International Fund. It was the first week of the \$115,000 campaign, and we should be collecting more than \$14,000 every week during the eight-week drive.

Supporters sent in \$400 from Detroit, \$505 from Twin Cities, and \$325 from New York.

What's needed now is for supporters of *New International* to begin to organize substantial collections, in order to wage a real weekly campaign. It's important for promoters of the fund drive to explain to contributors and potential contributors that the funds are needed *right now* to be able to finance the Marxist magazine *New International* and its sister publications in Spanish, French, Swedish, and Icelandic.

Issue no. 11 of *New International*, titled "U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War," came off the presses September 25. The initial run of 1,000 copies of this issue, with its beautiful four-color reproduction of the

Pathfinder Mural on the cover, has sold out. The printers are going back to press to produce another 1,000 copies and to improve the quality of the photographs and graphics. Issue no. 11 has more than a dozen inside photos — much more than previous issues.

One example of how to raise money early was set by *New International* supporters in St. Paul, Minnesota, who held a fund-raising meeting the first week of the campaign. Doug Jenness, a Steelworker and a leader of the Socialist Workers Party, spoke on "The Deepening Dilemma for World Capitalism and New Opportunities for the Working Class." Young Socialists member Heather Wood, who chaired the event, spoke about the Young Socialists Manifesto, a guide to revolutionary practice that is the opening piece in *New International* no. 11. A class on "Cuba's Internationalism: Cuba and South Africa" was held in conjunction with the meeting, drawing four youths interested in the Young Socialists.

Supporters of the New International Fund in Birmingham are planning to put together "a panel of fighters with whom we are carrying out political work, who will give short presentations on various aspects of the politics in the articles in *New International* no. 11," local fund director George Williams reports. The October 23 meeting will include a leader of the Socialist Workers Party, a Young Socialist, and a young worker who is an avid reader of revolutionary literature such as *New International*.

As noted before, it is crucial to collect as much as possible in the first half of the eight-week fund drive in order to allow for the necessary fund-raising, beginning in late October, for those attending the December 4-6 Young Socialists national convention in Los Angeles.

**Checks should be made out to the New International Fund and sent to the Militant at 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014.**

## \$115,000 New International Fund Drive

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| Vancouver             | 665            |
| <b>Total Canada</b>   | <b>3,000</b>   |
| <b>ICELAND</b>        | <b>1,400</b>   |
| <b>NEW ZEALAND</b>    |                |
| Auckland              | 1,000          |
| Christchurch          | 550            |
| <b>Total NZ</b>       | <b>1,550</b>   |
| <b>UNITED KINGDOM</b> |                |
| London                | 1,500          |
| Manchester            | 620            |
| <b>Total UK</b>       | <b>2,120</b>   |
| <b>UNITED STATES</b>  |                |
| Atlanta               | 2,800          |
| Birmingham            | 3,000          |
| Boston                | 4,700          |
| Chicago               | 7,500          |
| Cleveland             | 2,200          |
| Des Moines            | 2,500          |
| Detroit               | 4,500          |
| Houston               | 6,000          |
| Los Angeles           | 9,000          |
| Miami                 | 2,500          |
| Newark                | 8,500          |
| New York              | 12,000         |
| Philadelphia          | 4,000          |
| Pittsburgh            | 4,000          |
| San Francisco         | 11,000         |
| Seattle               | 8,500          |
| Twin Cities           | 7,000          |
| Wash., D.C.           | 4,000          |
| <b>Total US</b>       | <b>103,700</b> |
| <b>SWEDEN</b>         | <b>1,250</b>   |
| <b>Int'l Totals</b>   | <b>113,020</b> |

## Cuban poet, others to speak in U.S.

BY JACK WILLEY

CHICAGO — Norberto Codina, editor of the Cuban cultural magazine *La Gaceta de Cuba*, arrived in Chicago September 29 for a four-week lecture series at several university campuses and other cultural venues.

*La Gaceta de Cuba*, published by the Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba, is a leading forum for discussion on culture, politics, and the challenges facing the Cuban revolution today. Its pages reflect a wide range of viewpoints being debated in Cuba today.

Codina is speaking about art and culture in Cuba, holding readings of his poetry, and meeting with writers, artists, and others in the cities he is visiting.

He was one of several dozen Cuban writers and scholars who recently won visas to be able to accept invitations by academic institutions in the United States. The Latin

American Scholars Association (LASA) invited them to participate in their September 24-26 national conference in Chicago. After initial stalling, the U.S. State Department finally granted the visas after pressure from those inviting the Cubans. Some of the visiting academics, however, were then delayed by Hurricane Georges and arrived late or, in the case of Codina and others, not in time for the LASA conference. Some of them did go on to participate in events in other cities.

In New York, the editor of *La Gaceta* is speaking at a public meeting at Casa de las Américas October 2. He then goes to Boston, where his visit begins with a poetry reading and reception at the University of Massachusetts in Boston on October 5. The event is sponsored by several Latino academic institutions and student groups. The following day, he will speak to garment

workers at a lunchtime meeting, hosted by Local 1 of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees, and will give a poetry reading at Tufts University that evening.

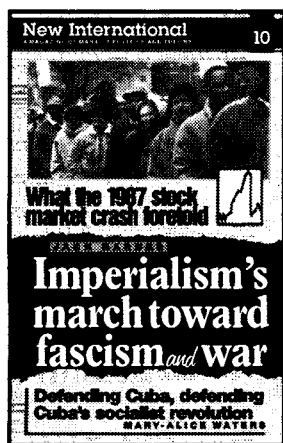
From Boston, the Cuban poet will travel to the San Francisco Bay Area. On October 9, he will speak at the University of California in Santa Cruz.

The following evening, he will give a poetry reading at the Mission Cultural Center in San Francisco that will be introduced by well-known Puerto Rican writer Piri Thomas and the director of the center. The Ethnic Studies, African American Studies, and Spanish/Portuguese Studies Departments at UC Berkeley are sponsoring an event for him October 12.

After speaking in the Bay Area, the Cuban poet will travel to Minneapolis, Chicago, and return to New York.

## New International

A MAGAZINE OF MARXIST POLITICS AND THEORY



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- Defending Cuba, Defending Cuba's Socialist Revolution  
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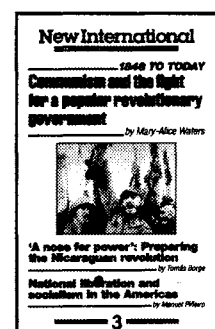
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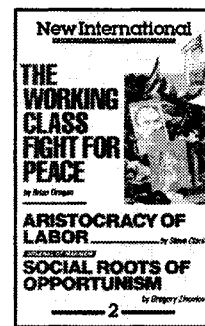
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### New International in Spanish, French, and Swedish

Many of the articles that appear in *New International* are also available in Spanish in *Nueva Internacional*, in French in *Nouvelle Internationale*, and in Swedish in *Ny International*.

AVAILABLE FROM BOOKSTORES  
LISTED ON PAGE 12



# More workers are open to reading the socialist press

BY CHRIS RAYSON

SEATTLE — In the first two weeks of the subscription drive, supporters of the *Militant* at the Burlington North-Santa Fe railroad here have sold one subscription and a copy of *New International* no. 10 [which features "Imperialism's March toward Fascism and War"]. The story behind each sale confirms what the *Militant* has noted about the "sea change" in workers' consciousness.

We attended a "town meeting" the company organized for its employees featuring CEO Ronald Krebs. About 15 track workers, members of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees (BMWE), showed up for the meeting after their shift, some arriving in a company van. Their "spokesperson," a worker with 19 years' experience, took the floor repeatedly to challenge the company's layoffs of track workers while sacrificing safety. Krebs anticipated this was going to come up. In his presentation he referred to a previous meeting in a town near Spokane that turned into a "war" over layoffs with BMWE members. Krebs tried to intimidate the track gang spokesperson, calling him "ignorant." But this co-worker of ours on the railroad gave more than he got and emerged from the confrontation with a good deal of authority.

I and other switchmen had a chance to meet a number of the track workers at that meeting. I was talking to one of them in the back of the room when one of the many company supervisors there told us to keep quiet. This BMWE member, a track inspector, told me "I've been spanked enough" and left, coming back later.

Early in the morning soon after this meeting Jeff Powers, Socialist Workers congressional candidate and a switchman at BNSF, myself, and another switchman visited the lot where the track gangs form up. We showed copies of the *Militant* and participated in a wide-ranging political discussion with a number of BMWE members. The track inspector I had met at the back of the room at the town meeting came out of the breakroom to join the discussion. We pulled out two *Militants* and sold a sub to the track inspector.

I have been trying to meet a brakeman who bought a *Militant* from a literature table in Seattle. I finally met him and sold him another copy of the paper. He said he would buy a copy every time we met but wouldn't get a sub because he didn't want to get on any list. I showed him a copy of *New International* no. 10. He's interested, but I'll have to talk to him further about it. As I was showing it to him a conductor who has read the *Militant* for half a year recognized it as the book he wanted to get from ads in the *Militant* and bought it from me. This conductor had purchased an introductory sub and then renewed it for 12 weeks. He has decided not to renew again but has bought his first copy of the *NI* and is, I'm sure, interested in Pathfinder titles.

BY CHRISTIAN COURNEYOR

TORONTO — Supporters of the *Militant* and members of the Young Socialists set up a literature table outside the Skydome here when about 40,000 students and teachers came to hear Nelson Mandela. The team sold 24 copies of the issue of the *Militant* that featured the speech given by Cuban president Fidel Castro to the National Assembly of South Africa, as well as three subscriptions, and 17 books with speeches by Mandela, Malcolm X, and about the Cuban revolution. Also eight people gave us their telephone numbers who are considering subscribing to the *Militant* and five youth want to be contacted by the Young Socialists.

Supporters of the socialist press have also visited workers on strike with their co-workers to build support for the unions. As a result of this, one worker from the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Local 819 decided to purchase 10 copies of the *Militant* and sell them to her co-workers. The paper contained an article about the recent strike of her local union against the plastics company W. Ralston in Brampton. The same week, a member of Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) Local 252 on strike at Gill Machine, two workers from the CAW at Chrysler and Ford, and a worker from Ford Electronic who is a member of the International Association of Machinists all bought subscriptions to the *Militant*.

Supporters of the paper also have been selling at the University of York. In the last two weeks, students bought seven books, including two issues of *New International*, and more than 15 copies of the *Militant*. Some of them gave us their name and telephone number to contact them about the Young Socialists becoming an official organization at the university.

"We are organizing a regional team to sell the socialist press at meatpacking plants in central Iowa, Kansas, and Nebraska from October 17-24," said *Militant* supporter Maryanne Russo from Des Moines. "At least one person from Des Moines will lead a team that would travel to packing plants in Kansas and Nebraska the whole week. If enough people volunteer, it might be possible to field two teams, one that could concentrate on Kansas and the other on Nebraska." Anyone interested in joining the regional team can call Iowa supporters of the *Militant* at (515) 277-4600.

Russo said supporters of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* who work at meatpacking plants in Iowa have found a good response to the socialist publications. Meatpacker Tom Alter who works at IBP in Perry, Iowa, said he sold a copy of *New International* no. 11 to his co-worker from Sudan. "I had been talking to him since the U. S. bombed Sudan. I had previously sold a subscription to his roommate," Alter reported.

## SUBSCRIPTION DRIVE September 12 – November 8 MILITANT/PERSPECTIVA MUNDIAL/NEW INT'L

|                  | Militant |      |     | PM   |      |   | NI   |      |
|------------------|----------|------|-----|------|------|---|------|------|
|                  | Goal     | Sold | %   | Goal | Sold | % | Goal | Sold |
| Australia        | 16       | 5    | 31% | 3    | 1    |   | 18   | 1    |
| Iceland          | 8        | 2    | 25% | 1    | 0    |   | 4    | 0    |
| New Zealand      |          |      |     |      |      |   |      |      |
| Christchurch     | 18       | 7    | 39% | 1    | 0    |   | 15   | 0    |
| Auckland         | 28       | 4    | 14% | 1    | 1    |   | 25   | 0    |
| N.Z. total       | 46       | 11   | 24% | 2    | 1    |   | 40   | 0    |
| United States    |          |      |     |      |      |   |      |      |
| Atlanta          | 28       | 10   | 36% | 8    | 3    |   | 40   | 6    |
| Seattle          | 70       | 21   | 30% | 20   | 1    |   | 70   | 16   |
| Des Moines       | 45       | 13   | 29% | 25   | 9    |   | 35   | 7    |
| Newark, NJ       | 120      | 33   | 28% | 40   | 9    |   | 100  | 43   |
| Chicago          | 65       | 16   | 25% | 25   | 9    |   | 58   | 14   |
| New York         | 140      | 33   | 24% | 60   | 13   |   | 120  | 55   |
| Cleveland        | 35       | 8    | 23% | 10   | 3    |   | 30   | 17   |
| Miami            | 40       | 9    | 23% | 20   | 1    |   | 40   | 13   |
| Philadelphia     | 35       | 8    | 23% | 8    | 1    |   | 30   | 4    |
| Houston          | 35       | 7    | 20% | 10   | 0    |   | 43   | 11   |
| Washington, D.C. | 45       | 9    | 20% | 15   | 5    |   | 25   | 8    |
| Twin Cities, MN  | 65       | 12   | 18% | 10   | 1    |   | 45   | 14   |
| Pittsburgh       | 40       | 6    | 15% | 5    | 3    |   | 45   | 1    |
| Birmingham, AL   | 50       | 7    | 14% | 6    | 0    |   | 40   | 3    |
| San Francisco    | 95       | 12   | 13% | 38   | 6    |   | 45   | 7    |
| Los Angeles      | 90       | 10   | 11% | 45   | 6    |   | 70   | 2    |
| Boston           | 35       | 3    | 9%  | 20   | 2    |   | 35   | 11   |
| Detroit          | 45       | 4    | 9%  | 10   | 3    |   | 40   | 13   |
| U.S. total       | 1078     | 221  | 21% | 375  | 75   |   | 911  | 245  |
| Sweden           | 16       | 3    | 19% | 8    | 4    |   | 25   | 8    |
| United Kingdom   |          |      |     |      |      |   |      |      |
| London           | 40       | 8    | 20% | 10   | 6    |   | 60   | 11   |
| Manchester       | 24       | 3    | 13% | 2    | 0    |   | 15   |      |
| UK total         | 64       | 11   | 17% | 12   | 6    |   | 75   | 11   |
| Canada           |          |      |     |      |      |   |      |      |
| Toronto          | 40       | 11   | 28% | 5    | 0    |   | 50   | 13   |
| Vancouver        | 40       | 4    | 10% | 5    | 0    |   | 40   | 10   |
| Montreal         | 25       | 2    | 8%  | 10   | 2    |   | 40   | 6    |
| Canada total     | 105      | 17   | 16% | 20   | 2    |   | 130  | 29   |
| France           | 5        | 0    | 0%  | 3    |      |   | 25   | 8    |
| Int'l totals     | 1338     | 270  | 21% | 424  | 89   |   | 1228 | 307  |
| Goal/Should be   | 1300     | 325  | 25% | 400  | 100  |   |      |      |

| Country/Union   | Militant |      |     | PM   |      |   | NI   |      |
|-----------------|----------|------|-----|------|------|---|------|------|
|                 | Goal     | Sold | %   | Goal | Sold | % | Goal | Sold |
| Australia       |          |      |     |      |      |   |      |      |
| AMWU            | 3        | 1    | 33% |      |      |   | 4    | 0    |
| TCFU            |          |      |     |      |      |   |      |      |
| Australia total | 3        | 1    | 33% |      |      |   | 4    | 0    |
| United States   |          |      |     |      |      |   |      |      |
| UAW             | 40       | 11   | 28% | 5    | 1    |   | 20   | 3    |
| UFCW            | 10       | 2    | 20% | 13   | 3    |   | 9    | 2    |
| IAM             | 50       | 9    | 18% | 10   | 0    |   | 25   | 1    |
| UTU             | 45       | 7    | 16% | 3    | 1    |   | 40   | 3    |
| OCAW            | 24       | 2    | 8%  | 4    | 0    |   | 12   | 0    |
| UNITE           | 4        | 0    | 0%  | 5    | 0    |   | 4    | 0    |
| USWA            | 31       | 0    | 0%  |      |      |   | 13   | 0    |
| U.S. total      | 204      | 31   | 15% | 40   | 5    |   | 123  | 9    |
| Canada          |          |      |     |      |      |   |      |      |
| CAW             | 4        | 0    | 0%  |      |      |   | 3    | 0    |
| IAM             | 8        | 0    | 0%  | 1    | 0    |   | 5    | 0    |
| USWA            | 5        | 0    | 0%  |      |      |   | 6    | 0    |
| Canada total    | 17       | 0    | 0%  | 1    | 0    |   | 14   | 0    |
| New Zealand     |          |      |     |      |      |   |      |      |
| EU              | 4        | 0    | 0%  |      |      |   | 2    | 0    |
| MWU             | 1        | 0    | 0%  |      |      |   | 1    | 0    |
| SFWU            | 2        | 0    | 0%  |      |      |   |      |      |
| N.Z. total      | 7        | 0    | 0%  |      |      |   | 3    | 0    |
| United Kingdom  |          |      |     |      |      |   |      |      |
| AEEU            | 4        | 0    |     |      |      |   | 5    | 0    |
| RMT             | 5        | 0    |     |      |      |   | 5    | 1    |
| TGWU            | 5        | 0    |     |      |      |   | 3    | 0    |
| UK total        | 14       | 0    |     |      |      |   | 13   | 1    |

AEEU — Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Workers Union; AMWU — Amalgamated Manufacturers Union; CAW — Canadian Autoworkers Union; EU — Engineers Union; MWU — Meat Workers Union; IAM — International Association of Machinists; OCAW — Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; RMT — National Union of Rail, Maritime, and Transport Workers; TGWU — Transport and General Workers Union; UAW — United Auto Workers; UFBGWU — United Food, Beverage, and General Workers Union; 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.

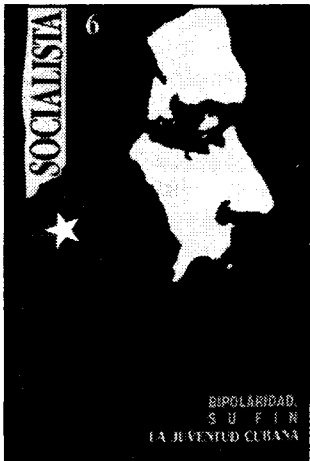
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# Contrasting responses to Hurricane Georges

Continued from front page  
tains, yucca, coffee, and sugar. Two major sugar mills collapsed.

## Paltry U.S. aid

U.S. officials said Washington has provided the Dominican Republic with \$500,000 in relief aid, and plans to spend a few million dollars altogether. In contrast, the Dominican community in New York alone has already provided 24 ship containers of donated food and clothing, with more on the way. The government of Dominican president Leonel Fernández is asking international bankers to reschedule the country's debt payments. The Dominican Republic has a foreign debt of \$3.5 billion.

The Dominican government has been criticized for failing to give adequate warning to the country's population. Newspaper editorials said that both the newly appointed civil defense chief and the head of the National Meteorological Office failed to issue warnings, arguing that they didn't want to alarm people. Critics have also blasted the television and radio stations for carrying only sitcoms and music until after the storm arrived.

A specialist in the meteorological office, speaking to the Associated Press on the condition of anonymity, said that he warned his bosses of Georges' potential 72 hours before it hit. One broadcaster at the office defied his supervisor's orders and broadcast a warning the day before the storm, but it failed to reach most Dominicans.

Medical personnel in the region have sounded the alarm over the potential of a second wave of devastation to workers and peasants in the storm's aftermath. Dr. Angel Alamar of the Red Cross said, "People are up to their chests in water. Others have no clothes, no medicines, and the children are beginning to get sick with diarrhea."

Dominican medical authorities have warned about the imminent risk of epidemics such as dengue, due to the lack of safe drinking water, accumulation of garbage, and widespread flooding.

Thousands of people are standing in long lines for drinking water. With water in short supply, many are forced to fill their containers from the Ozama River.

As Domingo Osvaldo Fortuna, 51, filled a jug with river water, a reporter asked whether he was worried about diseases. Osvaldo angrily replied, "Of course."

From Santo Domingo it was reported that 3,000 prisoners in the Victoria Federal Penitentiary took to the roof to save themselves when the prison flooded. Authorities claimed that inmates used it as a chance to try to escape, which prisoners deny. "People were trying to get to the roof so they wouldn't drown and were shot," reported prisoner Jacques Matos Medina. Col. Luis Manuel Tejada of the prison's security scoffed at the prisoners' reports of 15 inmates being killed by the guards.

## Haiti: price for decades of exploitation

In Haiti, more than 90 people have been reported dead and another 60 missing, while close to 150,000 have been left homeless. The threat of the Peligre hydroelectric dam breaking prompted the government to open the dam's floodgates, causing the Artibonite River to overflow. This has placed another 300,000 lives in jeopardy.

In the Dominican Republic and Haiti, many of the deaths were the result of sub-

standard housing that could not endure the storm's winds and flooding.

Flooding and landslides, exacerbated by decades of deforestation, account for most of Haiti's confirmed deaths. While only a relatively small number of homes were destroyed in Haiti's capital, Port-au-Prince, Cite Soleil, the area's largest slum, home to 500,000 residents, was inundated.

Currently 40,000 acres of farmland is under water and 80-85 percent of the food crops destroyed. This is in a country regarded as the poorest in the Americas. Health officials fear outbreaks of cholera and typhoid, given the country's poor sewage system and current lack of potable water.

So far, Washington has offered Haiti some water, food, bedding, and clothing. The United Nations Development Program has offered a paltry \$100,000, and the German government pledged just \$95,000. The Haitian government has scraped together only \$130,000 to aid hurricane survivors.

As in the Dominican Republic, the problems faced by workers and rural toilers in Haiti has been exacerbated by the government's refusal to prioritize disaster response services. An illustration of this is in Port-au-Prince where hundreds were left stranded in water more than a meter deep. Additionally, at the country's main hospital, injured were left lying on the hospital lawn, with no shelter set up to protect them from the 20 inches of rain that fell on Haiti.

Homere Jacques lost four relatives when the walls of his home collapsed. He told reporters, "The Red Cross told us to call the firemen, but the firemen told us they only had one vehicle available."

## Florida: bring your own blanket

In a *Miami Herald* article titled "Supplies out of reach for S. Florida Poor" several Miami workers explained the problems they faced preparing themselves and their families for the possibility of a hurricane without the money necessary to buy supplies.

Georgia Brown, spokesperson for a Miami homeless shelter, explained that "When a person is homeless or severely poor, they are at the mercy of the shelter they go to."

Groups that many working people look to help during times of natural disasters, like the Red Cross, said that while they would



Hurricane Georges slashes through Dominican Republic ripping roofs off houses, flipping over boats along the coast, killing hundreds. In Cuba, the government organized massive evacuations, sought volunteer help to minimize deaths and damage.

provide "basic staples," anyone who comes to a shelter must "bring their own drinking water, non-perishable foods, and bedding."

## Cuba's response quite different

The repercussions of the storm were quite different in Cuba. Despite the fact that Hurricane Georges hung over Cuba some 36 hours, only five fatalities were reported. Even the *Miami Herald* conceded September 25 that "Cuba's meticulous civil defense preparations were expected to keep casualties down."

As of September 26, Agriculture Minister Alfredo Jordán told Cuban television that there had been "major damage" to the coffee, plantain and banana, tobacco, sugar cane, cacao and vegetable crops in eastern Cuba. Some 1,000 houses were reported destroyed or seriously damaged and 20,000-25,000 more were less seriously damaged.

As the eye of Hurricane Georges pulled away from the north coast of Cuba into the Florida Straits on Friday, September 25, 1,000 delegates gathered in Havana for the fifth congress of the Committees in Defense

of the Revolution (CDR). In his speech opening the congress, which was broadcast on Cuban radio station Radio Progreso and could be picked up in Miami, Fidel Castro spoke of the circumstances in which three people died during the storm from contact with live electrical wires. Two others drowned.

About 200,000 people were evacuated in the eastern provinces of Cuba. They included thousands of high school students attending rural schools or volunteering for the coffee harvest, families living in flood-prone areas, and all foreign tourists. Even cattle were moved to safer ground. Castro explained that "... here no one is evacuated by force. They are secure in that no one will be abandoned or forgotten. Even if revolutionaries have to risk their lives to protect them." Castro called for aid from the international community for the people of the Dominican Republic.

Shirley Peña is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 368. Rachele Fruit is a member of IAM Local 1126.

# U.S., Puerto Rican gov'ts fail to help thousands of hurricane-struck people

BY RON RICHARDS

CANÓVANAS, Puerto Rico — On September 22 the most destructive hurricane in decades battered Puerto Rico. The hurricane-related death toll is about 20 and still rising. More than 18,000 people are living in shelters. The government estimated damages to be at least \$1 billion.

The hurricane left all homes in this U.S. colony without electric power and virtually all without running water. The Puerto Rico Telephone Company, which uses underground lines, was in better shape. Most homes never lost telephone service.

A week later 40 percent of the population had electricity and 65 percent had water. Most schools reopened on September 28, but 300 are so damaged they cannot be used and

170 are functioning as shelters.

Most people with water and electricity live in the San Juan metropolitan area. Hardest hit was the mountainous interior of the island. Many rural areas were completely cut off by a combination of destroyed bridges and downed trees and power lines.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) set up a toll-free number for hurricane victims, who are supposed to call to request aid. In the most devastated areas, however, many people do not have telephones.

On a September 27 visit to Villa de Hugo II, a working-class community in Barrio San Isidro of Canóvanas, the outer suburbs east of San Juan, almost every house showed signs of damage. The community, founded by people who lost their homes during Hurricane Hugo in 1989, consists of 500 homes, most of them plywood with corrugated metal roofs, a small number made of concrete or cement blocks. The community is built on a series of low limestone hills that rise out of the flood plain of the Río Grande de Loiza. Most are recent immigrant workers from the Dominican Republic.

Ramón Emilio Rodríguez and María Guerrero have lived for five years in a wooden house with a sheet metal roof. He works in construction. They fled to a neighbor's cement house when the roof flew off their home. "We have received no help up until now," Guerrero said. "We have no water nor electricity." The promised aid from City Hall "has not arrived yet."

On top of the hill Gregoria Rodríguez lived with her four young children on the second floor. The upper part of the house was wood with a corrugated metal roof. During the hurricane she took refuge in another house. When she returned, the roof and parts of the walls were gone. All of her possessions except for a bit of clothing were

destroyed. She said she hopes to rebuild a better house in cement.

The community has stickers calling for the reelection of the pro-statehood mayor but all residents interviewed agreed that absolutely no help has arrived from the municipal government or from any other agency, public or private.

Meanwhile, with materials at hand, members of the community have begun to rebuild. Some new roofs have been built or old ones covered with plastic. In better-off communities the concrete homes fared well and the damage was restricted to wooden roofs blown off patios and downed trees.

One of the most impressive sights in the wake of Hurricane Georges has been the thousands of working people around the island organizing to get work done on their own. People with access to heavy equipment such as tow trucks and backhoes went out and started clearing the roads without waiting for the government to act. Others used saws and machetes to remove downed trees.

Some people have begun to protest the lack of services. On September 25 people stood in front of City Hall in Cidra with signs saying they had been abandoned by the mayor. People have called the media to complain that FEMA did not have Spanish-speaking operators.

The emphasis of the Puerto Rican government has been to see to it that capitalists, such as those who own the expensive hotels, do not lose money. The headline in the September 28 *El Nuevo Día* read hopefully, "Everything is ready for the tourists." "We are back in business" proclaimed Jorge Dávila, executive director of the Puerto Rico Tourism Company.

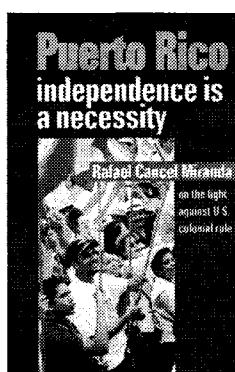
Ron Richards is a member of the American Federation of Government Employees in San Juan.

NEW! from Pathfinder

## Puerto Rico: independence is a necessity

Rafael Cancel Miranda on the fight against U.S. colonial rule

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# Chilean refugees fight Canadian gov't deportations

BY ALEXANDRE GARNEAU  
AND MICHEL PRAIRIE

MONTREAL — "The Canadian government has clearly decided to deport us all. I made the decision to fight rather than being deported in silence," said Miriam Vega on September 19.

Vega was part of a group of 15 families from Chile who had taken refuge in the Saint-Jean-de-la-Croix church two days earlier, after being denied political refugee status and facing the threat of immediate deportation by Canada's immigration authorities. Like many others in the church, she had to quit her job as a hotel maid. She explained that before coming to Canada, she had been among a handful of women working in the port of Valparaíso, in her native country.

Several of the refugees in the church participated last winter in a 38-day hunger strike around the same issue. The 20 hunger strikers ended their fast March 24, when a support committee, including Montreal's Roman Catholic Church cardinal Jean-Claude Turcotte and Gérald Larose, president of the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CSN), agreed to survey their cases when they were submitted to immigration authorities.

Ottawa has since continued its policy of expelling Chilean refugees. According to those who took refuge in the church, about 30 families have been deported since the end of the hunger strike. Montreal's *La Presse* reported September 26 that immigration authorities had issued arrest warrants for some 600 "illegal" Chilean refugees in the Montreal area alone, with a step-up of deportations the previous two weeks.

Nearly 4,000 Chileans have requested political refugee status since 1989, when a dictatorship formally ended in that country. The Canadian government has rejected 14 out of every 15 applicants. Thousands have been deported or forced to leave Canada. Canadian capitalists have investments of \$8.4 billion in Chile, and in 1997 Ottawa signed a free trade agreement with Santiago. To cover their imperialist dealings, Canada's rulers maintain that democracy has been restored in Chile.

The refugees in the church maintain that military violence and torture remain in the country. They pointed out that three people were killed by the Chilean police suppressing protests September 11 there, the 25th anniversary of the 1973 military coup that installed the dictatorship.

Most of the refugees in the church are workers. "I did not leave Chile because of poverty," said Eugenia Núñez. "I worked 22 years in a clinic. I decided to leave my fam-

ily, my friends, my job and to come here where I had to make a new life for myself and learn a foreign language, because I did not want my son to go through the same repression I did."

Raúl Reyes said he has a deportation date of September 29. The 41-year-old welder had to quit his job in order to take refuge in the church. Reyes also explained many refugees have been deported without their children or their spouses. Edith Díaz, for example, was deported September 20 along with three of her four children. The children were arrested while she was at work and detained for a full day. One of them, Astrid, 14, ran away, went into hiding, and has not been heard from since. Now the rest of her family has been deported. It was the arrest of the Díaz family and that of another refugee, Alfredo Vásquez, that convinced the Chileans to seek refuge in the church.

The Chileans have received messages of solidarity from several individuals and organizations, including the Quebec Teachers Federation (CEQ) and the Quebec nationalist Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste de Montréal (SSJB). Michel Dugré, a garment worker and the Communist League candidate for mayor of Montreal, is also using his campaign to build solidarity in defense of the rights of these workers.

A support group of youth, mainly students from University of Quebec in Montreal (UQAM) and the Vieux-Montréal college, have organized actions aimed at publicizing the case of the refugees. On September 24 the group led a demonstration from UQAM to the Canadian immigration offices and then to Concordia University, one of the two English-language universities in this city. When they entered the Concordia main campus hall they were attacked and brutally pushed to the ground, pepper-sprayed, and then ejected by the university cops.



Demonstration in Montreal to support the 67 Chilean refugees fighting deportation by Ottawa. A group of 30 students, who are not Chilean, organized the September 24 action. Banner reads "Amnesty for sans papiers" or those without papers.

Outraged by this unprovoked brutality dozens of students spontaneously took to the street in front of the hall. Two of the pro-refugee demonstrators and one protesting student were arrested by the city police and released after several hours without charges.

Some of those who claim support for the refugees, however, accept Ottawa's anti-democratic, anti-working-class, and inhumane immigration laws.

At a press conference held in the Saint-Jean-de-la-Croix church September 27, for instance, Réal Ménard, a Bloc Québécois member of parliament in Ottawa; a representative of the Montreal archdiocese; CSN president Gérald Larose; and others called for Ottawa to stop the deportation of Chilean refugees until Quebec's provincial government completes its study of 73 cases as potential pre-selected "immigrants."

"There will be deportations," said Larose at the press conference. He and others also called on Ottawa to provide financial assistance to the families who will have to go back to Chile and to monitor their return so they are not persecuted. They blamed Ottawa for the "massive arrival" of Chileans following its lifting in 1995 of a visa requirement for this country. This lifting, said Larose, was aimed at convincing the Chil-

ean government to sign the 1997 free-trade agreement with Canada.

Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste president Guy Bouthillier voiced a completely different approach to those he called "our Chilean friends." He said: "We can't remain indifferent to the fate of people who want to live with us. We can't remain indifferent when people fight for their dignity and their freedom just as we, at the SSJB, fight for our dignity and our freedom. You are welcome among us."

On September 28 Canadian immigration minister Lucienne Robillard rejected the call for a moratorium on deportation. The same day, with Ottawa's agreement, 34 Albanians from war-devastated Kosova were forcibly expelled by police from the entrance of the Canadian embassy in Budapest, Hungary. They were trying to get refugee status in Canada.

Meanwhile, the Chilean refugees have called a meeting on September 29 aimed at broadening their struggle to other forces.

*Alexandre Garneau is a member of the Young Socialists. Michel Dugré, a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees, also contributed to this article.*

## 'Militant' was incorrect on 'Cuban patriots'

The *Militant* received the following letter from Ernie Mailhot, referring to an article he wrote that appeared in the issue dated September 28. We reprint it here, together with a reply from the editor, by way of correction.

To the *Militant* Editorial Staff,

It seems to me the title "U.S. government arrests 10 Cuban patriots, accuses them of espionage" which was attached to the article I wrote for the last *Militant* is very inappropriate. The title doesn't conform to the ar-

ticle, which never refers to those accused by the U.S. government as patriots.

The article gives the facts about the arrests and what the Cubans are accused of. The only people who have said those arrested are supporters of Cuba are the U.S. authorities, who have said these people are dangerous spies. Up to now there have been no comments from the Cuban government or from those arrested (as far as I know) saying that these people were working for Cuba or in some way loyal fighters for Cuba. The only comments I've seen from Cuba are ones pointing to Washington as the number one spy center in the world.

Even if the arrested and accused are Cuban patriots it wouldn't be surprising that they wouldn't admit anything. The Cubans know they can't get any kind of fair hearing from a U.S. court.

One sentence in the article states: "One member of the group, Antonio Guerrero, had a civilian job at the Boca Chica Naval Air Station." I don't have my original draft but I remember deliberately referring to the "accused" or the "arrested" when talking about the 10 being held by U.S. authorities. The term "group" can give the impression that the article gives credence to the FBI's charges that these people were an organized spy ring.

I think the *Militant* staff should have a discussion about this soon so as to decide if something should go into the next issue.

Fraternally,  
s/Ernie Mailhot  
Miami, Florida



Dear Ernie,

Thank you for your letter drawing attention to the very inaccurate and politically misleading headline the *Militant* placed on your article, which you did not see until you received the paper. I apologize for the error, and for the delay in publishing this correction.

The headline wrongly implies that the author has knowledge beyond what has been reported in the press that the 10 individuals arrested are supporters of the Cuban revolution, though the article itself makes no such statement. But neither you nor the editors of the *Militant* have any information beyond what has been in the media about who these individuals are. One thing we are confident of is that Washington's version will be calculated and self-serving, not truthful.

I also agree that referring to the 10 accused as a "group" is a mistake, one that we are responsible for either introducing or not editing properly from the original. It implies the opposite of what the rest of the article does.

These fictitious points entered in the process of preparing your article for publication, if not publicly corrected, would hurt the working-class vanguard in this country and the Cuban revolution. The arrests are an attempted political frame-up by the U.S. rulers of Cuba's revolutionary government. They are part of an effort by Washington to cover up the political blows U.S. imperialism has suffered in its unrelenting "cold war" against Cuba since the Cuban air force shot down two planes in February 1996, flown from Florida by the counterrevolutionary group Brothers to the Rescue, which had repeatedly and provocatively violated Cuba's air space.

The errors we made could have been avoided by following the elementary rules and procedures of journalism that the *Militant* has a proud record of abiding by. This includes showing the author all editorial changes in articles and following standard procedures to check that headlines conform with the content of articles. It's an important wake-up call — these procedures are more indispensable today than ever.

Fraternally,  
Naomi Craine  
Editor

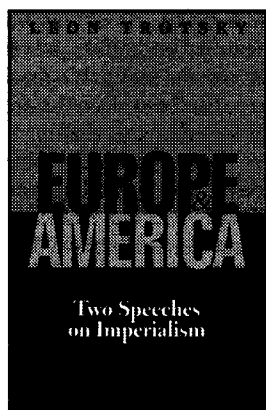
### from Pathfinder

#### Europe and America

##### Two Speeches on Imperialism

LEON TROTSKY

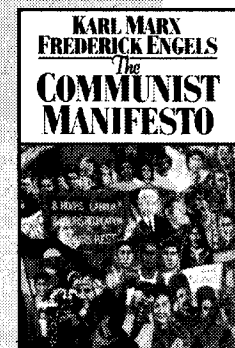
In two speeches in the mid-1920s, Russian Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky explains why the emergence of the United States as the dominant imperialist power is the decisive factor in world politics. He describes the sharpening conflicts between Washington and its European rivals and highlights the revolutionary prospects for the workers of the world. \$6.00



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# Paul Montauk, 1922-98: a 60-year cadre of the Socialist Workers Party

BY JIM ALTENBERG  
AND OSBORNE HART

OAKLAND, California — Paul Montauk, 76, a life-long political activist and member of the Socialist Workers Party, died September 29 in Oakland of complications from pneumonia. Though the largest portion of his six decades in the communist movement were spent in the Bay Area, Montauk also was a member of SWP branches in New York, San Diego, and Detroit.

Paul was born in Staten Island, New York, in 1922. His father was a jeweler and watch repairman whose small business, like those of tens of thousands of others, collapsed under the impact of the Great Depression of the 1930's. After his mother remarried following his father's death, Montauk was raised by an aunt in the Bronx.

He became active for the first time in politics while in high school, participating in the American Student Union (ASU), a youth organization dominated by supporters of the Communist Party (CP). In notes he jotted down on his life in 1997 and 1998, Paul remarked that it was as a member of the ASU that he first discovered that there were two competing political tendencies in his school — those who supported the CP and those who backed the Socialist Party, then headed by Norman Thomas.

## Protesting fascist New Jersey mayor

As a member of the ASU, Montauk joined hundreds of workers and students in a 1937 protest against Jersey City, New Jersey, mayor Frank Hague's use of massive police violence against workers trying to organize unions in that city. Socialist Party leader Thomas was scheduled to speak at a street meeting in Jersey City, but Hague's cops would "wade into the crowd and pull Thomas off the platform," Montauk recounted. "We were forced back down the subway steps with the storm troopers yelling 'go back to Russia.' Some of the demonstrators were badly hurt."

The protest Montauk joined was not an isolated event in Jersey City. "Boss" Hague used openly fascist methods to combat CIO unions, socialists, and anyone who spoke out in defense of civil liberties in Jersey City.

He mobilized mobs of cops, city employees, "special deputies," and right-wing war veterans to violently break up union and socialist meetings. His virulent anti-communist and ultrapatriotic demagoguery was well-received by businessmen and politicians determined to choke off the growing labor movement. Hague, a leader of the Democratic National Committee in 1938, was an American fascist.

Montauk was 16 when his impoverished aunt threw him on the street. He soon quit school and tried to find full-time work. In 1938 he helped lead a unionization drive in a decorating and upholstery firm. At the same time he came into contact with the Socialist Workers Party through his sister and another activist who Paul helped recruit to the furniture worker organizing effort.

Montauk joined the Socialist Workers Party's Brooklyn branch in 1939, when he was 17. The party, which had been founded the year before, was preparing for the second inter-imperialist world war that broke out



At the end of World War II, workers across the United States launched the biggest strike wave in the country's history. Above, packinghouse workers strike in Chicago, January 1946. Paul Montauk took part in the general strike in Oakland later that year. At right, Paul in Oakland, September 1998.

that year in Europe. The growing war pressures bore down hard on the working class, as the agents of bourgeois public opinion agitated for support of U.S. president Roosevelt's demagoguery about fighting fascism.

The Socialist Workers Party was not immune to these pressures and a layer in the party buckled and quickly abandoned the party's principled Marxist program. A faction led by New York University professor James Burnham and Max Schachtman challenged the party's defense of the Russian revolution, which, despite the Stalinist bureaucracy that had usurped political power from the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union, remained a fundamental conquest of the world working class.

Years later Montauk said that as a newcomer in the SWP, the sharp debate and factional struggle initially confused him. Not fully grasping Washington's real war aims, he also held pacifist views. Not long after joining the SWP, he left New York to take a job in a government printing office in Washington D.C., a job making maps for military use. A year later he returned to New York and to active party life.

## The SWP in World War II

Montauk said he remained a pacifist for a while but became convinced of the party's explanation of the unfolding war. The Socialist Workers Party explained that despite Roosevelt's pronouncements and the illusions of tens of millions who would be part of the war effort, World War II was not a war to stop the fascist danger. It was a war between the imperialist powers, in which the capitalist rulers of Europe, Japan, and North

As branch organizer, Paul helped orient the branch toward the thousands of workers in the fish canneries along the waterfront. Most of them were women who crossed the border from Mexico to work during the fishing season.

As opportunities to do political work in the cannery workers union dwindled, Montauk moved to Oakland in 1946 with a few other party members to start a new branch of the SWP. There was already a large party branch in San Francisco, which included many merchant seamen and other workers in the maritime industry.

At the end of World War II, workers throughout industry launched the biggest wave of strikes ever seen in this country. Determined to win back pay and working conditions lost to wartime inflation and speedup, and to prevent a repeat of the bosses' vicious post-World War I union busting drive, some 1.7 million men and women waged strikes in virtually every industry in late 1945 and 1946. At the same

time, U.S. soldiers and sailors abroad held massive demonstrations and meetings demanding that they be sent home now that the war was over. This "Bring us home" effectively blocked Washington's plans to use U.S. troops to back their puppet Chiang Kai-shek against the Chinese workers and peasants.

## 1946 general strike in Oakland

Unionists organized by the American Federation of Labor shut Oakland down in a general strike in December, 1946 to back women fighting for a union in the big downtown department stores. The strikers also demanded that the city rein in its police from their normal practice of violent attacks on workers' picket lines.

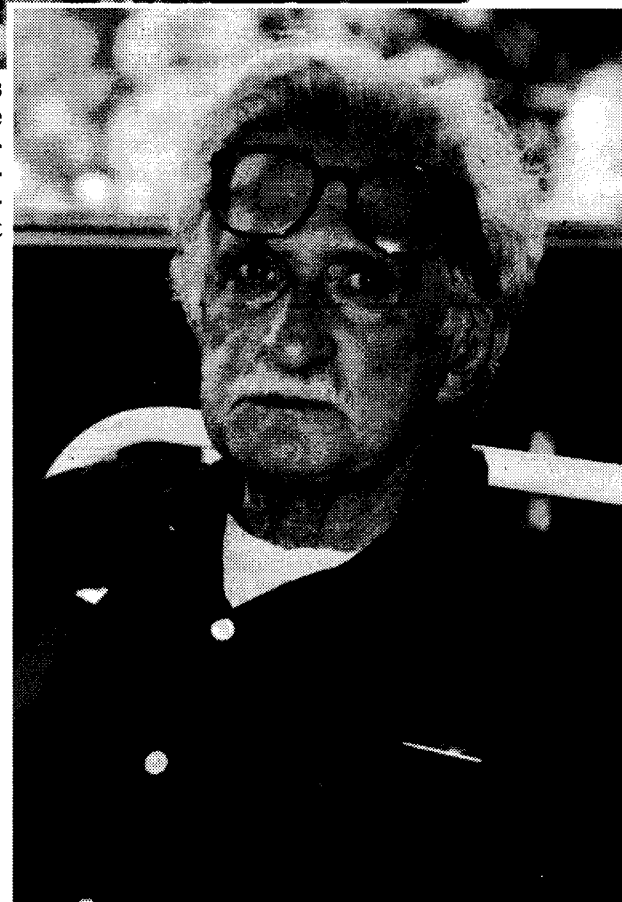
Paul was an active participant in the Oakland general strike. He described it in a 1975 talk as follows: "The only things moving were private autos, and they needed a permit from the Joint Strike Permit Committee to buy gas. The hastily created Permit Committee became the de facto ruling government of

Alameda County. CIO longshoremen, although not officially on strike, refused to load or unload all ships here without approval from the Permit Committee. The police disappeared. Al Brown's Carmen's union took over the directing of traffic.

"Alameda County was in the hands and control of the 100,000-strong union[s]." The strike had a deep impact on workers who were involved. "This was the event," Montauk wrote, "which placed them into history and they spoke proudly of their role and contribution." The new Oakland SWP branch quickly grew from its original six to 30 members, including 20 industrial workers.

Married to Louise Keene, Montauk lived in the Peralta public housing in Oakland. There he helped organize project residents to fight government housing officials to raise the maximum amount of income workers could have to be eligible to live there. Income levels were kept so low that large numbers of workers were denied housing at a time when tens of thousands had moved to the region to work in the East Bay's massive war industries. The Peralta tenants association also fought evictions directly. When a resident was evicted and his or her possessions were moved out by the sheriff, association activists would gather and move them right back in. Montauk also joined what was to be a successful fight to close the West Oakland Lock-up, a city jail of notorious reputation for police brutality against Blacks in the west Oakland community.

Paul served as the organizer of the Oakland branch in 1946 and '47, a period when



America fought each other over control over the world's markets and colonies. It was also a war by imperialism to roll back the workers state that had emerged from the Russian revolution, as well as an opportunity for the oppressed in the colonial world to fight for their national liberation.

In the best revolutionary Marxist tradition, the SWP campaigned against the war. At the same time, the party recognized that the working class was not yet strong and organized enough to prevent the imperialist war, nor the inevitable draft the rulers would use to fill the ranks of its armies. Party policy was based on this reality. Young party members who were drafted joined the rest of their generation of workers and farmers in the military, gaining military skills and fighting to exercise their rights as citizen-soldiers to hold and promote their views on all questions, including on the nature of the war itself.

Faced with the draft, Paul enlisted in the Navy after discussing his options with party leaders. Before departing for active duty, Montauk recounted a meeting with SWP national secretary James P. Cannon where they talked about the war. Montauk said it was common for Cannon to take time with all the comrades who were drafted or facing military service.

While in the military, he sought to read and study.

In 1945, Montauk was stationed in San Diego, a town dominated by the Navy. Montauk described it as "a town with poor wages and harsh conditions of employment." The San Diego SWP branch had 8-10 members, including two still in the Navy.

## The Struggle for a Proletarian Party

James P. Cannon

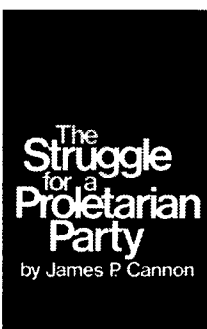
In this companion Trotsky's *In Defense of Marxism*, Cannon and other leaders of the Socialist Workers Party defend the centrality of proletarianization within the political and organizational principles of Marxism in a polemic against a petty-bourgeois current in the party. The debate unfolded as Washington prepared to drag U.S. working people into the slaughter of World War II. \$19.95

## The Socialist Workers Party in World War II

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James P. Cannon

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the branch pressed to get jobs in auto plants organized by the United Auto Workers, and the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) unions. Montauk was one of three party members at a large shop organized by USWA Local 1304. They were aided in getting jobs in the plant by union officials, part of the union's "Militant Caucus" who wanted a counter-weight to the bureaucratic practices of the Communist Party in the local.

#### Witch-hunt: domestic side of Cold War

In the aftermath of the war, U.S. imperialism emerged as the dominant capitalist power. Washington soon ended its wartime alliance with the Soviet Union. But the U.S. rulers were unable to carry out a military assault to roll back the Soviet workers state. Washington launched what would become known as the "Cold War" and prepared to use its military might to prevent the socialist revolution, as well as the anti-colonial rebellions well under way by the late 1940s, from making gains anywhere in the world.

The domestic side of Washington's campaign became known as the "McCarthy-era witch-hunt." Its targets were union militants as well as anyone who dared oppose U.S. policy anywhere in the world. They faced legal as well as extra-legal attacks on civil liberties and the right of unionists to work and function in the trade unions. In the Steelworkers union, Montauk and the other socialists soon found themselves isolated, as their erstwhile allies in the Militant Caucus became virulent anti-communists and refused to distinguish between the CP and the revolutionaries of the Socialist Workers Party.

The Oakland branch of the SWP actively campaigned in defense of James Kutcher, a disabled World War II veteran and party member kicked out of a public housing and fired from a government office job he got after the war. In 1947, three CIO unions in Oakland added their support for Kutcher's fight to win back his job. A prominent Black minister in the Bay Area signed on as a national sponsor of the Kutcher Civil Rights committee that year. After an eight-year-long fight Kutcher won his job back and was able to keep his apartment and veteran's disability payment.

In the early 1950s, Montauk moved to Detroit to build the SWP branch there. The branch had been reduced to a handful following a split with a tendency known as the Cochranites, after their main leader Bert Cochran. The Cochranites recoiled from revolutionary activity under the dual pressures of relative post-World War II capitalist prosperity and the accompanying anti-communist witch-hunt. They argued that the current capitalist expansion would last for an extended period of time, which precluded the possibility of renewed struggles by working people.

Montauk was one of a half-dozen or so party members sent by the party leadership to Detroit to join the others in the branch who had refused to buckle to the pressures that had led to the split.

The SWP, as well as any serious opponent of the government, faced the state of Michigan's 1952 "Trucks Law," which made membership in organizations deemed "subversive" by the government a crime. The SWP waged a successful fight to have the law declared unconstitutional. Prevented by the employers' blacklist from working in the auto industry and being active as a socialist in the United Auto Workers union, Montauk worked as a chef — a job he would hold off



Left: Militant/Hermes

As a member of the Detroit SWP branch in the 1950s, Montauk took part in organizing support for the growing movement for Black rights, including sending cars to Montgomery, Alabama, during the 1955-56 bus boycott there. Above, 1963 civil rights march on Washington, D.C. At left, Montauk talks to union official on picket line of Highland Hospital strikers in Oakland, January 1967.

and on for the rest of his life. He participated in socialist election campaigns, and joined with others in the SWP to raise funds to donate cars for use by Black civil rights fighters in Montgomery, Alabama, during the 1955-56 Montgomery bus boycott. The party campaigned nationally for cars and donations, and for solidarity with the fighters in Montgomery. Montauk often spoke at public political forums and lectures despite open police and FBI intimidation.

Party members sought every opportunity to carry out socialist political activity.

Montauk discovered that a student group could be organized at Wayne State University, the major campus of 15,000 students in the Detroit area. The "Wayne State Socialist Club" was established. Its activists published the "Wayne State Young Socialist" magazine, which as Paul explained in his memoirs, "proved to be an immediate success."

Montauk and other party member campaigned for solidarity with the embattled United Electrical Workers on strike and facing a concerted union busting drive at Square D Electric company.

Paul returned to Oakland in 1959 and remained in the Bay Area through 1976. In 1960 he married Mary Lou Dobbs, his companion for the rest of his life. Montauk had two daughters, Susan and Juliette, one from each of his marriages.

Montauk was a leader of party branches in Oakland and Berkeley. He was the party's candidate for mayor of Oakland in 1961 and 1963.

#### Vietnam Day Committee at Berkeley

As the movement against the Vietnam War developed, particularly on the University of California Berkeley campus, Montauk helped to found the Vietnam Day Committee, one of the principal anti-war organizations in the Bay Area. The Vietnam Day Committee began by organizing "Vietnam Day," a two-day teach-in on the war May 21-22, 1965, at Berkeley. Montauk served as the committee's secretary-treasurer for the event that proved to be a significant action in the growing campus anti-war movement.

Montauk served as an alternate member of the Socialist Workers Party's national committee from 1963 to 1973. He and others on the national committee supported a transition in leadership to a younger generation who were shouldering the major day-to-day responsibility for leading the party. Montauk continued to function as part of the broader party leadership after leaving the national committee.

During this time, Paul taught cooking in a Job Corps program. He also studied education, and received a masters degree in education from San Francisco State University in 1970. He continued to work as a teacher in vocational and public schools, and was an active member of the American Federation of Teachers for around 15 years. Prior to his retirement in 1995, Paul worked as a permanent substitute teacher at Oakland Technical High School.

In 1976, Paul and Mary Lou moved to New York to take assignments needed by the party. Paul was 54 at that time. Mary Lou worked on party finances. She edited a handbook for organizing branch finances

Paul worked in the SWP's national office. Among other assignments he took was in the national education department, where he edited many of the *Education for Socialists* bulletins used by party members and sold in Pathfinder bookstores. These booklets, which contain reprints of important political documents and writings, provide a guide for studying important political questions faced by fighting workers.

#### Party turns to new openings in industry

By 1978, the party had determined that the opportunity now existed for socialists to carry out political work on a broad scale through organized groups of worker-Bolsheviks active in the industrial trade unions. This had not been possible since the early 1950's, when Montauk and other revolutionary workers of his generation were forced to retreat from socialist political work in the industrial trade unions. The recession of 1974-75, which was both the first worldwide recession and the most severe since that of 1937-38, had dealt blows to workers' illusions in the ability of capitalism to provide a secure and stable life. This change in consciousness came on top of the deep-going shifts in attitudes of millions of working people as a result of the civil rights and Black Power movements, the anti-Vietnam War protests, and the new wave of women's rights fights in the 1960s and '70s.

Taking account of these developments, the party decided in 1978 to get the overwhelming majority of its membership into the industrial unions.

Workers and peasants around the world were making significant advances in the revolutionary struggle against imperialism at the end of the 1970s. The hated shah of Iran, whose blood-soaked regime defended U.S. imperial power and oil interests throughout the Middle East, was overthrown in massive mobilizations of working people. Led by the revolutionary Sandinista National Liberation Front in Nicaragua, and the New Jewel Movement in Grenada, workers and peasants toppled U.S. backed dictatorships and set up workers' and farmers' governments in those countries. These victories renewed prospects for an extension of the socialist revolution in the Americas, and

made it possible for the Cuban workers and their communist leadership to take new steps toward building socialism and in advancing their proletarian internationalist course.

An important part of the party's response to these new developments was to establish a professional leadership or cadre school, in which party leaders could take a substantial amount of time away from the day-to-day political work to systematically study Marxism. Paul worked to find a suitable location for the school, which was set up at a large house in upstate New York. He was also instrumental in finding some of the books, including many that were difficult to locate, that would constitute the leadership school's library.

The action revolutionaries in the United States took in relation to all of these political developments would be decisive in building the Socialist Workers Party and advancing the fight against capitalism.

A sharp debate over the party's organizational and political perspectives opened up in the party, in which a layer of party members shrank back from the SWP's turn to the industrial unions.

They also refused to recognize the importance of the revolutionary advances in Central America and the Caribbean and the decisive example for workers and fighters set by the Cuban revolution and the Cuban Communist Party. A two-year-long debate over these perspectives in the party led to a split in 1983.

Paul defended the SWP's revolutionary continuity, traditions, and political course. He, along with the majority of the party, turned toward the young workers in the industrial unions and the revolutionaries in Cuba, Central America, and the Caribbean. Years later, in 1992, Paul and Mary Lou visited revolutionary Cuba as part of a group challenging the U.S. government's reactionary ban on travel to the island.

#### An active party builder

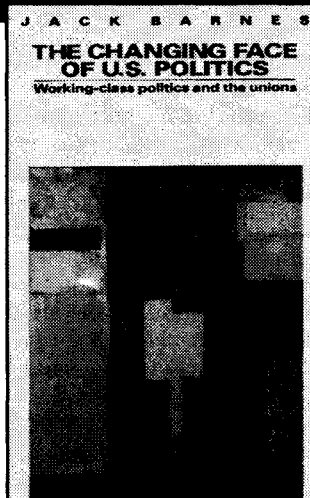
His health declined over the last decade of his life and the final few years Montauk was afflicted with Parkinson's disease and other infirmities, but he continued to make an active contribution to building the party.

In the wake of the 1991 collapse of the

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**The San Francisco branch of the Socialist Workers Party will host a celebration of the life and political contributions of Paul Montauk.**  
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# 700 Midwest farmers, others rally to demand fair crop prices, relief

BY TOM ALTER  
AND JOHN HAWKINS

WORTHINGTON, Minnesota — More than 700 farmers and their supporters gathered here September 19 at a Great Upper Midwest Farm Price Crisis Rally initiated by U.S. Senators Paul Wellstone from Minnesota, Tom Harkin from Iowa, and Byron Dorgan from North Dakota.

Although the rally was called, as one farmer put it, "to drum up support for the Democrats," many farmers saw it as an opportunity to voice demands for guaranteed prices for farm commodities and relief for farmers this year.

In addition to farmers and their supporters from throughout Minnesota, participants in the event came from Iowa, North Dakota, and South Dakota. Among those attending were members or affiliates of a number of farm organizations.

The Farmers Union in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota organized the largest contingents. Farm activists from Groundswell, based in western Minnesota, were also present.

Featured speakers at the rally were the three Democratic Party politicians. They focused their fire on the "Freedom to Farm Act," adopted by Congress and signed by President Clinton in 1996 — legislation that Dorgan dubbed as "Republican heaven." The law made the biggest cut in government crop subsidies to farmers since the 1930s — about \$2 billion over seven years.

Wellstone promised to continue raising in the Senate legislation to guarantee farmers a "fair" price for their products and to

lift the cap on loan rates, although this latter measure had been defeated in the Senate earlier during the week. The loan rate is the amount farmers can borrow against particular grain crops placed in storage.

Dorgan also called for protectionist trade measures that would put barriers to farm imports into the United States. He pointed with approval to the punitive inspections of trucks carrying livestock and grain from Canada ordered by some state officials.

On September 16, state officials from North Dakota, and South Dakota began pulling over, delaying, or turning back truckers from Canada. They used food safety, truck weight, and highway safety laws as a pretext for stopping the trucks. Five days later several hundred farmers and ranchers staged jingoistic protests on the Canadian border in Montana and North Dakota, blocking truckers from entering the United States and dumping grain on the northern side of the border.

The senator aimed his fire at Canadian farmers whom he accused of dumping grain and beef on the U.S. market. This, he said, is an example of "the loss of markets to the subsidized farming of other countries." He also called U.S. trade officials "boneless" for not standing up to farm imports from Canada.

The farmers that spoke at the rally described the harsh reality facing working farm families today and stressed the importance of immediate action. Linus Solberg, a hog farmer from Cylinder, Iowa, was one of three farmers scheduled as speakers on the rally program. He pointed out that the prices



Militant/Ruth Nebbia

Grain storage silo near Marshalltown, Iowa. Prices farmers are getting today are falling dramatically. Wheat, corn, cotton, and soy beans are at record-low levels.

farmers are getting today for their commodities are falling dramatically. "Wheat is at a 20-year low," said Solberg. "Corn, cotton, and soy beans are also at a 20-year low."

Solberg pointed to storyboards on either side of the speakers' platform, which illustrated the consequences of the crisis for farmers. To the left of the speakers were boards comparing the cost of typical consumer goods such as jeans or a gallon of gasoline in bushels of corn, wheat, or beans. To the right of the speakers platform were boards detailing the cost of producing a bushel of corn, wheat, or beans by inputs such as fuel and fertilizer — all of which showed that at today's prices farmers cannot cover their cost of production.

"This is what the Freedom to Farm Act has produced for farmers," Solberg said. "If we don't turn this around all farming will be like poultry where the entire process is controlled by big business from the chicks to the plant. What we need is immediate relief, guaranteed prices, and price stability."

Marcy Svenningsen, a farmer from Valley City, North Dakota, walked to the microphone holding aloft a sheaf of papers. "Here," she said, "are 21 auction bills for farms in my area whose owners were driven out over the past five months."

"These were our neighbors and we're in much the same shape as they were. We raise beef cattle and for three of the last five years we have not been able to make all our payments."

"Eighty-five percent of the farmers in our area," said Svenningsen, "have not been able to make all their required payments in the past year. Fifty percent have not even been able to pay their operating loans."

"If it were not for my job we couldn't keep farming."

"Farmers are tired and angry. We face ever-increasing expenses and low commodity prices. Congress has passed laws protecting other groups in society," said Svenningsen. "It's time they acted to pro-

Continued on Page 11

## Cleveland rally protests frame-up of Mexican worker

BY STEVE WARSHALL

CLEVELAND — Fifty supporters of imprisoned Mexican worker Alejandro Ramírez rallied at the Club Azteca on Cleveland's west side September 16. The rally coincided with the celebration of the Grito de Hidalgo — Mexico's independence day. The event was sponsored by the Alejandro Ramírez Defense Coalition.

Ramírez was convicted in October 1997 of murder in the death of a Painesville, Ohio, man who kicked down the door of the house where Ramírez lived at the time and was robbing the occupants. After a scuffle forced the man out of the house and into the front

yard, the intruder pulled a knife and was then shot.

Ramírez was arrested by Painesville police and signed a confession under the mistaken belief that he would merely be deported to Mexico, whereas others in the household would have faced harsher penalties. A tape of the interrogation shows that he was neither informed of his right to an attorney, nor that any statements he made would be used against him in court.

At the beginning of the trial, the judge stated that the proceedings would last only four days — three days for the prosecution and one for the defense. Jury selection was

limited to 10 minutes with no direct questioning allowed by the defense. In addition, Defense Coalition activists stress that no physical evidence was found linking Ramírez to the murder weapon. "The only 'evidence' offered by the prosecution was Alejandro's 'confession,' which was retracted long before the trial began," explained Cleveland State University student and Coalition activist Alex Corona.

Because of the efforts of the defense coalition, support for Ramírez is growing. In addition, the Mexican government has filed a brief with the court supporting Ramírez, pointing out that had he been allowed to

contact his government's representatives in Cleveland after his arrest, he would not have signed a false confession.

Speaking to the Cleveland rally, Baldemar Velásquez denounced the trial as a miscarriage of justice. "We know from our experience of Ohio's callous disregard of the rights of immigrants. This legal system doesn't work for the migrant worker." Velásquez is the president of the 6,000-member Farm Labor Organizing Committee in northern Ohio. He called on working people in Cleveland to support the efforts of the defense to fight for justice.

Also speaking were Dan Cardenas, a leader of the defense coalition and president of the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA); Cleveland City Council member Nelson Cintrón; local artist Salvador González; and Bud McTaggart of the Cuyahoga County AFL-CIO. Statements were read from the group Women Speak Out for Peace and Justice and Michael White, mayor of Cleveland.

Moisés Cintrón spoke for the National Committee to Free Puerto Rican Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners. Using a poem written by independence fighter Rafael Cancel Miranda, Cintrón compared the treatment of Ramírez to the experience of Puerto Ricans in the United States. He urged participants to join together in supporting workers like Ramírez as well as Puerto Rican political prisoners now unjustly held in U.S. jails. He also invited participants to join with him and other supporters in a picket line at the Federal Building for the Grito de Lares — the Puerto Rican patriotic holiday — on September 23 to support independence for the country and freedom for the prisoners.

A letter from Ramírez thanking the supporters for their hard work and diligent support was also read in Spanish and English to the audience.

The coalition is working to raise the necessary funds to appeal the case. While \$15,000 has been raised so far, an additional \$10,000 is needed to pay for attorneys and court costs. For additional information or to make a contribution write to: Alejandro Ramírez Defense Coalition, c/o Escuela Popular, 2688 W. 14th Street, Cleveland, OH, 44113. Checks can be made out to the Alejandro Ramírez Defense Fund.

## Communist League candidate in New Zealand will 'stand in solidarity with the struggles of working people'

The following article appeared September 1 on page 2 of the daily *Christchurch Press* as part of a series of profiles on the 14 candidates for mayor of Christchurch, New Zealand. It ran under the headline "Call for mayoral pay to equal average skilled worker's."

Ruth Gray may be the only mayoral candidate seeking a pay cut.

If she wins, the 34-year-old advocate for the Communist League wants the mayoral salary cut from its present \$91,000 level to the equivalent of the average wage of a skilled worker.

Would she do the job for no salary, or just living expenses? We asked each mayoral candidate this question and Miss Gray's reply was the most succinct: "Yeah."

She has few illusions that the people of Christchurch will vote in a Communist mayor, but Miss Gray plugs on for a wider ideal.

"I'm standing to put forward the working-class voice, addressing the immediate needs of working people everywhere."

The production worker, a member of

the Engineers Union, is having her second tilt at the city mayoralty. She stood against Vicki Buck in 1995 and scored 893 votes. This time, better versed in the strategy and tactics of mayoral warfare, she reckons her 10 years involvement in socialist and union organisations has equipped her well for the weeks ahead.

"There's a deep economic crisis of capitalism. What can working people do? How can we unite to fight for our interests?"

Miss Gray targets unemployment as a core issue, signalling a fight for a shorter working week, with no loss in pay, to force employers to hire more people.

Her conversation is peppered with buzzwords like "solidarity" and "workers", with the occasional "imperialist" thrown in to describe the enemy. At joint candidate meetings she has enjoyed the distinction of being the only mayoral candidate to emphasise "building solidarity with the socialist revolution in Cuba and opposing the U.S. military assault and sanctions against Iraq."

Miss Gray, whose CV declares her to be "single, no children", is active too in campaigns to defend women's rights to abortion and to oppose racism and sexual discrimination. This year she flew to Australia to meet sacked wharfies.

So what sort of Christchurch does Miss Gray want to live in by the time of the next local body elections in 2001?

"I want Christchurch to be a place where workers and farmers, on a local and national level, are working toward a society not based on profits but on human needs." Full employment, the elimination of inequality based on race and sex, and free health and education for everyone are her other ideals.

"It's about human dignity, fighting the attacks on our wages and living standards, the moves to degrade the working class of this country."

Her activist work has included standing on picket lines at Princess Margaret Hospital and the Alliance meat works and attending rallies organised by fire-fighters.

"We stand in solidarity with the struggles of working people."

That includes the unemployed? "Of course. The unemployed are workers who don't have a job."

She seems nervous in an interview, and volunteers little insight into her private life or interests, but her eyes gleam with the enthusiasm of someone fully committed to her beliefs.



# Striking miners win solidarity

Continued from front page

mine in Farmersville, and Local 2488 at the Industry strip mine near Macomb, Illinois.

Striker David Yard, representing UMW Local 1969, spoke before the Madison County Central Labor Federation September 25, explaining the key importance of health and safety for miners and asking member locals for support.

On September 30, several strikers attended a meeting of the Blue Shirts in East Peoria, Illinois. The Blue Shirts, a group formed during the Caterpillar strike by members of United Auto Workers Local 974, invited the strikers after visiting UMW picket lines and strike headquarters.

Three vans with 22 miners from the Illinois locals who are on strike drove to Nelsonville, Ohio, September 28 to attend a rally sponsored by Democratic Party politician Jesse Jackson, Sr., who has been touring the Appalachian region testing the waters for another presidential bid. At the event, strikers spread the word about their strike and a support rally on October 11.

Striking miners are planning a big participation in the October 11 action that will commemorate the "Battle for Virden" 100 years earlier. On Oct. 12, 1898, guards herd-

ing strikebreakers to Virden in an effort to break the newly formed miners union at the Chicago-Virden Coal Company, opened fire on strikers and their supporters. The miners returned fire. In the firefight 12 people were killed, most of them union supporters. The majority were miners from surrounding communities who joined the fight to defend the union.

The commemoration will begin at 1:00 p.m. in downtown Virden. UMW international president Cecil Roberts will be the featured speaker, along with others. It is sponsored by the Illinois Labor History Society, UMW District 12, the Mother Jones Foundation, Operating Engineers Local 148, Service Employees International Union Local 73, Laborers Union-Southwestern District Council, Springfield Trades and Labor Assembly, and the Madison County Federation of Labor.

Eleanor Miller, a member of the Mother Jones Jubilee Committee in Mount Olive, Illinois, told the *Militant* that the cemeteries in Mount Olive refused to allow four of the miners killed in the Virden massacre to be buried there. Workers founded their own cemetery to bury the four miners. The cemetery was expanded by the Progressive Miners Union in the 1930s. The gate outside reads, "Union Miners," and all those buried inside — except one — are miners. The one exception is Mother Jones, a well-known fighter for miners and other workers. She had asked to be buried by "her boys," the ones who fought and died at Virden.

The Freeman strikers are inviting everyone at the Virden commemoration to come over to a hog roast outside their strike headquarters in Farmersville.

Support for the strike is growing. Standing with the unionists at the picket shanty outside the Crown 3 mine, virtually all the cars or farm vehicles blow their horns in sup-

port. The Shell station, one of the two gas stations in Farmersville, has a big illuminated sign reading, "We support the UMW." Restaurants and bars in town have hung support signs in their windows.

The strike headquarters has started serving meals to strikers. Much of the food is donated by area unionists, supporters, and small businesses. Supporters from this rural area have brought in harvests of homegrown peppers, crock pots of hot food, and canned goods.

Negotiations between the company and the union were set for September 29-30.

Claiming the strike might "turn violent," the company has brought in a security force from Asset Protection Team, a Vance International security subsidiary. They have erected spotlights to shine on pickets when it is dark and begun videotaping and photographing strikers and others who stop at the picket line to express support.

*Coal Outlook*, an industry journal, reports that Freeman United's biggest customers — Archer Daniels Midland and Central Illinois Light — are scurrying to find coal from other mines.

To help in reaching out, the UMW strikers have written a leaflet explaining the strike. "The need to prepare for a long strike appears inevitable. As so many of you who walked the picket lines during the Staley and Caterpillar strikes already know, having a Relief Fund and Food Pantry helps maintain solidarity needed to last one day longer



Above, sign on the strike shanty outside the Crown no. 2 mine September 26, in Farmersville, Illinois.

## Farm rally

Continued from Page 10  
tect family farmers."

Michael Erickson, a livestock and grain farmer from Balaton, Minnesota, said, "I can't get enough income to keep the wheels turning. After the '80s debacle it hasn't been happening.... Agribusiness doesn't want to pay people what it's worth."

Another Minnesota farmer told the *Militant* that at today's prices he and his family would make only about \$5,000 on their crops above and beyond expenses. He said he was planning to store the crops and not even take a loan on them at the low rates being offered. If farmers made sure there's a lot of unplanted "black land" throughout the area come spring, he said, that might get some action.

Barbara Bernkpes, also from Minnesota, told the *Militant*, "It's clear what has to be done. The federal government has to step in and buy up the excess crops."

Also present at the rally were half a dozen supporters of Lyndon LaRouche, comprised of area farmers and small businessmen. LaRouche, a fascist politician who operates within the Democratic Party, is currently seeking its nomination for U.S. president in 2000. LaRouche supporters blame the farm crisis on London banks that they claim control Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan.

Parsons called for a moratorium on all farm foreclosures, for low-interest loans to working farmers, and for government insurance on crops and livestock with 100 percent coverage against natural disasters.

Tom Fiske, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Minnesota governor, and Ray Parsons, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Iowa agriculture secretary, addressed the rally during the open mike period.

"I work for Eaton," Fiske continued, "where we make hydraulic motors for farm tractors. The company brags every month in its newsletter that it is making record profits. These huge profits of the monopolies come out of the sweat of both farmers and workers. We need an action perspective for workers and farmers to defend farmers. We need committees of workers and farmers to monitor and publicize the prices charged by the agriculture monopolies."

Responding to the events along the Canadian border, Fiske issued a statement September 28 that read, "The U.S. rulers, including the agribusiness giants, are using this crisis on the land to fuel reactionary, chauvinist 'U.S. first' notions to improve their position against capitalist rivals in Canada.... Workers in the United States should fight alongside farmers by aiming our fire at the U.S. government, not farmers in Canada."

*Tom Alter is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1149 and the Socialist Workers candidate for governor of Iowa. John Hawkins is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 7263 and the Socialist Workers candidate for lieutenant governor of Minnesota.*

## Sharp drop in vote for Social Democrats reflects political polarization in Sweden

BY ANITA ÖSTLING

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — Elections for national, regional, and local parliaments took place here September 20. The ruling Social Democratic party registered a historic loss of votes, dropping from 45 percent in the 1994 elections to 36.5 percent. The Left Party and the right-wing Christian Democrats both posted substantial gains, while the conservative Moderate Party headed by Carl Bildt wound up with a similar vote as four years ago — about 22 percent.

A year ago the Social Democrats were polled at less than 30 percent. Its main contender, Bildt's conservative party, stood at a historic high of more than 30 percent.

Fearing the ouster by the conservatives, the Social Democratic government stepped up spending on social entitlements. It gave 4 billion kronor (1 kronor=US\$0.13) to local governments in 1997 and 8 billion in 1998, supposedly to create jobs. It also increased unemployment benefits from 75 to 80 percent of the regular wage and raised the cost of living indexes for pensions. Historically high unemployment in Sweden — now at about 8 percent — is a very hot political issue. By May 1998 the Social Democrats had regained some ground in the polls and stood at 37 percent, while the conservatives were down to 27.5.

But the election campaign did not bolster the Social Democrats, and they lost 30 of their parliamentary seats. The party leadership has now appointed a "crisis commission" to evaluate what went wrong. And members of the party's national committee are publicly criticizing the campaign and the performance of party leader Prime Minister Göran Persson. Despite this loss, the Social Democrats will stay in government. The conservatives, whose campaign called for lowering taxes, cuts in social spending, and a smaller public sector, made no headway. Two other traditional bourgeois parties, the Liberals and the Center party, also took heavy losses in the elections.

### Vote registers political polarization

The elections also registered growing political polarization. The Left Party, a remnant of the Stalinist Communist Party, doubled its vote from 1994 to 12 percent,

becoming the third-largest party in parliament. It put forward the campaign slogan, "Now is the time for justice," and called for an increase in sick leave and unemployment benefits, more public spending, no to privatization of public services and school vouchers, a 35-hour work week, and equality for women.

Surveys after the election showed that up to 25 percent of union members voted for the Left Party, and the figures are higher among unemployed. A quarter of the young people voting for the first time also chose the Left party. At the same time the Social Democrats register lower figures among these groups than in previous elections.

Also reflecting the political polarization is the election results for the Christian Democratic Party, which gained nearly 8 percentage points and stands close behind the Left party, with just one less seat in parliament. Their campaign slogan was "A Social Market Economy for Security, Growth and New Jobs." The campaign has concentrated on a call for "restoring family values," law and order, good schools, and an allowance for women who stay home with their children.

Among the new Christian Democratic members of parliament is Mikael Oscarsson, who for the last seven years has been the chairperson of the "Yes to Life" organization, which opposes a woman's right to choose abortion. The party soft-peddled its opposition to women's right to choose during the elections, after pushing the issue hard in the early 1990s, as support for the present reproductive rights legislation is overwhelming.

Christian Democratic Party chairman Alf Svensson has demanded that Oscarsson resign his post in "Yes to Life." Putting their antiabortion stance on the back burner has caused a crisis inside the Christian Democrats. Out of the party's 42 members of parliament, 10 are members of "Yes to Life," as is the leader of their youth organization, and some are protesting the party's new stance as censorship.

The ultrarightist Sweden Democrats have also registered some gains. They won seats in seven local parliaments, most notably in the industrial town of Trollhättan where sev-

than the company," the leaflet says.

For information about the strike, the October 11 events, to request a speaker from the striking miners, or to offer support, contact the UMW Strike Headquarters, P.O. Box 107, Farmersville, Illinois 62533, or call: (217) 227-3233.

*John Studer is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 1011. Alyson Kennedy is a member of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 7-507.*

eral clashes between skinheads and immigrants have taken place over the past years, including a brutal beating of a Somali man. The Sweden Democrats also won seats in Haninge, a suburb of Stockholm with a large immigrant population. The party's campaign has had two slogans: "No to immigration" and "No to the European Union."

Another feature of the elections was the relatively low turnout of voters, around 80 percent. This is down 6 percent from the latest elections and a historic low. In some of the densely immigrant-populated suburbs of the bigger cities, the turnout was less than 50 percent.

### Rulers worry new gov't will be weak

The main concern now among bourgeois politicians and commentators is that the government will be weak and that the Social Democrats will have to rely on the Left party and the Green party, which came out of the elections with only a small loss. Both the Left party and the Greens demand shortening the work week. A leading capitalist, Göran Trogen, has warned that any change in work hours will lead to contracts between unions and companies being annulled.

The three parties have been negotiating for a week, and the budget for 1999 is coming up for vote in parliament October 13. According to Social Democratic prime minister Göran Persson, the budget will be a test. If that works out, the three parties will then move on to other issues.

Another concern of the rulers has been Stockholm's relation to the European Union and the European Monetary Union. Both the Left and the Green parties oppose membership and favor Sweden resigning from the EU and not joining the EMU. Both demand a referendum on the EMU.

"Sweden isolating itself even more" read a headline in the conservative daily *Svenska Dagbladet*. The news article stated that Sweden is on a counter course to the rest of Europe. It also stated that when the prime minister meets his colleagues at the informal EU summit in Austria in a month his position will be even weaker. "He will then represent a Swedish government that can stay in power only thanks to parties who want Sweden to leave the European Union."

# Conservatives suffer blow in German election

Continued from front page

tacks, a popular slogan has been "Kohl must go." The Social Democrats already had a strong showing compared to CDU in the elections in the western state of Lower Saxony last March, where Gerhard Schröder was elected to head the state government. Another state election, held in the eastern state of Saxony-Anhalt in May, showed that support for CDU was just 22 percent, only a little more than what the former ruling party in the east, the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS) garnered there. The ultraright German People's Union (DVU) got close to 13 percent in that vote.

In the elections in Bavaria on September 12, it looked like the gap between the Social Democrats and CDU/CSU had closed. The CSU got 52 percent, about the same as they usually get, and the Social Democrats got 30 percent, as in elections in 1994.

## Bonn chokes trying to swallow the east

Kohl pointed to the reunification of Germany in 1990, as the Stalinist bureaucracies that had ruled in Eastern Europe began to crumble, as the crowning achievement of his chancellorship. By incorporating the five states of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) into the Federal Republic of Germany, Kohl aimed to strengthen the position of German imperialism in relation to its competitors, particularly in Paris, Washington, and London. He promised that living standards in the east would rise to the levels in the west, and conceded to exchange the east German mark at a one-to-one ratio.

But the last eight years have seen a relative weakening of the German bourgeoisie vis-à-vis its rivals, in large part as a result of the attempt to absorb the noncapitalist workers state in the east. Bonn has transferred some \$100 billion a year to eastern Germany since 1990, roughly 5 percent of western Germany's annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 40 percent of the GDP of the former GDR. Most of these funds have been spent on jobless benefits and other social payments, not capital investment.

The German government has shut down much industry in the east, resulting in official unemployment that topped 20 percent earlier this year. The Kohl administration got this figure down to about 17 percent leading up to the vote through a \$1 billion government make-work program, but those jobs are expected to end soon.

Since 1990 there have been strikes in both the east and west demanding parity of wages, protesting plant closings, and defending social entitlements.

In the elections in 1990 and 1994, the CDU and Kohl won the most votes among all parties in the eastern states. But this time CDU only got an average of 26 percent of the votes in the east, down 13 percent from last elections, while the Social Democrats increased their vote from 32 percent to 36 percent in the eastern states.

In his campaign Schröder promised to make rebuilding the east a top priority that will be handled directly under him as chancellor.

Nine years after reunification, the former ruling party in the east, the Party of Democratic Socialism, gets around 20 percent of the votes there. Nationally, the PDS share of the votes increased this time compared to last federal elections, reaching the 5 percent threshold needed to be seated in the Bundestag. Half of the parliamentary seats are allotted to each party based on the proportional vote, with the remainder elected directly in each district. Previously, the PDS held three district seats in the Bundestag.

A recent survey shows that two-thirds of those living in the eastern states do not feel as equal citizens in the reunified Germany.

The ultraright National Democratic Party (NPD) and German Peoples Union were expected to get a big vote in the east after their strong showing in the state elections in Saxony-Anhalt in May. Nationally, the DVU got 1.3 percent of the votes. In parliamentary elections in the eastern state of Mecklenburgh Vorpommern, also held September 27, none of the ultraright parties that campaigned heavily there won a seat. The DVU was closest, with 3 percent. In the last elections the ultraright won just 1 percent.

## Social Democratic coalition government

The Greens and the Free Democratic Party (FDP) will both be seated in the Bundestag. The Greens won 6.7 percent and will form a slim majority of delegates together with the Social Democrats. The FDP, which had been a coalition partner in Kohl's CDU/CSU government, won 6.5 percent. The FDP had earlier been a coalition partner in Social Democratic governments.

In the last weeks before the elections, as the gap between the Social Democrats and CDU was estimated to narrow, speculations grew that Schröder would form a "grand coalition" government with CDU. Since the election results give the Social Democrats and the Greens a clear majority, a grand coalition is less likely. The SPD and Greens announced they will start coalition negotiations October 2.

## Social Democrats in governments

Schröder's campaign focused a lot on high unemployment, which now stands at 10.6 percent nationally, or more than 4 million people. Last winter it was more than 4.5 million but the make-work programs in the east to gain votes, seasonal economic changes, and an upturn in the business cycle have lowered the number slightly. As elections are over and the winter is approaching, joblessness will grow again.

Schröder has had a procapitalist campaign with vague promises of jobs and reforms. He has been compared to Anthony Blair, who heads the Labour Party government in the United Kingdom. Social Democrats are now in governments in 13 of the 15 countries within the European Union. This reflects the failure of the traditional bourgeois parties to deal the workers and farmers in Europe the same blows as they have been dealt in the United States, as well as the increasing resistance among working people in Europe.

Next summer the German government will move from Bonn to Berlin, closer to the region of central and eastern Europe that German imperialism has always considered its "backyard." This move symbolizes the shift in German imperialism's interests and alignment to the east and within the West, from Paris to Warsaw and London. Schröder's first trip after his election as

chancellor was to Paris, the capital that Kohl always visited first. But he is also rapidly planning visits to London and Moscow.

The economic crisis in Russia, and lack of any motion toward restoring capitalist rule there, has a particularly big impact on the German bourgeoisie. By the middle of this year, German banks were owed \$30.5 billion by the government and other institutions in Russia — more than four times the outstanding Russian loans of U.S. banks and more than 40 percent of all Russia's debt to foreign banks. Some 14 percent of the capital of German banks is exposed to loans to Russia.

At the end of August 1998, Moscow delayed interest payments on a portion of this debt for the first time, and the Russian government is now threatening to stop payment altogether on some foreign loans, unless new ones are offered.

As the German elections are over, rifts between the main imperialist powers in the European Union will come to the fore. This fall negotiations over the European Union's budget for the coming years and preparing the enlargement of the EU to the east, will be on the agenda. On Jan. 1, 1999, the single currency will start.

*Carl-Erik Isacson is a member of the Metalworkers union.*

## MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

### CALIFORNIA

#### Los Angeles

**The Socialist Alternative to the Growing World Crisis of Capitalism.** Hear Socialist Workers candidates in the upcoming elections. Sat., Oct. 10, Dinner: 6:30 p.m., Program: 7:30 p.m. 2546 Pico Blvd. Dinner: \$5, Program: \$4. Tel: (213) 388-9600.

### FLORIDA

#### Miami

**The Crisis of the Clinton Administration and the Pornographication of Politics.** Speaker: Shirley Peña, Socialist Workers candidate for Lt. Governor of Florida and member of the International Association of Machinists, Local 368. Fri., Oct. 9, 7:30 p.m. 137 NE 54th Street. Donation: \$4. Tel: (305) 756-1020.

### MASSACHUSETTS

#### Boston

**Puerto Rico: Independence is a Necessity.** Panel discussion with representatives of the Puerto Rican independence struggle and the Young Socialists. Fri., Oct. 9, 7:30 p.m. 780 Tremont St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

### ILLINOIS

#### Chicago

**Che Guevara: Myths vs. Reality.** Fri., Oct. 9, 7:30 p.m. 1223 N. Milwaukee Avenue (at Division on CTA Blue Line). Donation: \$4. Tel: (773) 342-1780.

### MICHIGAN

#### Detroit

**The Pornographication of Politics and the Crisis of the Clinton Presidency.** Speaker: Gary Boyers, Socialist Workers candidate for Lt. Governor of Michigan and member of United Steelworkers of America. Fri., Oct. 9, 7:30 p.m. **Puerto Rican Political Prisoners in U.S. Prisons: Their Fight for Freedom.** Speakers: Noemi Cortes, political activist and daughter of political prisoner Edwin Cortes; Jorge Jimenez, Puerto Rican Solidarity Organization at the University of Michigan; and Rosa Garmendia, Socialist Workers candidate for governor of Michigan. Sat., Oct. 17, 7:30 p.m. 7414 Woodward Ave. Donation: \$4. Tel: (313) 875-0100.

### MINNESOTA

#### St. Paul

**Black Farmers Fight Land Loss.** Speaker:

Jenny Benton, recently attended Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund conference in Epes, Alabama. Fri., Oct. 9, 7:30 p.m. 2490 University Ave. W. Donation: \$4. Tel: (651) 644-6325.

### AUSTRALIA

#### Sydney

**The Fight to Defend Aboriginal Land Rights Today. Reports on Jabiluka and Mutawintji.** Speaker: Alex MacDougall, Communist League. Fri., Oct. 9, 7 p.m. 1st Floor, 176 Redfern St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (02) 9690 1533.

### NEW ZEALAND

#### Auckland

**Farmers Face the Crisis of the Nineties.** Speaker: Colin Parker, Communist League. Fri., Oct. 9, 7 p.m. 203 Karangahape Road. Donation: \$3. Tel: (9) 379-3075.

### UNITED KINGDOM

#### Manchester

**U.S. Imperialism Lost the Cold War.** Fri., Oct. 9, 7 p.m. 60 Shudehill. Donation £2. Tel: (161) 839-1766.

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## — CALENDAR —

### MASSACHUSETTS

#### Boston

**Art & Culture in Cuba Today.** An evening of discussion with Norberto Codina, award winning Cuban poet and editor of *La Gaceta de Cuba*, the foremost magazine of arts and culture in Cuba. Codina is a member of the national board of the Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba (UNEAC). Wed., Oct. 7, 6:00 p.m. 130 Beacon St., Rm. 123 (corner of Berkeley and Beacon). Tel: (617) 825-3239. Sponsored by Emerson College Honors Program.



**Hunkering down** — Members of the British Parliament voted to spend £30 million on a bronze facade for their new office building. Contracted to a company that usu-



Harry Ring

ally makes armored cars, they say the bronze sheeting will withstand a bomb blast.

**We're all right Jack** — Members of Parliament will also have their own bombproof subway to Westminster Place. Explains one MP: "Members will be able to dash to the Commons without having to worry about getting shot or bumping into tourists."

**The march of civilization** — The Pentagon is developing environmentally friendly weapons and bullets with a lower lead content. And it's also a money saver. The Pentagon folks assure that "none of these efforts to green our weapons systems will reduce their perfor-

mance."

**Kind of not in vogue** — The publishers of *Vogue* canceled a slated party to celebrate the launch of the magazine's Russian edition. Given the ruble crisis, they felt the bash might be in bad taste.

**Family values** — When Sidney Altman of Beverly Hills checked out, he left the bulk of his \$6-million estate to his dog, Samantha. His companion, Marie Dana, was named guardian to Samantha and will receive \$60,000 a year until the dog (now the equivalent of 75) dies.

The house will then be sold and Dana will be on her own. She's suing.

**Privatization means better service, no?** — Passenger complaints about privatized rail service in England have jumped 82 percent in a year.

**Dang, always too early or too late** — Our first New York dwelling was a microscopic "apartment" in an ancient Orchard St. tenement, replete with sink and tub in the kitchen. Now, one of the Orchard St. tenements, operated by a mu-

seum, offers a diner for 30 (in two adjacent apartments) that evokes the immigrant past. Up to \$750. Presumably, no roaches.

**In this society?** — "We believe that physicians should always act in the best medical interest of the individual patient.... Patients are burdened enough by concerns and fears about themselves; they should not have to worry about the motivations of their physicians as well." — Statement by two Boston-area doctors on the increasing role of "cost effectiveness" in determining treatment.

## Castro speaks on U.S. role in 1973 coup in Chile

Twenty-five years ago a U.S.-sponsored right-wing coup in Chile overthrew the Popular Unity (UP) government of Salvador Allende on Sept. 11, 1973. Thousands of workers, political activists, and others were massacred. Allende himself was killed as he fought (with a rifle given to him by Cuban president Fidel Castro) to defend the national palace against attacking troops. "We were right in our premonition in giving the president that rifle," said Castro at a mass rally in Havana, Cuba, two weeks after the coup. "And, if every worker and every farmer had had a rifle like it in his hands, there wouldn't have been a fascist coup!"

### BOOK OF THE WEEK

Below we reprint excerpts from the speech by Castro that appears in the Education for Socialists publication entitled *Fidel Castro on Chile*. The booklet is copyright © 1982 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission.

BY FIDEL CASTRO

President Allende and the Chilean revolutionary process awakened great interest and solidarity throughout the world. For the first time in history, a new experience was developed in Chile: the attempt to bring about the revolution by peaceful means, by legal means. And he was given the understanding and support of all the world in his effort — not only of the international Communist movement, but of very different political inclinations as well. We may say that that effort was appreciated even by those who weren't Marxist-Leninists.

And our party and people — in spite of the fact that we had made the revolution by other means — and all the other revolutionary peoples in the world supported him. We didn't hesitate a minute, because we understood that there was a possibility in Chile of winning an electoral victory, in spite of all the resources of imperialism and the ruling classes, in spite of all the adverse circumstances. We didn't hesitate in 1970 to publicly state our understanding and our support of the efforts which the Chilean left was making to win the elections that year.

And, sure enough, there was an electoral victory. The left, People's Unity, with its social and political program, won at the polls.

Of course, that didn't mean the triumph of a revolution; it meant access to very important positions of power by peaceful, legal means.

However, it wasn't an easy task that President Allende was faced with. There were conspiracies right from the beginning. An attempt was made to keep him from being inaugurated after the elections. Imperialism and its agencies — the CIA and the multinational companies — conspired to keep Salvador Allende from becoming president of the republic. They even murdered the commander of the army of Chile in an attempt to prevent it....

But what problems confronted him? In the first place there was an intact bourgeois state apparatus. There were armed forces that called themselves apolitical, institutional — that is, apparently neutral in the revolutionary process. There was that bourgeois parliament, where a majority of members jumped to the tune of the ruling classes. There was a judicial system that was completely subservient to the reactionaries. And it was in those circumstances that he had to carry out his governmental duties. There was also the fact that the country's economy was completely bankrupt, that the Chilean state was four billion dollars in debt.

That huge debt was the product of the imperialist policy, the product of the engineering of the United States, which was trying to create a showcase of the Christian Democratic government so as to confront and stop the advance of the social movement....

President Allende found himself with a country burdened down by debt; a country in which imperialism had introduced its customs, its consumer habits; a country in which the mass media — the press, television, and radio — was in the hands of the oligarchy and reaction. And at a time when the price of copper plummeted from 75 cents to 48 cents a pound.

Moreover, the people had crying needs that simply had to be met. There was large-scale unemployment, and a solution had to be found for this problem. The most crying needs of the people, the demands most felt by the population, had to be attended to, and the government of People's Unity found enormous economic obstacles in its path.

When the agrarian reform began to be put into effect, the large landowners and agrarian bourgeoisie started sabotaging agricultural production. The bourgeoisie, owners of the distribution centers, warehouses, and stores, started cornering the market and sabotaging the People's Unity government.

As soon as the nationalization of the copper enterprises that had extracted thousands upon thousands of millions from the labor and sweat of the Chilean people — as soon as the nationalization of those enterprises was approved, imperialism froze all the loans granted by all the international organizations to the Chilean government and went about stifling the economy of Chile.

Those were the enormous difficulties which President Allende faced on taking office.

The bourgeois political parties — essentially the National Party and the Christian Democratic Party — oriented by a reactionary leadership, took it upon themselves, in complicity with imperialism and the reactionary classes and with the reactionary press, to put obstacles in the way of everything President Allende tried to do. They made it practically impossible for him to rule; they virtually tied the hands of the government to keep it from doing anything.

Those three years of the People's Unity government were really three years of struggle, of difficulties, of agony for its at-

tempts to carry out its program. And, on top of all this, there were armed forces that, I repeat, called themselves apolitical and institutional.

They were three years of one plot after another, of conspiracy after conspiracy. The ruling classes and their parties reacted as was to be expected. The societies of owners, merchants, and even professionals — the kind of professional we knew here — most of them at the service of the ruling classes, sabotaged the government's tasks: they called work stoppages and strikes and completely paralyzed the country on more than one occasion.

And this wasn't all. They also called on the armed forces continually to overthrow the People's Unity government.

And President Allende kept on working in the midst of all those tremendous difficulties. And, in the midst of those difficulties, he tried to do — and did do — many things for the Chilean people. And at least in those three years the Chilean people — especially the workers and farmers — understood that there in the presidency of the republic was a representative not of the oligarchs, large landowners, and bourgeoisie, but of the poor, of the workers — a true representative of the people, for whom he was fighting, in spite of the enormous difficulties with



Thousands demonstrate in Santiago, Chile, before September military coup overthrew Allende government. "If every worker had a rifle, there wouldn't have been a coup!"

which he was faced. (Applause)

President Allende realized the difficulties and foresaw the dangers; he was witnessing the birth of fascism. He witnessed the hatching of plots one after another. All that he had to oppose those forces that had been created and spurred on by imperialism was his fighting spirit and determination to defend the process at the cost of his very life. (Applause)

## —25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

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

October 12, 1973

**TACOMA, Wash.** — The Washington game and fisheries departments are on trial here for robbing 14 Indian tribes of their fishing rights. The federal government has filed suit on behalf of the Indians, who are fighting to regain the right to fish outside their reservations.

Despite a 1968 Supreme Court decision upholding the off-reservation fishing rights, the state of Washington says the Indians can fish only on their reservations and then only for a limited amount of fish, "so as not to deplete the resources."

State officials have continually charged that the tribes do not know how to regulate their off-reservation fishing and thus threaten the conservation of steelhead and salmon.

Fisheries expert Dr. James Heckman testified to the contrary. The Indians "know much more about the fish and fishing than many of us learn in college," he said.

Over the past 50 years the annual salmon catch has dropped from 16 million pounds to three million.

The Indians have pointed out that construction, the removal of gravel from spawning grounds, flooding, and agricultural and industrial pollution have depleted the fish runs — not the tiny amount of tribal fishing.

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

October 11, 1948

Henry Wallace, presidential candidate of the Progressive Party, has added his name to the growing list of prominent liberal and labor leaders who are demanding a full presidential pardon and complete restoration of civil rights for the 18 leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and Minneapolis Truckdrivers Local 544-CIO who were convicted under the Smith "Gag" Act and imprisoned during the war.

In an answer to a letter from SWP presidential candidate Farrell Dobbs, one of the 18 Minneapolis Case victims, Mr. Wallace on Sept. 21 wrote that the 18 who served prison sentences of from 12 to 16 months "were not convicted on the basis of any acts of violence but solely by reason of their expression of political views and opinions."

Among the signers of the pardon appeal for Dobbs, Grace Carlson, SWP vice-presidential candidate, and the other 16, are Norman Thomas, presidential candidate of the Socialist Party, Roger Baldwin, John Haynes Holmes and Arthur Garfield Hayes of the American Civil Liberties Union; August Scholle, president of the Michigan CIO Council; Willard S. Townsend, president of the CIO United Transport Service Employees; Irving Abramson, CIO Eastern Regional Director, and John Dewey, eminent philosopher and educator.

**Pathfinder**

**Fidel Castro on Chile**  
Speeches and interviews from Fidel Castro's 25-day visit to Chile in 1971. Castro warns of impending counterrevolution and stresses the example of Cuba, where workers and farmers mobilized to defeat imperialist intervention.  
**\$12.00**

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12 or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel. (212) 741-0690. Fax (212) 727-0150. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 to cover shipping and handling.

# Socialists: Cancel the debt!

Continued from front page

is a slap in the face. It has provided even less to Haiti.

Meanwhile, the billionaire coupon-clippers in the United States have not budged from their insistence that the Dominican Republic keep making the interest payments on a \$3.5 billion foreign debt. To keep this blood money flowing into their coffers, the imperialist bankers demand that governments in oppressed countries like the Dominican Republic and Haiti impose brutal economic austerity measures to squeeze more out of workers and peasants. The Dominican government has pleaded for a rescheduling of debt payments to ease the staggering burden it faces right now.

Hurricane Georges was a *natural* phenomenon, but its disastrous consequences were a result of *social* conditions caused by capitalism.

Imperialist plunder has fostered underdevelopment in semicolonial and colonial nations. Millions of acres of farm and forest land are exploited by companies from imperialist countries to make a quick profit. Their "development" projects have ruined the natural environment of these nations while driving peasants off the land. Decades of deforestation in Haiti, for example, have made the country vulnerable to flooding and landslides, causing massive homelessness and the spread of disease, with a looming threat of epidemics today.

Poor roads and communications, an inadequate health-care system, shoddy housing — all these conditions, which multiplied the human toll of the disaster, were caused not by the hurricane but by a criminal system of exploitation — imperialism. And the capitalist governments in these countries bow to the profit prerogatives of their imperial masters, who couldn't care less about working people.

Not all areas were affected equally. In rich neighborhoods with well-built and protected structures, housing damage was less. But impoverished rural areas were devastated. In the Dominican Republic, entire towns vanished,

swallowed up by overflowing rivers.

Over the coming months, these catastrophic social conditions for working people will be magnified by the capitalist depression that is wracking the world. Throughout the past year, these brutal conditions have sparked widespread protests by working people in the Dominican Republic.

Likewise, the social devastation of Puerto Rico graphically highlights the colonial status of that Caribbean nation — down to the most degrading details, such as the U.S. relief authorities who staffed telephones without enough Spanish-speaking operators!

In contrast to Washington's arrogance and stinginess, the revolutionary government of Cuba has issued a call for international aid, especially to the Dominican Republic, and is sending some material aid of its own, despite the fact that Cuba also suffered serious damages from the hurricane.

One U.S. capitalist politician, Congressman Robert Menéndez, had the gall to criticize the Cuban government for its "incredible" stance of sending assistance to other nations instead of keeping it for its own country. The U.S. rulers are horrified by the shining example of selfless solidarity demonstrated by the Cuban people and their revolutionary government, which exposes Washington for what it is — an enforcer of exploitation and the dog-eat-dog values of capitalism.

Although Hurricane Georges hit the island of Cuba, the workers and farmers government there prepared the population for the natural disaster, minimizing its impact. Working people organized in a calm, disciplined way to take preventive measures, and they had full access to health care and other needed resources. That's the difference a socialist revolution can make.

Working people should demand:

Massive unconditional U.S. aid to the Caribbean!

Cancel the Third World debt!

End the U.S. embargo against Cuba!

# Stop deportations in Canada

Below are excerpts of a statement issued by Michel Dugré and Elssa Martinez, candidates of the Communist League for mayor of Montreal and for city councilor in the district of Père-Marquette, respectively.

All working people, youth, and defenders of democratic rights should unconditionally join the struggle by 67 Chilean refugees against their deportation by Immigration Canada and for their right to remain in this country.

Under the growing international crisis of their capitalist system of exploitation and oppression, all imperialist governments without exception — including Ottawa — are scapegoating immigrants and refugees for the increased unemployment, massive reduction of social services, and growing dislocation of social life that characterize the coming of the 21st century under capitalism. They have tightened their immigration policies and opened the door to deadly street attacks against immigrants by ultrarightist and fascist forces around the world.

But it is the capitalist system that is responsible for the growing unemployment and massive deterioration of social services in the imperialist countries. And it is this same system that is responsible for the increased economic, military, and political devastation that sweeps the countries oppressed and exploited by imperialism — the real reason why millions of working people around the world

are forced to live in another country.

Ottawa's tougher policies are not aimed at preventing immigrants and refugees to come to Canada. They are aimed at creating a layer in the working class with fewer rights who are forced to accept the employers' worsening conditions by fear of being deported. This system drives down the rights, wages, and working conditions of all workers. Ottawa's immigration policies are aimed at dividing and dehumanizing all working people by convincing many to accept that a whole layer of our brothers and sisters be treated in a brutal and cruel manner under the pretext that they come from another country. This is part of the bosses' political preparation for their wars against their capitalist competitors in other countries and against the people who resist the increasingly unbearable effects of the capitalist economic crisis.

The struggle of the Chilean refugees in Montreal shows once again that in today's world immigrants are not just victims. They are fighters who bring a real reinforcement to our class. Their struggle also confirms that in today's world the real bearer of humanity and dignity is the working class. It is in our interest to demand an immediate stop to all deportations, a general amnesty for all refugees — Chilean and others — as many of the current combatants have begun to demand, and the abolition of Ottawa's immigration and refugee laws.

# Paul Montauk: a cadre for 60 years

Continued from Page 9

Soviet Union, representatives of Pathfinder Press traveled to Russia to save books by Marx, Engels, and Lenin from being sold for pulp. In San Francisco, the Communist Party closed its bookstore. Sensing what was happening, Montauk rushed to arrange to purchase their remaining stock of Marxist literature at fire sale prices. He and other branch members filled a pick-up truck with books containing the precious lessons of Marxism in both in English and Spanish.

Montauk collaborated with Bay Area supporter Howard Petrick in converting the SWP's entire film archive to videotape so that it would be available for future generations, including footage of party activities in the 1930s and '40s.

Paul took special pride in winning young people to revolutionary politics and the communist youth, today organized in the Young Socialists. He staffed the Pathfinder bookstore virtually every Saturday for the last years of his life, where he spent many hours talking politics with young workers and students. He participated actively in the discussions at Militant Labor Forums. Montauk always sought to guide young people toward the literature they needed to answer their questions.

During the summer of 1998, the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists in San Francisco organized a sum-

mer school. Party members with long experience in the trade union and political movements joined Young Socialists and students spending the summer working industrial jobs and carrying out political work in the Bay Area to study important chapters of the history of the working-class struggle. They read and discussed the writings of revolutionary leaders James P. Cannon, Leon Trotsky, Vladimir Lenin, and others. Montauk was one of the most active and enthusiastic participants in the summer class series, helping prepare study materials and working with other students to effectively lead class discussions.

Paul participated in meetings of the SWP branch in San Francisco until the last two weeks of his life.

He recently explained to several comrades that he had gone through five or so major crises in his life, and that he had resolved every one of them by doing what the party had asked of him. Your problems don't go away, he said, but active party life prevents you from wallowing in them.

Montauk said that he had learned long ago that the needs of the party, based on centralized decisions and priorities, also give meaning and purpose to a revolutionary's life. It helped him get through all his crises in life, he emphasized, and made him stronger every time.

Norton Sandler contributed to this article.

# YS plans for convention

Continued from front page

of its work. Participants voted to carry out several national campaigns that will require the active involvement of all members. These include helping to organize and promote December 10 actions calling for the release of Puerto Rican political prisoners, building solidarity with and participating in labor struggles, and campaigning for Socialist Workers candidates across the country.

"The YS convention will give us a time frame and focal point for the YS nationally to carry out common campaigns that will make us a stronger and larger organization by the time of the convention," said YS leader Verónica Poses in a report to the meeting.

The national leadership meeting was called following a successful West Coast conference sponsored by YS chapters in California September 5-6 (see article in the September 21 *Militant*). That conference reflected progress in building a communist youth organization that participates in politics with other forces and recruits young fighters to its ranks. The YS National Executive Committee had asked participants in that conference to vote on whether or not the weekend's deliberations indicated that the call for a YS convention was warranted. After several hours of discussion, the 30 youth present decided that would indeed be a help in generalizing some of the advances reflected in the conference discussion.

Much of the discussion at the national leadership meeting two weeks later focused on the need to develop a "nose for recruitment." Samantha Kendrick, who is the YS organizer for the California region, explained, "We need to develop a recruitment culture, where contacts are invited to forums, classes, political actions, and social events. We need to follow up with those who do participate with us in common activity to convince them of why they need to be part of a communist youth organization."

Several YS members who volunteer at Pathfinder's print shop participated in the meeting. They brought with them the new Pathfinder pamphlet *Puerto Rico: Independence is a Necessity*, which contains two interviews with longtime Puerto Rican independence leader Rafael Cancel Miranda. "This pamphlet is very attractive not only to Puerto Rican fighters but for all revolutionary-minded young people," said Poses in her report. This pamphlet will be an important political tool of the YS for the next months in the work to build the actions to free the Puerto Rican political prisoners and to explain why fighting for an end to U.S. colonial rule in Puerto Rico is essential for the working class in the United States.

The leadership conference also reflected the work that YS members have been a part of in their cities. Paul Cornish, a member of the United Steelworkers of America in Atlanta, described his experiences participating in the Million Youth Movement events in Atlanta earlier this month. "Many young Blacks are looking for answers to the social and economic devastation they face, and raise questions that we need to be ready to answer," he said.

YS members will soon start a period of preconvention discussion. All YS members will participate in a written discussion on the program and organization of the YS, as well as exchanging experiences and evaluating developments in world politics.

The YS *Discussion Bulletin* will be opened with the "YS Manifesto," a document drafted by the chapter in Los Angeles as a set of working notes developed through several chapter discussions, as well as the YS Organizer, which was adopted by the second national convention of the YS, held in Atlanta in March 1997. The YS Manifesto and the opening section of the YS Organizer, "Aims of the Young Socialists," are published in the new issue of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist*. That issue, which features the Socialist Workers Party resolution "U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War" by Jack Barnes, will be one of the central political weapons of the YS to study and sell to others in the coming months.

Leading up to the convention, YS chapters will organize oral discussions on the Manifesto and the Organizer, as well as other materials that chapters deem relevant to their work. This discussion will lay the basis for the election of delegates for the YS convention.

"A central part of our activities this fall has to be fundraising," said Poses in her report. Chapters will start raising "scholarship funds" to help youth who are interested in going to the convention but can't afford all the expenses related to it.

At the same time, YS members will raise money to help finance the expenses of the national office, which leading up to the convention will be higher than usual. This money will be used for paying bills such as phone, fax, postage, printing of the *Discussion Bulletin*, and travel.

At a Militant Labor Forum Saturday night, supporters of the YS contributed more than \$1,200 to help with the expenses of holding this meeting, as well as moving the national office from Chicago to Los Angeles, where it will be based leading up to the convention.

The meeting also celebrated the graduation of nine YS members who have left the YS in order to focus their attention on their leadership responsibilities in the Socialist Workers Party. A new National Executive Committee was elected composed of Carlos Hernández, Samantha Kendrick, Cecilia Ortega, and Verónica Poses.

Maithong Yang, a YS member in Los Angeles, contributed to this article.



# Britain: Firefighters push back concessions

BY JIM SPAUL

LONDON — Firefighters in Essex, England, have succeeded in restricting attempts by the county's Combined Fire Authority (CFA) to cut jobs and services. The CFA proposed to eliminate 36 jobs, as well as remove one aerial ladder and two foam tenders. When the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) threatened strike action, the CFA reduced the proposed job cuts to 16.

FBU members rejected this as well and carried out a series of strikes of varying duration. The first began June 8, when more than 900 members of the Essex FBU walked off the job. After the CFA threatened to sack the strikers for "breach of contract," more than 1,500 firefighters from around the United Kingdom turned out June 12 for a demonstration in support of the walkout. The FBU promised national strike action if the sacking threat was carried out.

The fight of the Essex strikers was to maintain the number of firefighters needed to provide safe and adequate service. Strik-

ers at Chelmsford explained that they could not cover all of the equipment with the cuts the CFA was seeking. The CFA said its cuts would save £1.6 million (\$2.7 million). The strike cost the CFA more than £2 million (\$3.4 million) in payments for providing stand-in fire cover, including to the British army.

Having rejected the CFA's previous "final offer" by 84 percent, the strikers still faced the threat of the sack. Rejecting what they called "scaremongering" tactics, the firefighters announced seven days of strike action to start on September 17. In response, on September 14, the CFA put forward a new proposal that reduced job losses to eight and maintained the aerial ladder platform at Chelmsford and a foam tender. This was accepted by firefighters at 22 of the 31 Essex FBU branches (locals).

Brentwood FBU member Robert Thomson told the *Militant*, "It's hard to say we've won when they are still making cuts." But, he added, "The CFA were trying to



Militant/Phil Waterhouse

Firefighters from across United Kingdom rally to back strikers in Chelmsford June 12

break the union and we've shown our resolve. We've shown we can get something by going out on strike."

Another FBU member, Kevin, said, "We only went back when we wanted to; they didn't force us back. If they make job and

service cuts again next year we will be out again."

Jim Spaul is a member of the Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers Union. Celia Pugh contributed to this article.

## Great Lakes Steel gets slap on wrist in worker's death

BY JAY RESSLER

DETROIT — In a blow to worker safety on the job, the state of Michigan agreed to more than halve its original fine against Great Lakes Steel for a May 1997 accident that killed a worker. The agreement was reportedly worked out at a July pretrial hearing before Administrative Law Judge J. Andre Friedlis.

The Michigan Department of Consumer and Industrial Services originally fined the company, a division of National Steel Corp., \$10,150 in the death of James Brillhart, Jr., a crane repairman. Brillhart was killed when an overhead crane struck him while he was working on an adjacent crane. Prior to the July hearing, the fine had already been lowered once, in August 1997, to \$8,750. Not satisfied with that, National Steel appealed, claiming Brillhart's death was due to "human error." The fine has now been cut to \$4,900.

"I think that's pretty cheap for a death," said Harry Lester, director of District 22 of the United Steelworkers of America, according to Crain's Detroit Business. His com-

ment expressed the anger of many workers at the fine reduction.

The cause of Brillhart's death, Lester said, was that machinery was not properly locked out, a safety violation state officials had cited the company for more than a year before. "The whole thing happened because of a repeat violation. More actions should have been taken by the state," Lester was quoted as saying.

Brillhart was one of five workers killed during 1997 at the Great Lakes Steel mill, located just outside of Detroit in Ecorse, Michigan. The other fatalities in 1997 included Willie White, an employee of a contractor, who was killed as he worked on a blast furnace on Zug Island. Marvin Crosby and John Fox were crushed when an overloaded hopper at the blast furnace collapsed onto the shanty where they were taking a break, burying them under 100 tons of metal. Donald Arnold, a carpenter, was killed on an overhead crane runway in an accident similar to the one that killed Brillhart.

National Steel ranked last among integrated steel mills for safety last year. It's

noteworthy that the spate of fatalities coincided with National Steel shipping a record 6.14 million tons of steel in 1997 and earning record profits of \$213.5 million, compared with \$53.9 million in 1996. Shareholders received \$4.70 per share in 1997 up from \$.99 in 1996.

### 2,800 unsafe work practices

The union safety committee has been conducting a safety audit of the aging mill in which they have identified 2,800 unsafe work practices. The Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MiOSHA) had cited the company for 1,200 safety violations. Audits of some primary steelmaking areas have yet to be completed.

In the recent settlement the company refused to assume responsibility, putting the blame on the workers instead. In a written statement company officials said the company is "moving forward with many employee-oriented activities to improve our safety program."

To some workers this promise rings hollow. Unsafe conditions are still rampant throughout the mill. Widespread overtime, job-combinations, foremen who turn a blind eye to unsafe practices, and lack of adequate maintenance all contribute to unsafe conditions. Potholes, uneven floors, cranes and other equipment with brakes and sirens that don't work, and malfunctioning hooking equipment all are common.

Nevertheless, the company goes to great lengths to pose as the champion of safety. There are safety rules in place for every operation, but these rules are used to absolve the company of any responsibility when accidents occur. "When someone gets hurt, they say it's because the workers involved failed to follow the safety procedures," noted Gary Boyers, the Socialist Workers candidate for Lt. Governor, who works in the Great Lakes Steel Cold Mill.

"The company has created the entire situation in which the unsafe conditions occur. They combine jobs and pressure the work-

ers breaking in on those jobs to declare themselves qualified as soon as possible," added Boyers.

### Workers must lead fight for safety

Fred Anderson a 34-year veteran of the mill and former union safety man said, "The company has a responsibility to make sure people are following the safety rules."

Anderson, who works as a crop shear operator in the temper mill, was quick to add, "We have a certain amount of responsibility too."

Boyers, underscored this point, noting, "Safety is a union question. Workers on the shop floor must take the lead in fighting for a safe workplace. We can't rely on MiOSHA, vigilant foremen, or company programs."

Rick Torres, who recently started working as a crane learner, said, "The only time the company comes down on workers for unsafe practices is when coils are damaged."

He added, "A lax attitude has developed because repairs are often neglected long after problems are reported." When discussing safety, Torres talks about his father who retired from Great Lakes Steel. He was seriously injured many years ago when a piece of mill equipment pulled his arm in. The elder Torres lived in constant pain from the injury for years until his death.

The company has recently started to strictly enforce policies on wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). This includes hardhats, safety glasses, safety boots, hearing protection, and a blanket policy requiring buttoned-down long sleeves.

Torres concluded, "When people see so many serious things wrong and real dangers, and nothing done about them, they don't take seriously some of the PPE issues like long-sleeves. Let's talk about real issues — some of which cost money."

Jay Ressler is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 1299 at Great Lakes Steel.

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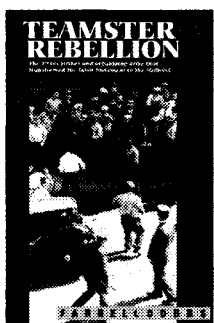
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The author, Farrell Dobbs, was a central organizer of these labor battles during the rise of the CIO, and subsequently national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party.

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## LETTERS

### More on the Cold War

When I saw John Laurence's letter in the Oct. 5 *Militant* I was particularly interested because he expressed very similar opinions to those I laid out in a letter to the *Militant* a few months ago. Now I think that Laurence's views, as well as those I expressed, are too tightly focused on the "here and now," and insufficiently appreciative of the underlying motive forces of history that have brought about the current situation.

Laurence points to the imperialist course to expand NATO to the east, as well as the collapse of the productive forces in Russia, as evidence that the U.S. has not really lost the Cold War. Imperialism is still pursuing its goal of capitalist

restoration in the East, and seems to be making headway.

The appearance is that the former Soviet Union lies in ruins, while the U.S. imperialists remain strong and in control. If the Cold War is over, it would seem that the U.S. won it. Or you could argue, as Laurence does, that the Cold War is not really over yet, but that so far it looks like imperialism is winning.

This position, however much it appears to be grounded in the facts, fails to come to grips with the reasons for the collapse of the Stalinist mechanisms in the period 1989 to 1991.

Was this collapse due to a weakening of the workers' state in the face of imperialist pressure? Or was it due to the weakening of imperi-

alism together with its Stalinist prop in the old Soviet Union? I believe that the latter explanation is the right one.

It is important to bear in mind that the Stalinist state structure is a function of imperialist pressure on the workers' state. Stalinism could never have been born in the first place had not imperialism been strong enough to impose the conditions which made bureaucratic parasitism take root and grow in the workers' state. This is the key to understanding the current situation.

The growing weakness of imperialism in the post-WWII period meant that the Stalinist repressive apparatus could no longer be sustained, and it collapsed through the natural evolution of its own inter-

nal contradictions.

The fact that Russia is now in a horrible mess does not prove that imperialism "won" or "is winning" anything in the world class struggle. It only proves that the old way of providing the necessities of life for the masses of the people is no longer functional.

The workers are in the process of gathering the experience which they will use to find a way to reorganize the productive forces on a new foundation. And they are now in a better position to do this because the travesty of communism that they endured for so long has been swept away, and the workers' state has survived.

Jim Miller  
Seattle, Washington

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J.G.  
Sierra Madre, California

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.

## Protests spread through Indonesia

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — "Hungry, hungry, hungry," chanted some 1,000 students demonstrating September 10 against the government of Indonesian president Jusuf Habibie in Jakarta. "The people will win!" they added. The protest was one among a wave of antigovernment actions during that month in both Indonesia and Malaysia, as the political repercussions of the deep capitalist economic crisis in Southeast Asia continue to be felt in the streets.

In Indonesia working people are making use of the political space won with the resignation of President Suharto earlier this year. Suharto's regime originated in a military-led bloodbath in the mid-1960s. In the midst of antigovernment actions organized by workers and students, and after major riots, Suharto acceded to the wishes of his imperialist and local military backers and handed over power to his vice president, Jusuf Habibie, on May 21.

Many actions occurring in Indonesia today are fueled by simple, brutal hunger. "Millions of Indonesians face an impending famine due to dire food shortages," the Associated Press reported September 15.

Food Minister A.M. Saefuddin stated that many families can afford only a single daily meal. "Sixty percent of the Indonesian population can only afford to buy food," said Dr. Sri Mulyani Indrawati of the University of Indonesia, stating that among the 200-plus million Indonesians, some 20 million are unemployed. Habibie himself has said that 40 percent of the population is living in poverty, up from the official figure of 11 percent before the economic crisis began a year ago. Referring to the past years of rapid economic growth, the Indonesian president stated in an August 16 televised address, "It is no exaggeration to say the achievements of three decades of national development have been wiped out."

### Miners, transport workers strike

Prices of essential foodstuff have soared since the region-wide economic slide was triggered in July last year. The rupiah has fallen by 80 percent against the U.S. dollar in that time. With inflation threatening to reach 100 percent, and problems of distribution, prolonged drought, hoarding, and smuggling, rice prices have tripled over the past year.

Many workers, students, and farmers are taking action in response. The *Sydney Morning Herald* reported a week-long strike involving 5,000 workers at the PT Freeport Indonesian mine in Irian Jaya, one of the world's largest copper and gold mines.

In mid-September thousands of striking public transport workers took to the streets of Medan. Their "massive strike" has "paralyzed" the city, reported the *Jakarta Post*, an English-language Indonesian daily. Thousands of students from the Javanese cities of Jogjakarta, Surabaya, Bandung, and Jakarta have been involved in protests, demanding that Habibie cut prices or resign. Students and farmers protested outside government buildings in Jakarta, demanding



Indonesian students ride atop a bus headed for the parliament building in Jakarta in mid-September to call for President Habibie's ouster.

assistance for impoverished farmers, and in Bogor, where they demanded the return of land stolen by government officials or their associates.

In late August, in the town of Cilacap, 270 miles east of Jakarta, thousands of fishermen burned a number of trawlers. The fishing-boat crews, paid the current equivalent of 18 cents a day per person, said they

had not received a pay rise in six years. These social explosions often turn on establishments owned by Chinese business people. Scapegoating the Chinese traders has long been a tool of military and autocratic rule. Over the past several months demonstrations have been organized by Chinese communities throughout the region, from Beijing to Auckland, calling on the

Habibie government to investigate the violence that occurred during the May riots that preceded Suharto's resignation.

### Nearly 5,000 arrested by military

The Indonesian Armed Forces (ABRI) have been put on the defensive by unfolding revelations of atrocities in the north Sumatran province of Aceh, carried out during a nine-year campaign against fighters for national rights. Human rights groups say they know of nine mass graves in the area.

While Habibie has made a show of apologizing for "human rights violations in several regions committed by individuals from the state apparatus," he responded to the recent swell in protest action by instructing "all ABRI to take stern action against looting and rioters." The Indonesian police have reported that since May, some 4,800 people have been detained for questioning during various "disturbances." Of these, 867 have been charged, with 267 put on trial.

Independence fighters on East Timor warned of a recent buildup of troops in the territory. About 100 students protested at the U.S. consulate in Surabaya September 24 against Washington's military assistance to Indonesian troops in East Timor.

Habibie's government has said there will be general elections next May. Under Suharto's rule only three government-controlled parties were allowed, and since his resignation many new electoral parties have been announced. New laws being mooted would place "conditions" on parties participating in the elections, and retain a number of seats for representatives of the military.

## Antigovernment actions swell as economic crisis deepens in Malaysia

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — "Mahathir resign" has become a popular slogan among tens of thousands who have taken to the streets of Malaysia. Protests have taken place almost daily since September 2, when Prime Minister Mahathir sacked Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Anwar Ibrahim. Anwar was arrested 18 days later.

Police have used batons, riot shields, and water cannons against the demonstrations, which grew from meetings at the deposed finance minister's house to reach a peak on the weekend of September 20. On that day 80,000 people, many of them young, rallied in the capital of Kuala Lumpur.

The protests occurred during Mahathir's showcase of the Commonwealth Games, held in Kuala Lumpur in mid-September.

Demonstrations like these have been unheard of in Mahathir's 17 years as prime minister. Political dissent has been met with repression, using laws like the hated Internal Security Act (ISA), which provides for detention without trial. Such laws are modeled on those created by the British colonial regime-controlled Malaya until inde-

pendence in 1957 (Sarawak and Sabah joined Malaya to form Malaysia in 1963).

The National Front government is a coalition of 14 parties dominated by Mahathir's United Malays National Organization (UMNO).

Under a camouflage of protecting "indigenous rights," the Malay aristocracy's rule has been buttressed by measures discriminating against the Chinese, Indian and other communities, including laws making Islam the state religion and Bahasa Malaysia the national language.

Anwar was detained on the night of September 20 under the ISA. The head of UMNO's youth wing, Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, and four leaders of the Islamic Youth Movement of Malaysia, are among the others who have been arrested.

While he has not been charged, Anwar faces allegations of committing sodomy, treason, and corruption. Prime Minister Mahathir told a news conference on September 22 that "I personally interviewed people he sodomized and women he had sex with." The former Finance Minister has strongly denied the charges, saying that Mahathir saw him as a rival for the leadership and an opponent on some key policies.

### Economic crisis deepens

Before these events Anwar, a 16-year veteran of Mahathir's cabinet, had been considered his likely successor. Differences between the two figures have become evident as the capitalist crisis has bitten deeper in the region.

The Malaysian economy — which had been one of the fast growing "Asian tigers" before this year — has officially entered a recession.

The economy contracted 6.8 percent between April and June, following a 2.8 percent drop in the first quarter. The construction industry has been hardest hit, dropping 22 percent in the second quarter. Manufacturing and farming also declined by more than 9 percent. As a result the unemployment rate, which had been near zero, is between 4 and 5 percent. Malaysia's debt to

imperialist banks has risen every year in the 1990s, and now stands at more than \$27 billion.

Mahathir has assumed a demagogic, nationalist stance, blaming the country's economic difficulties on, at different times, overseas financiers, journalists, and Jews.

Anwar, on the other hand, became known for supporting the kind of austerity measures the International Monetary Fund has proposed for countries like Indonesia and South Korea. The former deputy premiere also called for political reforms. "I fight for civil society, the rule of law, and administrative transparency," he has said. Groups opposing his arrest have demanded the rights to freedom of speech and assembly, and the abolition of the ISA.

Among the crowd at the September 20 rally was Eric Bastian, a 50-year-old worker, who told a reporter that "I never supported [Anwar], but I would like to at this time because he has been unjustly treated and he will stand up against corruption and nepotism."

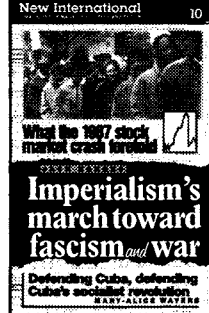
Anwar's purge occurred in the wake of a range of economic measures pushed through by Mahathir earlier in September. As reported in New Zealand's *Sunday Star Times*, "Dr. Mahathir [announced] a range of foreign-exchange controls designed to shield Malaysia's currency and economy from speculators and financial instability."

The article reported that the measures were taken in response to news that Malaysia is "officially in recession, with its currency the ringgit, having lost 40 percent of its value, the sharemarket down 75 percent and new car sales off 70 percent, all over the past year."

These latest measures have caused disquiet among the imperialists, who are also concerned about the unprecedented protests against the Mahathir's rule. Evincing paternalistic concern, a U.S. government official commented that "we tell everyone in the region that you'll do best by getting your system in shape to participate in a globalized economy. Mahathir clearly has chosen a different path."

### "Imperialism's March toward Fascism and War"

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