

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Why steelworkers should reject anti-import crusade

— PAGE 11

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 62/NO. 37 OCTOBER 19, 1998

Steelworkers walk out at Kaiser Aluminum

BY ESTELLE DEBATES AND DENNIS RICHTER

SEATTLE — More than 3,000 members of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) are conducting round-the-clock picketing at five plants owned by Kaiser Aluminum, the nation's fifth-largest producer of aluminum. Kaiser is currently operating all its struck facilities with scabs, as well as current and retired management personnel.

Contract negotiations ended September 30 when workers in Washington, Louisiana, and Ohio walked off the job, rejecting the company's final offer. Kaiser spokeswoman Susan Ashe told the Associated Press that the company's offer was contingent on the union not going out on strike and the union negotiating committee recommending ratification by the membership. This "enhanced offer," she said, was withdrawn due to the strike action.

The "enhanced offer" by Kaiser included the permanent elimination of 400 jobs between the five plants and the contracting out of 150 jobs, ranging from janitors to diesel mechanics. Over the course of the company's proposed five-year agreement, wages would increase by only 2.3 percent per year, which is less than the average inflation

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Socialist Workers turn to openings in the unions

BY NAOMI CRAINE AND ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

CHICAGO — The Socialist Workers Party National Committee met here October 3-5 to discuss and adopt a course of action to deepen the proletarianization of the party and to launch a campaign to rebuild fractions of the party in eight industrial unions. Participating in the meeting, in addition to members of the National Committee, were leaders of the party's trade union work, organizers of SWP branches across the country, a delegation from the Young Socialists National Executive Committee, and representatives from the leaderships of Communist Leagues in other countries.

The objective basis of this campaign is the upturn in defensive struggles by the working class that has become increasingly apparent for more than a year. Right now coal miners in Illinois, striking Titan Tire rubber workers in Iowa and Mississippi, farm workers in California, and farmers in growing numbers around the country are involved in important fights.

Women and workers who are Black are also assuming a more weighty leadership role in battles by industrial unions against the employers. And layers of militant workers and working farmers — from Caterpillar plants in Illinois to a Crown oil refinery in Texas to Black farmers in the South — are beginning to draw broader conclusions

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U.S., NATO hands off Yugoslavia!

Support fight for independence in Kosova

Working-class fighters need to campaign to speak out against Washington's intensified drive toward a military assault on the workers state in Yugoslavia.

The U.S. rulers, with virtual unanimity,

EDITORIAL

are beating the war drums for a NATO bombing campaign, under the false pretense of concern over the massacres of Albanians in Kosova by the regime in Belgrade. "Time to Shoot or Shut Up" was a typical headline in the October 12 issue of *Newsweek* magazine.

The planned U.S.-led assault has nothing

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Washington escalates military threats

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

"NATO is moving forward very rapidly in a serious, sustained and intensive manner preparing for military action," declared U.S. special envoy Richard Holbrooke. "We are...on the edge of a major use of force," he added, unless something is done that is "extremely substantial."

Holbrooke's remarks underscored the U.S. rulers' stepped-up drive toward a military onslaught against Yugoslavia under the pretense of concern for Albanians in Kosova who have been massacred by the Serbian army and special police. Holbrooke was speaking at an October 5 news conference in Belgrade after a second day of discus-



British pilot in Germany October 5 prepares to join NATO force that may launch military strikes against Yugoslavia under pretense of protecting Kosova Albanians.

sions to press Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic to meet to Washington's demands or face imperialist armed intervention. The Serbian government has been carrying out a seven-month offensive to crush the struggle for independence in Kosova, a region in Yugoslavia, whose population of 2 million is 90 percent Albanian. Faced with

systematic discrimination fostered by the chauvinist Serbian regime in Belgrade, the Albanian people in Kosova have been fighting for years for their right to national self-determination. They have lived under a state of siege imposed by Belgrade since 1989, when the Serbian rulers revoked Kosova's

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Farm workers in California celebrate victories in union-organizing efforts

BY KAREN RAY AND JUAN ACEVEDO

SANTA ROSA, California — With music, food, and high spirits, farm workers and their families gathered here at the United Farm Workers (UFW) offices October 4 to celebrate winning their first union contract a week earlier at Balletto Farms.

Salvador Mendoza, a UFW organizer in Sonoma County, said there are about 8,000 farm workers in the vineyards and fields of Sonoma at the height of the season, about 3,500 of whom work year round. Sonoma County, the site of many wineries, is located just north of San Francisco.

Balletto Farm is the largest vegetable farm on the northern coast of California, employing 30 farm workers year-round and about 100 at harvest time.

Agricultural workers at Balletto conducted a one-day strike July 24 demanding better wages, benefits, and union recognition. Mendoza reported that between 30 and

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Interview with Cuban leader on 1962 'missile' crisis — pages 6-7

Japan economy spirals down

As Japan's depression accelerates, the Tokyo stock market nose-dived 209 points October 1 — down to 13,197 points, one-third its 1989 peak. Leading the plummet were banks and real estate firms, companies at the core of Japan's shaky financial system. Bank stocks, which dropped by 10 percent that day, have in the past six months lost 50 percent of their value. The central banker, Masaru Hayami, announced October 4 that the capital supporting the country's top 19 banks has dwindled to critically low levels. Tokyo's banking system is saddled with \$600 billion in bad loans.

Meanwhile, Japan's industrial output has dropped 8.5 percent this year, leading to reductions in wages and overtime, which in turn undermines retail sales. Average pay declined 4.8 percent in August — the largest decline since January 1971 — while overtime hours in manufacturing fell by 16.5 percent. Japanese auto sales fell 8.2 percent in September. It was the 18th consecutive month of decline.

"Profit forecasts are being revised down, capital expenditures are getting slashed, price declines in land are accelerating," said Andrew Shipley, an economist with Schroders Japan Ltd. "The financial markets are going to start inflicting more and more pain on Japan."

Indonesia students demand end to military role in parliament

Hundreds of students protested in the Indonesian capital city of Jakarta October 5, demanding an end to the military's presence in government positions. Dozens of police and troops blocked the street action. The demonstration was against the so-called dual function policy that grants the armed forces a role in legislative politics. Currently, the military has 75 seats allotted to it in the 500-member national parliament.

The protest was part of a series of anti-government actions that have taken place in the last two months, fueled by the capitalist

Thousands protest austerity in Peru



Some 5,000 unionists, students, and others protested government austerity measures and the reelection of President Alberto Fujimori September 30 in Lima, Peru.

economic crisis gripping the nation. In a move to shore up the ravaged banking system, the Indonesian government announced October 2 that it would merge four state banks in the next two years and inject \$148 million into the banking system, taking bad loans out of the four banks and consolidating them in a special institution. Minister of State Enterprises Tanri Abeng said the merged bank may be sold to private capitalists.

Turkey: base workers win strike

Members of the Union of Defense Industry and Allied Workers won a two-month strike at U.S.-run air bases in Turkey September 28, just three days before a planned

NATO military maneuver to be held in Turkey, Greece, and Italy. The Incirlik Air Base, where 1,800 workers had walked off the job, is the hub of operations for U.S. and British military planes enforcing the "no-fly zone" in northern Iraq that Washington imposed on that nation after the 1990-91 Gulf War. The workers won a 50 percent wage increase and additional raises to compensate for inflation, which stands at about 70 percent a year. The strikes shut down the commissary, gas station, dining halls, and other Incirlik facilities.

Protests continue in Palestine

Since September 20 the Israeli government has imposed a complete closure on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, alleging threats from the Palestinian organization Hamas. The closure prevents tens of thousands of Palestinian workers from getting to their jobs and costs the Palestinian economy millions in lost wages and trade. In response, since September 30 there have been daily protests by Palestinians, which have been attacked by the Zionist regime's armed forces. In the West Bank city of Hebron, 100 Palestinians protested at an Israeli military checkpoint October 4, some throwing bottles and rocks. Troops responded with rubber bullets and tear gas, wounding two protesters. The same day, 100 Palestinians marched to protest illegal land confiscation by Zionist settlers.

Meanwhile, U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright traveled to Tel Aviv for

"peace talks." Instead of condemning Tel Aviv's collective punishment of Palestinians, she called on Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat to crack down on "terrorists."

Teachers strike in Kenya

Some 260,000 teachers throughout Kenya went on strike over wages and working conditions October 5 after government-promised raises failed to materialize. In Nairobi the riot police used tear gas to break up a demonstration by a few hundred teachers chanting, "People united will never be defeated." In the western town of Rongo, police clubbed a group of teachers discussing the strike and arrested three representatives of the Kenya National Union of Teachers. The unionists fought back with stones.

Teachers in this East African country are paid anywhere from \$45 to \$490 per month and schools are underfunded. Teachers were protesting against the government of President Daniel arap Moi for reneging on a deal signed after a 12-day strike last December, in which Moi was forced to concede raises of up to 200 percent over five years.

Strike wave in South Africa

A wave of wage strikes has rattled bosses in South Africa. Job actions "have ended a relatively calm period in the country's troubled history of labour relations," the *Financial Times* reported October 1. Some 50,000 members of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa have struck in various sectors of the auto industry for the past month.

Members of the National Union of Mineworkers in South Africa who work at Impala Platinum's refinery were locked out September 30 after workers called a strike. Unresolved wage disputes also include strikes by the South African Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union against Edgars, a retail company, and by 1,000 construction workers, mostly South African contract employees, who have stopped work on the \$1.3 billion Mozal aluminum smelter in Mozambique.

U.S. capitalists fear deflation

Prices for manufactured goods in the United States fell at their fastest rate in nearly 50 years, according to the latest survey by the National Association of Purchasing Management. The employer group, which produces a much-reviewed report of all sectors of the economy, announced its price index dropped from 38.4 percent in August to 34.4 percent in September. Prices have now dropped for nine straight months. "Deflationary pressures are intensifying," said Deutsche Bank Securities in an October 1 statement. "Prices are falling at their fastest pace since the 1940s."

— MEGAN ARNEY AND BRIAN TAYLOR

THE MILITANT

U.S. out of the Balkans!

As the people in Kosova fight for self-determination, Washington is moving to intervene militarily with the aim to restore capitalist rule in Yugoslavia. The 'Militant' tells why working people the world over should reject Washington's war moves. Don't miss a single issue!



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Cuban editor, poet opens lecture series on culture and art

BY ANDREA MORELL

BOSTON — Norberto Codina, editor of *La Gaceta de Cuba*, a magazine of art and literature published by the Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba, opened a series of speaking engagements on college campuses in this city October 5 at the University of Massachusetts. Two dozen people, mainly students, heard the prize-winning author read several of his poems and afterward answer questions about culture and politics in revolutionary Cuba.

In response to an audience member who asked if any young people were involved in the magazine, Codina said *La Gaceta* enjoys a "very strong representation of youth." The editorial staff includes people in their twenties, he said, and the poetry and short-story contests mainly draws youth.

Asked about censorship in Cuba, Codina noted that the atmosphere in the arts in Cuba in the 1970s was dominated by "Soviet-style socialist realism," with the narrower views on culture that it represented. But today, he said, Cuban arts continue to become more open to a range of expression and subjects, including the treatment of topics that were

taboo such as homosexuality.

The meeting took place under the auspices of the William Joiner Center for the Study of War and Social Consequences, as part of its 1998 Fall Lecture and Reading Series. It was cosponsored by the Gaston Institute for Latino Community Development, the Latino Coalition, the College of Public and Community Service, Talented and Gifted Hispanic Students Program, and Casa Latina. Professor Ester Shapiro chaired the meeting and later hosted a reception for Codina at her home.



OLGA RODRÍGUEZ

NEW YORK — Norberto Codina began his five-city series of academic speaking engagements with a public meeting at Casa de las Américas October 2. Luis Miranda, director of the Cuban cultural center here, welcomed Codina on behalf of the 80 people present. After thanking Casa de las Américas, where he has previously spoken during his U.S. visits in 1995 and 1996, Codina read three of his own poems. A written English-language translation of these



Militant/Hilda Cuzco

Cuban editor Norberto Codina read his poetry and answered questions at a meeting of 80 people at Casa de las Américas in New York October 2.

poems, done by U.S. author Margaret Randall, were also read to the appreciative audience. Following his presentation, a discussion ensued on Cuban literature and other art forms in Cuba today and other topics.

Codina was also welcomed by Rosina Rodríguez of the New York-based Dominican Friends of Cuba Committee and by Javier Torres, president of the Student Senate at Hostos Community College. They both spoke of the importance of visits by Cubans such as Codina as a way for people

to find out the truth about the Cuban revolution today.

Torres announced that academic institutions at Hostos will sponsor a meeting for Codina, at the end of his U.S. visit, on October 22. That event is thus far is sponsored by Hostos Community College president Dolores Fernández, the Center for Arts and Culture at Hostos, the student government organization, and Michael Mbabuiké, director, Department of Humanities at the college.

Cuba debated at Latin America scholars conclave

BY HARVEY McARTHUR

CHICAGO — Debate on the Cuban revolution and U.S. aggression against Cuba featured prominently in the international convention of the Latin American Studies Association held here September 24-26. The congress drew about 4,000 academics and researchers, most from the United States, with a substantial number from different Latin American countries and a few from Europe and Japan.

Organizers of the LASA gathering had invited more than 80 Cuban scholars to participate, the largest Cuban delegation ever. The Cubans, some of them LASA members who had participated in previous conventions, were scheduled to speak in more than 40 of the 500 panel discussions there.

The U.S. State Department, however stalled in authorizing entry visas for the Cuban guests. Officials of LASA and other members protested the delay to the State Department and eventually won visas for 65 of the Cubans. Some of those who received visas at the last minute were further delayed by Hurricane Georges and arrived late or were unable to attend.

Cuban scholars made presentations on topics ranging from the role of women in Cuba to recent economic developments, agrarian reform and the transformation of the Cuban countryside, developments in the Cuban-American population, and the status of youth and Afro-Cubans.

Washington's hostility to Cuba

Five panel discussions focused on U.S.-Cuba relations. One featured University of Havana professor Esteban Morales, who took up Washington's attempts to undermine the revolution, especially the 1996 Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act, also known as the Helms-Burton law, which tightens the U.S. economic embargo against Cuba. Morales noted that these measures came in the mid-1990s as Cuba began to recover from the worst of the economic crisis precipitated by the loss of favorable trade relations with the Soviet Union at the beginning of the decade and as it became clear in Washington that the revolution would not collapse on its own.

On that panel, Richard Nuccio, a former head of the U.S. State Department's "Cuba Desk" who later resigned out of disagreement with aspects of the Helms-Burton law, spoke at length defending U.S. efforts to pressure Cuba in the early 1990s. While distancing himself from the harshest measures imposed in recent years, Nuccio claimed that Washington had every right to "promote a peaceful, democratic transition in Cuba," and blamed the continuing U.S. aggression on the refusal of the Cuban government to change to meet Washington's demands.

Nuccio was answered from the floor by Soraya Castro Mariño from the University of Havana. She quoted from a press interview with Nuccio when he was Washington's point man on Cuba in which he articulated the U.S. government's goal of undermining and eventually overthrowing the Cuban government. Castro Mariño also cited the U.S. war in the Persian Gulf as further proof that Washington was not interested in democracy anywhere.

Debate on Che Guevara

More than 150 people attended a panel discussion on the book *Compañero, the Life and Death of Che Guevara*, by Jorge Castañeda, a prominent liberal academic and commentator who is a professor at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) and New York University. Ernesto Che Guevara was a central leader of the 1959 Cuban revolution and shouldered key responsibilities in the revolutionary government in the first half of the 1960s.

Castañeda presents a liberal anticommunist argument against Che and the Cuban revolution, labeling them a failure that no one wants to emulate today. "No one is a Guevarista today," he told the audience, "and no one is much interested in socialism either."

Castañeda claims Guevara and Cuban president Fidel Castro developed sharp differences in the mid-1960s over economic policies and Cuba's growing ties with the Soviet Union, and that Castro finally sent Guevara off on a hopeless mission to Bolivia where he would be killed.

The LASA panel included three prominent professors from U.S. universities and Juan Jorge Valdés Paz of the Instituto de Historia in Havana.

Harvard professor John Coatsworth applauded "Castañeda's wonderful book." Guevara "failed to build a solid economy and failed to spread the revolution," he argued, but still remains "an important symbol of struggle against inhumanity."

Another Harvard Cubanologist, Jorge Domínguez, also covered Castañeda's book with praise. Echoing the prevalent theme at the panel, the academic declared that Che "failed as a guerrilla," adding that he "led to death a great many others, and eventually to his own death" in heading a nucleus of revolutionary combatants in Bolivia in 1966-67. Guevara was murdered in 1967 by the Bolivian military dictatorship in close consultation with Washington.

Domínguez repeated the charge that the political and economic policies advocated by Guevara as Cuban working people reorganized the country's economy and society on proletarian foundations "were catastrophic." He blamed Che for making pub-

lic statements that "contributed to confrontations with the United States and the USSR and made more vulnerable [the Cuban] government."

Answering the other speakers, University of New Mexico professor Nelson Valdés reminded the audience that in just 11 years, between 1956 and 1967, Che had been a guerrilla commander, head of the National Bank, Minister of Industry, international representative of the Cuban revolution, and a leader of guerrilla fighters in Africa and Latin America. "Ask yourself," he concluded, "if you were to die today, what have you done in the past 11 years of your life that compares with those 11 years of Che's?"

Juan Jorge Valdés Paz of the Cuban Institute of History opened his remarks by "disagreeing with the most fundamental points of Castañeda's book," including his focus on psychology rather than the social conditions and struggles in Latin America in attempting to explain Guevara's actions. Valdés disputed Castañeda's "selective use of sources," and reliance for information on individuals who are opposed to the Cuban revolution. Che's will was a product of his development through the struggles of the Cuban revolution, he said.

Valdés took on Castañeda's claim that Che had major political differences with Fidel. "Che and Fidel maintained close, fra-

ternal relations. Their views were the closest of any two leaders of the revolution," he said.

Nor did Guevara act in an ultraleft manner when speaking as a representative of the Cuban government as Castañeda charged. "He always acted with the greatest discipline in carrying out his responsibilities," Valdés said.

Guevara's leadership of guerrilla struggles in the Congo and Bolivia were vindicated by subsequent revolutionary developments in Latin America and Africa, Valdés explained, noting the popular upsurge in Bolivia in the late 1960s and the independence movements in southern Africa the mid-1970s. The initiatives for these expeditions came from Che, he added, but they were supported by the rest of the Cuban leadership and flowed from the general internationalist course carried by the revolution.

Che's ideas are a rich legacy for today, he stressed. "For me and the Cubans, this includes his criticisms of existing socialism." Guevara's example includes the determination that "it is necessary to make a revolution to be able to carry out social reforms. Today, Valdés stated, when the "capitalist euphoria has come to an end," Che is an "example of struggle, of the fight for a better world and of human solidarity."

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Time to step up payments for New International Fund

BY BROCK SATTER
AND JON ERWAY

NEWARK, New Jersey — The good news is: local goals for the New International Fund, rising slightly last week, now meet the international \$115,000 goal.

The challenging news is: only 4 percent of the goal has been collected. After the second week, we should be at 25 percent to be on target.

Working people who read the *Militant* are hoping to see dollar figures besides every single city on the chart by next week.

What is needed now is to begin collecting and sending in payments for the fund in every area — and to accelerate collection of pledges in the areas that have already begun to do so — to bring in the funds that are required to produce *New International* in English, *Nouvelle Internationale* in French, *Nueva Internacional* in Spanish, and *Ny International* in Swedish.

Detroit fund director Frank Gorton reports that "consistent, weekly work at collecting contributions" has enabled *New In-*

ternational supporters in that city to send \$905 as of this week, topping this week's chart. "We have \$650 more to send to you," Gorton continued. We have \$4,810 pledged so far."

Such a weekly campaign footing has allowed supporters of the Marxist magazine to reach out more broadly for contributions. Gorton reports that those supporters who belong to the Steelworkers union in Detroit have adopted a goal of collecting \$75 from their co-workers. And a "call-around" of interested workers and youth resulted in a new \$50 pledge and a promised purchase of issue no. 11 of *New International*, "U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War."

In Sydney, Australia, supporters of the fund are planning to have an event to combine the opening of a new Pathfinder bookshop and to celebrate the publishing of *New International* no. 11 on October 31. Supporters have mailed out a fund letter and leaflet advertising the event this week.

In Des Moines, Iowa, fund director

Maggie Trowe reports that two unionists who work at the Swift meatpacking plant in nearby Marshalltown plan to collect \$20 in contributions from co-workers. "In our area we've already received pledges equal to our goal of \$2,500," Trowe said, "and we haven't even talked to every one we know yet, so we should be able to go way over that."

Des Moines supporters of the fund are also holding a special fund-raising event October 9. Socialist Workers Party leader Doug Jenness will speak on "The Deepening Dilemma for World Capitalism and New Opportunities for the Working Class." Fund-raisers in other cities are planning meetings in October to give a big boost to the New International Fund campaign and have an evening of political discussion among working-class fighters.

Please make checks out to: New International Fund.

Farm workers in California celebrate victories in union organizing efforts

Continued from front page

40 workers from Balletto's packing operation, which is located on the farm, joined the strikers on the picket line.

Just days later, on July 28, the union election was held and the UFW voted in. Mendoza stated that the company settled rapidly "because they were losing \$200,000 a day."

Workers had been meeting over the course of the year to organize the union. Martin León, a 14-year veteran farm worker at Balletto, said, "We planned this for a long time — since 1997. But the harvest was almost over so we decided to wait until the following year."

León added, "This is a victory for all farm workers who work for Balletto, by obtaining a good salary, benefits, and vacations. Not only have we gained the representation of the United Farm Workers but it is also a victory because it is the first contract in Sonoma County. We organized ourselves and that's why we won." León said that wages range from \$5.75 to \$8.35 an hour.

Mendoza explained that under the terms of the 28-page contract the farm workers will receive:

- a 50-cent hourly raise in each of the first two years of the contract and then 25 cents an hour for each of the following three years;
- Medical care with 60 percent coverage;
- a pension plan;
- and seven paid holidays a year by the end of the contract.

In another development in Mendocino County, grape workers struck twice in the



Militant/Rick Trujillo
Farm workers rally demanding contract from Coastal Berry in Watsonville, California, in July. In September, UFW members won contract from Balletto Farms and pushed back pay cuts at Anderson Vineyards.

month of September at Anderson Vineyards, which owns the Roederer Estate Winery. Their fight began in mid-September when the bosses told the farm workers that they would be paid less than before, and that they would have to split their wages with the tractor drivers and the sugar tester, who had always been paid by the company before.

Hearing this news, the farm workers at

the company's Boonville vineyard walked off the job on September 10 and struck for three days. While on strike, the workers decided to call the UFW and organize themselves into the union.

By September 18, the company had agreed not to cut the workers' wages. According to UFW organizer Mendoza, the company conceded to pay the salaries of the

\$115,000 New International Fund Drive

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Detroit	4,500	905	20%
Washington, D.C.	4,000	550	14%
Cleveland	4,000	510	13%
Des Moines	2,500	305	12%
New York	12,000	970	8%
Newark	8,500	630	7%
Twin Cities, MN	7,000	505	7%
Boston	4,700	250	5%
Birmingham	3,000	125	4%
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Seattle	8,500	225	3%
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Chicago	7,500	0	0%
Houston	6,000	0	0%
Los Angeles	9,000	0	0%
Philadelphia	4,000	0	0%
Pittsburgh	4,000	0	0%
San Francisco	11,000	0	0%
U.S. Total	105,500	5,075	5%
Australia	650	0	0%
Canada			
Montreal	665	0	0%
Toronto	1,670	0	0%
Vancouver	665	0	0%
Canada Total	3,000	0	0%
Iceland	1,400	0	0%
Sweden	1,250	0	0%
United Kingdom			
London	1,500	0	0%
Manchester	620	0	0%
UK Total	2,120	0	0%
INT'L TOTAL:	115,970	5,169	4%
SHOULD BE:	115,000	28,750	25%

tractor drivers and increase the pay rate per ton of grapes by \$5. On September 21 the state's Agricultural Labor Relations Board called for a vote and the UFW won, 27 to 18.

The *Anderson Valley Advertiser* reported that on September 28, Anderson Vineyards announced that they were challenging the union election to the Agricultural Labor Relations Board. The company hired the San Francisco antilabor law firm of Littler, Mendelson, Fastiff, Tichy, and Mathiason, to aid the company in decertifying the union.

The paper also reported that farm workers at the Anderson Farms vineyard in Navarro, when hearing of the election challenge to the union walked off the job on September 29. On September 30, the company bussed contract workers onto the farm through the picket lines to replace the strikers. But these workers walked out after only 15 minutes and joined the picketline. Mendoza reported the union is trying to negotiate with the company. If the union vote is upheld, Anderson Vineyards would be the first agricultural operation in Mendocino to be represented by the UFW.

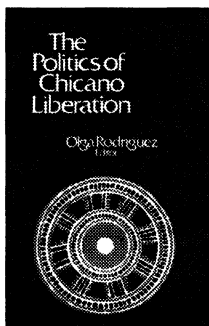
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OLGA RODRÍGUEZ

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'Militant' launches target week to get on track for sub drive

Supporters of the communist press are launching a special target week October 10-17 to wipe out the current 8 percent gap in the international subscription campaign. In cities around the world they are taking special measures to expand sales to new areas and step up subbing on the job, at campuses, and in working-class communities. Among other things they are fielding regional teams to sell new subscriptions of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, together with copies of *New International* magazine, to miners, meatpackers, farmers, and others. Below are a few reports sent in from the campaign front.

BY ELVIDIO MEJÍA
AND MARGARET TROWE

MARSHALLTOWN, Iowa — The Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Senate in Iowa, Margaret Trowe, and two supporters, all members of the United Food and Commercial Workers union at the Swift plant in Marshalltown, Iowa, went campaigning door-to-door near the plant October 4.

We picked a street at random and found that at four out of five houses we ran into co-workers, all of whom were quite interested in the program the Socialist Workers are

Iowa, where workers who held sit-down strikes last year for higher wages were subjected to an INS raid when their boss called in the deportation cops.

We got a lot of support for the Socialist Workers proposals for a jobs program calling for a shorter workweek with no cut in pay, cancellation of the Third World debt, and affirmative action measures for Blacks, Latinos, Asians, and women. We raised the idea of a campaign meeting in Marshalltown October 18, and many workers showed interest in attending and helping publicize the meeting, as well as helping us find an inexpensive meeting hall.

We handed out a number of campaign flyers in English and Spanish, and co-workers at two households bought introductory subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial*. One renewed his subscription and bought *An Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis* in Spanish. Another bought a copy of the *Militant* and wants to consider subscribing next week.



BY DAN FEIN

ATLANTA — Two supporters of the *Militant* made a trip to northern Georgia October 5 to get the socialist press in the hands of some of the 1,000 members of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees at the textile mill in Lindsdale, a mill town. Six workers bought copies of the *Militant* at the 3:00 p.m. shift change.

After that sale, the team headed to Copperhill, Tennessee, where workers have been on strike for more than two years at an acid plant. Jewell Cole, one of the three pickets on the line when the team arrived, told us about the Environmental Protection Agency and other government agencies ignoring the asbestos contamination and other chemical pollution. He decided to subscribe to the *Militant* after hearing that the socialist press calls for a workers and farmers government to replace the capitalist government in Washington, D.C.



BY JANICE LYNN

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Hundreds of people stopped by the Pathfinder Bookstore booth at the Baltimore Book Festival September 26-27. Participants bought some \$400 worth of pamphlets, books, and catalogs. Over the course of the weekend we sold five subscriptions — three to the *Militant* and two to the Spanish-language monthly *Perspectiva Mundial*.

In addition, we sold 36 copies of the *Militant* and four copies of *Perspectiva Mundial*. Among the 42 books and pamphlets we sold, four were copies of the *New International* magazines.

Other top sellers included the two new Pathfinder books — *John Coltrane and the Jazz Revolution of the 1960s* and *Black Music, White Business*; as well as the pamphlets *Genocide Against the Indians*, *Socialism and Man in Cuba*, *Puerto Rico: Independence is a Necessity*, and *The Communist Manifesto*.

About a dozen young people signed up for more information about the Young Socialists and many stayed around the booth to have further political discussions about the ideas contained in the books displayed.



Militant/Clive Turnbull

Pathfinder bookstore booth at September 26-27 Baltimore book festival

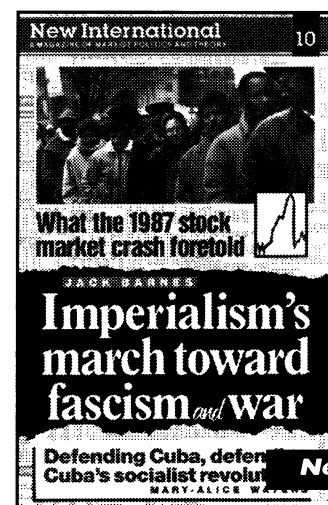
putting forward. We were invited into several houses for extensive discussion and were offered refreshments. Later we visited two families of co-workers we already know, and had fruitful house meetings there as well.

We talked about the recent arrests of Mexican-born workers by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) on Interstate 80 and how we can defend immigrant rights, the attempt to drag working people down into the capitalists' politics of resentment through the pornographic character of the scandal involving President William Clinton, the U.S. war threats against Yugoslavia; and the many struggles on the job at Swift to fight line speedup and victimization of union militants.

One co-worker was part of a protest meeting against changes in a boning operation on the ham line that made several workers' jobs much more difficult. Workers described how line speedup has led to arm and shoulder injuries.

In several households, two or more adults work at Swift. Others we met work at a nearby IBP beef plant in Tama,

FROM PATHFINDER



Imperialism's March toward Fascism and War

JACK BARNES

"There will be new Hitlers, new Mussolinis. That is inevitable. What is not inevitable is that they will triumph. The working-class vanguard will organize our class to fight back against the devastating toll we are made to pay for the capitalist crisis. The future of humanity will be decided in the contest between these contending class forces." Jack Barnes, "Imperialism's March toward Fascism and War." \$14.00

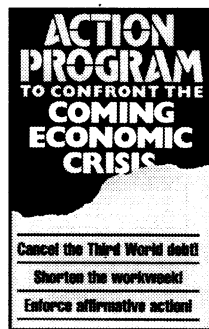
New International no. 10.

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

	Militant			PM			NI		
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	%
United Kingdom									
Manchester	24	11	46%	2	4	15	0		
London	40	13	33%	10	7	60	28		
UK total	64	24	38%	12	11	75	28		
Australia									
	16	5	31%	3	1	18	8		
United States									
Atlanta	28	19	68%	8	4	40	6		
Chicago	65	27	42%	25	10	58	18		
Philadelphia	35	14	40%	8	2	30	4		
Seattle	70	26	37%	20	1	70	16		
Newark, NJ	120	42	35%	40	11	100	63		
New York	140	46	33%	60	17	120	55		
Pittsburgh	40	13	33%	5	3	45	15		
Des Moines	45	14	31%	25	9	35	7		
Washington, D.C.	45	14	31%	15	6	45	18		
Detroit	45	13	29%	10	5	40	18		
Los Angeles	90	24	27%	45	9	70	28		
Cleveland	35	9	26%	10	4	30	17		
Miami	40	10	25%	20	5	40	19		
Birmingham, AL	50	11	22%	6	0	40	18		
Houston	35	7	20%	10	0	43	14		
Twin Cities, MN	65	12	18%	10	1	45	14		
Boston	35	6	17%	20	4	35	18		
San Francisco	95	15	16%	38	9	45	41		
U.S. total	1078	322	30%	375	100	931	389		
New Zealand									
Christchurch	18	7	39%	1	0	15	1		
Auckland	28	5	18%	1	1	25	8		
N.Z. total	46	12	26%	2	1	40	9		
Iceland									
	8	2	25%	1	0	4	0		
Sweden									
	16	4	25%	8	5	25	15		
Canada									
Toronto	40	12	30%	5	0	50	25		
Vancouver	40	6	15%	5	0	40	21		
Montreal	25	2	8%	10	4	40	12		
Canada total	105	20	19%	20	4	130	58		
France									
	5	0	0%	3	3	25	17		
Int'l totals	1338	389	30%	424	125	1248	524		
Goal/Should be	1300	494	38%	400	152				

IN THE UNIONS

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		
IAM	65	15	23%	15	3	25	2		
UFCW	10	2	20%	13	3	9	2		
UTU	45	8	18%	3	1	40	5		
OCAW	24	4	17%	4	0	12	1		
UNITE	5	0	0%	7	0	5	0		
USWA	31	0	0%			13	0		
U.S. total	220	40	18%	47	8	124	13		
New Zealand									
EU	4	1	25%				2	0	
MWU	1	0	0%				1	0	
SFWU	2	0	0%						
N.Z. total	7	1	14%				3	0	
Canada									
CAW	5	1	20%				6	0	
IAM	8	0	0%	1	1	5	0		
USWA	5	0	0%			1	6	0	
Canada total	18	1	6%	1	2	17	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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'The month that we lived most dangerously'

Interview with Cuban leader Jorge Risquet on 1962 'missile' crisis

Below we reprint an interview with Jorge Risquet, member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, on the October 1962 "missile" crisis. At that time, the U.S. administration of President John Kennedy brought the world to the brink of nuclear war and threatened the annihilation of the entire Cuban people over the issue of Soviet missiles that were installed in Cuba in an act of sovereign self-defense. Kennedy intended to mount an invasion of Cuba, as he had been planning to do for more than a year. His hand was stayed when the Pentagon informed him that, in face of an armed and ready Cuban population, he could expect an estimated 18,000 U.S. troop casualties during the first 10 days of an invasion.

The interview, headlined, "The month that we lived most dangerously," appeared originally in issue no. 308 in 1997 of the magazine *Cuba Internacional*, published in Havana. The translation from Spanish is by the *Militant*. Reprinted by permission.

BY MOISÉS SAAB

Thirty-five years ago, in October 1962, the world was on the brink of nuclear holocaust because of the so-called Missile Crisis.

So close, in fact, that former U.S. defense secretary Robert McNamara does not even want to think about the subject because, to this day, it makes him shudder.

Jorge Risquet is a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba and a specialist on the causes and effects of that wild spiraling of tensions between Cuba and the two great superpowers of the time, the Soviet Union and the United States, over the placement on the island of intermediate-range ballistic missiles armed with nuclear warheads. Three and a half decades later, he remembers that episode and its consequences, which could have ended in an unprecedented tragedy for humanity.

How was defense organized for the very likely possibility of direct U.S. military intervention in Cuba?

In the capital, Fidel [Castro], working directly with the General Staff, was responsible for the provinces of Havana and Matanzas; Che [Guevara] was in Pinar del Río with a command post in Cueva de los Portales; in Las Villas and Camagüey, that is, the center of the country, the command was entrusted to Commander of the Revolution Juan Almeida; while Raúl [Castro]



Some 400 protesters, chanting "Hands off Cuba," demonstrated outside the United Nations building in New York in September 1962 to oppose Kennedy administration's war threats against Cuba. The anticipated political cost of high U.S. casualties, in face of massive defense mobilization of Cuban people in arms, stayed Kennedy's hand.

was on the eastern front.

Looking back 35 years later, would you say that this was the month that we lived most dangerously?

Well, we were within a hair's breadth of nuclear war.

What or who avoided this confrontation?

One would have to be crazy to want nuclear war, because although the response capability of the Soviet Union was inferior to that of the United States — we didn't know it at the time, but we later found out that the United States held a 17-to-1 edge over the USSR — and Nikita Khrushchev [the former first secretary of the Communist Party of the USSR] bluffed a lot with the missiles. The millions of human lives, the devastation, and the radioactive consequences for everyone involved would have been unimaginable, irrecoverable.

Did the October, or Missile, Crisis simply break out or had it been prepared?

First we must look at the reasons why nuclear weapons were installed in Cuba, and

then at the development of events. In the first place, we were convinced — and secret documents released later proved us right — that the United States was preparing a direct military attack on Cuba.

Later, when it was declassified, we would learn about the "Mongoose" plan, which in fact was to culminate in October, when, after creating a civil war situation in Cuba — according to the fevered imagination of the CIA officials in charge of the plan — U.S. troops would intervene.

We saw this coming, although we didn't know about the entire plan, which was controlled personally by Robert Kennedy.

So we asked the Soviets to accelerate the schedule for the delivery of armaments.

On May 29, 1962, they sent us a high-level delegation, led by Rachidov, alternate member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of the USSR and first secretary of one of the Asian republics; Marshal Sergei Biryuzov, chief of Soviet missile forces; and Aleksandr Alexeev, who had recently been named Soviet ambassador to Cuba, a tremendous man. He had excellent relations with Cuba; he was here as a journalist during the first days of the revolutionary triumph, and he thought like a Cuban. He thought we were right throughout the crisis.

This commission explained that the Soviet leadership had analyzed our point of view and had come to the same conclusion as we had with respect to the probable direct military attack, and that the only thing that could deter this attack was the installation of a number of nuclear warheads on medium- and intermediate-range missiles.

The Cuban leadership studied the issue and approached it in this way: if it were solely for the defense of Cuba, we would have preferred another solution over this one — for example, a military pact between the USSR and Cuba and a public statement that an attack on Cuba would be considered an attack on the USSR. Such a formulation would also have been a deterrent and, furthermore, would have been backed up by the shipment of more conventional arms and the corresponding advisers. But we told them we accepted the option of the nuclear missiles, considering that this would improve the East-West relationship of forces in favor of the socialist camp, to which we belonged, and subsequently would strengthen our defense against the plans being developed by the Pentagon to invade us.

We had no idea of the nuclear imbalance between the United States and the USSR. Fidel [Castro] would say years later that if he had known that the imbalance at the time was so great, he would have recommended to the Soviet leadership that they be more

cautious and reject the idea of installing the missiles here, because we could not be so imprudent when the gap was so great.

The Cuban leadership thought we should not approach the question solely from the point of view of defending Cuba. Since we belonged to the socialist camp and were asking it to make sacrifices for us, then it was also incumbent upon us to assume responsibilities involving risks and danger.

From the standpoint of international law, Cuba is a sovereign country, as was the USSR, and we adopted an agreement covered by Article 51 of the UN Charter.

It was for all these reasons that the Cuban leadership agreed to respond positively to the Soviet proposal. The Soviets sent a draft accord that was a sloppy, tactless document. The agreement was rewritten in Cuba, in Commander-in-Chief Fidel Castro's own handwriting, and was taken to Moscow by Raúl [Castro, Cuban armed forces minister] to be translated and studied. The translation turned out to be very difficult, because the discussions were with then-Defense Minister Marshal Rodion Malinovsky, with no one else present besides Ambassador Alexeev. We didn't speak Russian and they didn't speak Spanish, and our knowledge of diplomatic language was weak, so we often had to resort to dictionaries to get the right terms.

Nikita Khrushchev's autobiography gives an account of the events according to which the Cuban authorities did not agree, for example, on the question of the secret or public character of the military treaty. How did it really happen?

Cuba was not in favor of nondisclosure of the accord, given the missile question. We were convinced that not making the Cuba-USSR military accord public would lend a dubious character to a legal and sovereign act, which the United States would use in its favor. And we let the Soviets know this very frankly. Khrushchev did not want to make it public in the middle of the U.S. congressional election campaign, because he did not want to harm Kennedy's chances of winning. He proposed making the announcement in November, during a visit he was planning to Cuba, after the U.S. elections. This is the historical reality.

Then the question arose: What would the USSR do if, in the middle of the operation, the United States discovered it? How would the two superpowers react? The delegation that came in late May had no answer to this. When Raúl was in Moscow in July, he asked the Soviet prime minister the same question, on Fidel's behalf.

And?

And Nikita's answer was, "We will send the Baltic Fleet." We were pleased with the promised action, as it meant the Soviets had decided not to retreat in case the crisis eventually broke out.

In late August, another Cuban delegation, headed by Che [Guevara], went to the USSR. He asked Khrushchev the same question, this time less hypothetically, as the United States was creating an atmosphere of hysteria over the arrival of a large quantity of armaments in Cuba. Nikita, who was a short man with short limbs, raised his right arm and reiterated, "We will send the Baltic Fleet." Che proposed signing the military accord on behalf of Cuba and making it public immediately. The Soviet leadership did not agree to announce it at that time, but rather in November, after the U.S. elections; also, Nikita and Fidel were to sign it in Havana.

Later, when the crisis broke out over the installation of missiles with nuclear warheads, how do you evaluate the course of events?

My impression is that Nikita arrived at a time when he was flustered by the crisis. And also that the senior Soviet leadership made several errors, including the discussion on the offensive or defensive character of those weapons. The correct thing would have been to proclaim the sovereign right of Cuba to acquire the arms it considered necessary for its defense. All Cuban statements were based on this right and we never fell into the trap of labeling the type of weapons. It was a long and pointless discussion, but for the U.S. government, a

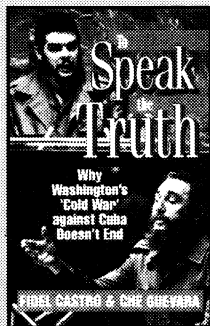
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Pathfinder

To Speak the Truth Why Washington's 'Cold War' against Cuba Doesn't End Fidel Castro and Che Guevara

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— Che Guevara, 1964 speech to the UN General Assembly

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In New International no. 10
**Imperialism's March
toward Fascism and War**
by Jack Barnes

**Defending Cuba,
Defending Cuba's
Socialist Revolution**
by Mary-Alice Waters

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and Swedish **\$14.00**

weapon capable of reaching its territory was considered "offensive."

Another error was not announcing the accord. If, as soon as the pact was adopted, it was announced that Cuba had the weapons necessary to confront any foreign attack, it would have accomplished its political and military objective.

On the other hand, however, it must be said that, in general, the Soviet operation of transferring weapons as well as personnel, and their deployment, was flawless, considering the magnitude and distance.

As is known, this situation was settled between Moscow and Washington, without taking into account the Cuban position. Did this bilateral resolution damage relations between Cuba and the USSR?

Of course it damaged them. But rather than pour vinegar and salt in the wound, we used balm, and we worked to put that episode behind us, which we did.

Given the fact that the Cubans were excluded from the negotiations to resolve this problem, the outlook for relations between Havana and Washington was tense. Would the situation have been different if Cuba had participated in the discussions?

The discussion of the problem should always have been between the three of us — the USSR, the United States, and Cuba. The crisis was handled the wrong way; Cuba should have been heard. There was no justification for keeping us out of the negotiations.

We believe our participation in the discussions could have extracted guarantees to halt the preparations for an attack, the spy flights, the economic and financial blockade — which had been decreed in early 1962 — the acts of sabotage, and the return of the land holding the U.S. naval base on Cuban territory, which is important to the United States for purely political reasons since, militarily speaking, it is obsolete and con-

stitutes a death trap.

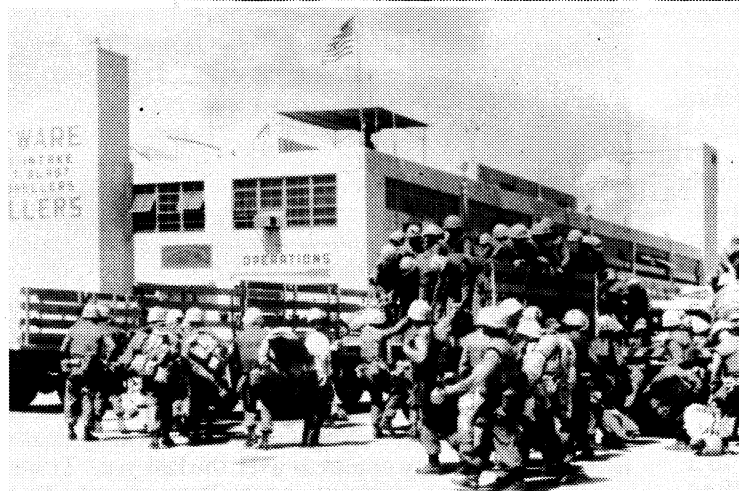
The Soviets, nevertheless, achieved the dismantling of the U.S. missile bases in Turkey.... For the United States, these bases had become a liability more than an advantage. We now know that they had raised withdrawing them with the Turks a year earlier. They feared that in a confrontation with the USSR, Soviet troops would occupy them. But the Turkish government was opposed, since it considered them important for its defense, and the United States did not insist. If you think about it, they were more considerate of their Turkish allies than the Soviets were with us.

What impact did this situation, its development and outcome, have in Cuba?

Since then we have known for certain that, in the event of an attack, we can count only on ourselves. Che described it very well when he called them "the brilliant, but sad days of the October Crisis."

Brilliant, because the people knew that they were risking the very existence of the country and confronted the situation with dedication and courage. There was not a hint of panic either in the country's leadership or among the people. More than 400,000 people mobilized and formed the regular forces, the reserves, and the militia units. The United States, as McNamara confessed to me at the first "Tripartite Meeting on the Crisis" in Moscow, did not know about this enormous deployment capacity of Cuba.

Sad, because Cuba continued to be subjected to the danger of an attack. There are those who say that we succeeded in winning the pledge that a military attack would not be launched, but this is a fallacy. If the



Granma
"The protagonist of that [October] crisis is the same as today: the people." Above, Cuban militia members during the 1962 missile crisis. Left, U.S. Marine reinforcements loading equipment after arriving at U.S. naval base in Guantánamo, Cuba, in October 1962.

know what their post is in the event of war.

The great hero, the protagonist of that crisis, is the same as today: the people. They are resisting, not a short-term tense situation, but rather daily challenges of every kind. And, among the people, the heroes are the women, who every day face the problems of feeding the family, caring for the kids — basically everything necessary to survive.

And together with the people, we have a leadership capable of finding solutions to these everyday problems, of resisting the special period and the blockade, which has been intensified to inconceivable lengths by the Helms-Burton law, of defending the country's independence, and leading the gradual recovery of the economy.

October 1962: SWP says, 'U.S. hands off Cuba'

Below we reprint a statement published on the front page of the *Militant* on Oct. 29, 1962, during the October "missile" crisis. The statement was issued by the Political Committee of the Socialist Workers Party. The following week the *Militant* reported on demonstrations that took place worldwide protesting Washington's war moves against Cuba, sponsored by the Fair Play for Cuba Committee and other groups. During this period, the socialist newspaper also countered the U.S. news blackout on the revolutionary Cuban government's response to the U.S. war threats by reporting on statements by Cuba's then-prime minister Fidel Castro and reprinting the October 8 speech to the United Nations General Assembly by Cuban president Osvaldo Dorticós.

President [John] Kennedy's blockade of Cuba brands him as aggressor before the eyes of the world. He has violated the rights of Cuba, the Soviet Union, and other countries. He has invited military retaliation in self-defense by his order to the armed forces to fire upon ships of other nations which refuse to submit to search and seizure. He has subjected the American people to the gravest danger of nuclear war — graver danger than in any of the previous crises precipitated by the bipartisan brinkmen in Washington.

Kennedy has not only violated the rights of the Cuban, Soviet, and other peoples, he has brazenly disregarded the wishes of the American people. A majority of Americans don't want to go to war over Cuba. That fact has been amply demonstrated through current opinion polls taken by Gallup, *Newsweek* magazine, and other agencies.

Instead of heeding these popular sentiments, as is his duty as president, Kennedy is trying to change peoples' minds by deceiving them. He has trumped up scare charges that Cuba has become a missile threat to the United States and the rest of the Western hemisphere. He seeks thereby

to conceal the truth about relations between Cuba and the United States in order to trick people into supporting his policy of aggression.

Cuba is not a threat to the people of the United States in any way. All the Cubans want is to be left free from attack while they concentrate on completion of the socialist revolution in their country. The working people there have taken national affairs into their own hands, and they are running things in their own interests. They have abolished capitalism and set out to build a planned economy. They are eliminating unemployment, building homes for all, looking to the health and education of everybody. They have effectively outlawed Jim Crow. They are trying to build a new, good life such as the workers of that land never before knew.

When the Cubans abolished capitalism they also put an end to exploitation of their country by American monopoly corporations. In putting human welfare above corporate profits, the Cuban revolutionists committed an unpardonable sin in the eyes of the capitalist rulers of the United States. If the Cubans aren't stopped, workers in other Latin American countries will begin to follow their example and the idea that the workers should run national affairs will make headway here in this country. To prevent that forward step by the workers, the big capitalists, who run the United States through their Democratic and Republican puppets, are determined to smash the Cuban revolution.

They have long been trying to strangle Cuba with an economic embargo. Last year they used counterrevolutionaries for an invasion attempt that was beaten off by the Cuban masses. These attacks, both economic and military, forced the Cubans to turn wherever they could for help, as was their right as a nation. From the Soviet Union and other countries they secured economic aid and military equipment with which to defend themselves against attacks organized by the imperialist warriors in Washington.

Now the parties of Kennedy and

Eisenhower, who share responsibility for the hostile acts that forced the Cubans to arm in self-defense, resort to a new smear campaign. They try to make defensive measures taken by a little country of seven million people appear as a threat to the security of the powerful USA. They surround tiny Cuba with a mighty armada in preparation for further acts of aggression calculated to restore American capitalist domination over that island. They issue ultimatums to Soviet-bloc countries on a comply-with-our-order-or-fight basis. They take the people of the United States and the world to the brink of a general nuclear war in their bitter determination to smash Cuba's socialist revolution.

tion.

To save mankind from a nuclear holocaust, the working people need to lead a political fight to take the war-making power out of the hands of the imperialist madmen in Washington. Let the people vote on life-and-death questions of foreign policy! Let the voice of the real America be heard, the voice of the toilers of hand and brain who want to live at peace with the rest of the world.

Support public demonstrations against the Cuban blockade!

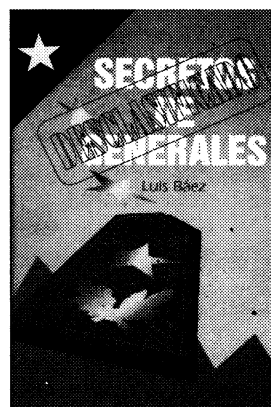
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The struggle for a proletarian party

Socialist Workers Party National Committee launches third campaign

Continued from front page

about capitalist society and form links of solidarity among themselves and with other fighters.

The increase in struggles such as these raises the standard of leadership responsiveness — of speed and consistency in political work — that vanguard workers and fighting youth have a right to expect of the communist movement.

This is the third campaign in the last two decades to meet political opportunities by organizing to get the big majority of party members into a range of industrial unions, and in industries representing a cross section of the working class as a whole — auto, garment, textile, mining, airlines, machine manufacturing, meatpacking, steel, rail, oil refining, and chemicals.

To accomplish this goal, participants in the meeting decided, every party branch needs to function in its entirety as a jobs committee to find the hiring openings and make collective decisions on where members of the party need to seek work to build all eight of the party's national industrial union fractions. Beginning now.

By carrying out this effort as a party campaign, in a politically centralized way, the best conditions are created for each individual member to participate, said SWP national secretary Jack Barnes in his summary report to the meeting. The party will come out of this campaign with more local fractions of two or more members working in the same plant, increasing the effectiveness of political work on the job; and with fewer members on permanent second-shift jobs, which makes it hard for them to participate in political activity as part of a branch.

Three months earlier, meeting immediately following a July 11-12 Active Workers Conference in Pittsburgh, the SWP National Committee voted to qualitatively strengthen the party's concentration in garment and meatpacking, and begin serious work to rebuild a fraction of coal miners. This could only be done by many party members currently working on the railroad or in the airlines and steel mills changing jobs. But that's not what happened over the subsequent two months.

"Simple arithmetic tells us the scope of what must change if we are to reach our goal and relaunch the turn — substantial numbers of comrades in the largest fractions, with no fraction immune, getting on the jobs committees to carry out our decisions," Barnes said in a September 11 report to the party's Political Committee, a summary of which was published as part of a booklet for all party members just prior to the National Committee meeting. "Implementing the NC decisions on garment, packing, and coal goes hand-in-hand with reconquering proletarian norms in all the fractions."

Transform unions into tools of struggle

This course, the "third campaign for the turn to industry," is the only road to political fractions that can carry out working-class politics in the trade unions and more broadly today and begin recruiting workers to the communist movement.



Right: Militant/Janice Lynn

The objective basis for relaunching SWP turn to industrial unions is upturn in defensive struggles by the working class that has become increasingly apparent over the last year. Transit workers on strike against Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) rally in Philadelphia, July 7, 1998 (top). Women, especially those with experience in previous class battles, and workers who are Black are assuming more weighty leadership role in struggles by the industrial unions against the employers. Flight kitchen workers at United Airlines, organized by the International Association of Machinists, rally to protest job cuts, Washington, D.C., May 1993 (right); signs refer to Stephen Wolf, the company's chairman at that time.



The party launched its initial turn to industry as a politically centralized nationwide campaign in 1978, to get the overwhelming majority of the membership and leadership of the party members into industrial unions. This was possible and necessary because of shifts in the class struggle that put the working class at the center of politics in the United States for the first time in decades, as workers resisted the bosses' blows to the unions after the 1974-75 world recession.

The aim of the first campaign for the turn to industry is presented in the book, *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions* by Jack Barnes. "Our goal is quite simple: to do everything possible to transform the American unions, as [Bolshevik leader Leon] Trotsky explained, into 'instruments of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat,'" Barnes explained in a 1979 convention document contained in that collection. "What we do is aimed at advancing toward revolutionary unions as combat organizations of the American working class. In the process of doing this, we'll build the irreplaceable political instrument of our class — a revolutionary party of industrial workers."

In the early 1980s, the party strengthened this turn to the industrial unions by broadening the range of its national union fractions, including getting into the garment and

textile industries and later meatpacking. This put the party in contact with broader sectors of the working class, including those with lower pay levels. In 1985 the party launched the second campaign for the turn to industry, focusing on expanding the number of fractions built in each branch, and thereby extending the geographic spread of the national fractions.

"By having party members from more of our branches represented in each one of the nine national fractions, we draw on the experience of a broader layer of the union membership of our class, and of our own cadres. We find out how ignorant a small organization such as ours really is about the industrial union movement in this country. And we begin to expand our knowledge and spread it throughout the party," said Joel Britton in a report to an SWP national convention in 1985, summarizing some of the experiences of that effort. Britton is today a member of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers in Chicago and a member of the party's national Trade Union Committee. Britton's 1985 report was recently published as the lead article in an Education for Socialists booklet titled *Background to 'The Changing Face of U.S. Politics' and 'U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War.'*

That 1985 report helped "prepare us for the battles that broke out in meatpacking later that year," noted Betsy Farley, a party leader in the Philadelphia branch. At the time she was working in a garment shop in Birmingham, Alabama. When the members of United Food and Commercial Workers Local P-9 struck at the Hormel plant in Austin, Minnesota, "we were able to help get strikers to come speak to garment workers and miners in Alabama," she recalled. "We couldn't have done it without getting our fractions in shape first."

Labor retreat is over

"U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War," the 1990 SWP resolution featured in the just-published issue no. 11 of the Marxist magazine *New International*, opens with the words, "A more than 10-year offensive by the employers has failed to drive the labor movement from the center stage of politics in the United States." The resolution points to the Eastern Airlines strike, and the overlapping coal miners strike against

Pittston in 1989-90, as fights that set the example for the labor movement, foreshadowing bigger class battles for all working people in the 1990s.

In light of those labor battles, the resolution explains, the end of the nearly decade-long retreat of the U.S. labor movement since the deep 1980-81 recession seemed to be in sight. But under the impact of Washington's brief and largely uncontested assault on Iraq in 1990-91, and the slow onset of deflationary conditions throughout the capitalist world, the working class resumed its retreat for another half dozen years.

These conditions reinforced pressures on the party to become more routine and inward turned. Party branches and union fractions tended to institutionalize these habits of retreat. The proportion of party members in relatively better-paid union jobs, such as rail, steel, and the airlines grew, while the numbers in garment and meatpacking dwindled to a handful in a few cities. Party

members in the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) were laid off, and a new generation was unable to get hired in the mines. The tendency to view one's job as a personal matter, instead of a political assignment, increased.

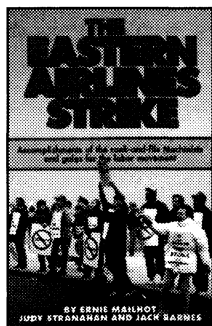
Since early 1997, the evidence has mounted that the long retreat of the working class is now behind us. There are signs of resistance, from contract battles by farm workers in California to the UPS strike last year, from the five-week walkout at General Motors earlier this year to new forms of leadership initiative by working people who are Black in factories and in the farm movement. There is a new push forward by women in the plants. The opening section of the 1990 resolution "can now be read, not with disclaimers that conditions are different, that much of what is written there may not be a useful guide to action today, but with confidence that the opposite is more and more true," explains the "In This Issue" article of *New International* no. 11, written by Jack Barnes and Mary-Alice Waters.

That fact became especially clear as workers in the party who are organizing to rebuild a fraction in the UMWA began using the 1990 resolution as a daily guide in their work. These include some of the youngest generations in the communist movement, as well as party veterans who led the turn to the industrial unions in 1978 and are now joining the effort to get mining jobs. As one experienced miner who has been laid off for a number of years explained it, while she put in job applications with younger party members, "The first coal boss in the United States who hires me, gets me."

This third campaign for the turn to industry can be successful only through the combined efforts of several generations in the party, Barnes noted. The generations that led the previous two efforts, and who still make up the majority of the active party cadre today, cannot lead this campaign on their own. But these individuals, together with the youngest generations of leaders of the party and the Young Socialists, are capable of helping to meet the opportunities to transform the party again, Barnes said.

Launching this third turn to industry was

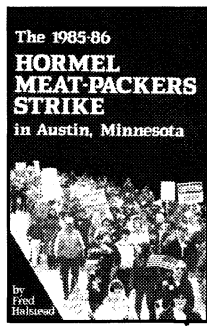
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today

for turn to the industrial unions

prepared through several party trade union leadership meetings in July, August, and September, as well as the Active Workers Conference in Pittsburgh. (An article on this conference appeared in a supplement to the August 10 *Militant*.) The Pittsburgh conference, while not a decision-making gathering, registered the course that a growing number of workers and youth were pressing — a course that was bringing to a head the contradiction between the expanded openings for communist work and resistance to responding to these openings in party branches and fractions as they had been shaped by the retreat of previous years. The conference focused on practical work and the opportunities that exist to carry out mass work in the labor movement, linking up with layers of militant workers and farmers.

Responding to proletarian initiatives

Above all, the Active Workers Conference was a call to workers in the party to take initiatives to lead the party along a proletarian course, assuring them that the central leadership of the party would respond to such political efforts. It encouraged workers in the party who had become reticent during the years of retreat to step forward and assume leadership responsibilities.

The National Committee adopted a letter along these lines that Barnes had written to a member of the Los Angeles branch, in response to such an initiative by that party member. It also adopted a report by a commission appointed by the party's Political Committee to work with the membership in Los Angeles to reconquer proletarian norms and reverse adaptations to centrist political pressures.

Meg Novak from Birmingham said that the discussion at the National Committee meeting "makes it clear this is what we all face." She gave the example that in Birmingham, the local executive committee of the party for weeks did not bring a debate on whether to build a fraction in the area in the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees into the branch, even though this had been set as a national priority. Once the branch as a whole discussed it, they began to carry out this perspective.

The Active Workers Conference also encouraged members of the Young Socialists to push in a proletarian direction. One result was the "YS Manifesto," a set of working notes drafted by members of the Los Angeles YS chapter in April, through a series of chapter discussions that drew on the strategic documents of the party to clarify the character and activity of their organization and the necessity of its relationship with the communist vanguard party of the working class in the United States, the SWP.

The YS Manifesto was subsequently published in *New Internationalist* no. 11 and is one of the documents the Young Socialists are using to open discussion in preparation for their convention in December.

Bold moves by Young Socialists

Over the same period the Young Socialists took a series of steps that placed politics ahead of organizational forms in order to draw on the momentum of a spurt of recruitment on the West Coast. The YS National Executive Committee (NEC) decided to give a September 5-6 regional conference called by the YS chapters in California the power of the YS National Committee to call a national convention of the organization. Every YS-age participant was given an equal vote, regardless of whether they were a member. The NEC also decided to move the YS National Office from Chicago to Los Angeles.

The success of that conference showed it was possible to take the much needed step of releasing a layer of the most experienced leaders of the YS from the youth organization to focus their political attention on party building. The development of leaders of the party's branches and trade union fractions who are in their early 20s is key to the party being able to strengthen itself today.

Two weeks after the West Coast conference, the YS National Committee met in Los Angeles. Representatives of YS units across the country were invited to participate with

equal vote. That meeting set the dates for the YS convention that had been called by the West Coast conference. It will take place December 4-6 in Los Angeles.

Participants in that YS national leadership meeting decided to lead the YS over the coming months to respond to struggles such as the miners strike in Illinois, the Steelworkers strikes at Titan Tire, farm protests, fights to defend immigrant rights and bilingual education, work in defense of the Cuban revolution, and the struggle for Puerto Rican independence. At the same time they will take advantage of the next month of the Socialist Workers election campaigns — seven YS members are candidates on the party's ticket — and the *Militant* subscription drive. Through such mass work and propaganda activities they will recruit to the Young Socialists and build the December convention as a by-product. (Reports on the West Coast YS conference and the YS national leadership meeting appeared in the September 21 and October 12 *Militant*.)

In the opening report to the expanded SWP National Committee meeting, "Deepening the proletarianization of the communist movement: prospects for the Young Socialists," Mary-Alice Waters stated that recruitment to the YS today sharpens the need to fight for a proletarian party and against the habits of the previous years of retreat. The majority of party branches today have been, in fact, acting in a way to block recruitment to the Young Socialists, she stated, by not responding promptly to struggles that break out, lecturing young people instead of working together with them as equals on political questions during common activity, pressing people to join without doing the work to convince them of the politics and disciplined character of the organization they are joining, or pressing YS members to get into industry immediately, instead of winning them to doing so through deepening their political understanding of the vanguard place of the working class first. That was what the YS members in Los Angeles were responding to when they drew up the Manifesto.

"There won't be any Young Socialists convention that's successful unless all three California chapters are strengthened over the next two months," noted party leader Norton Sandler from San Francisco. "And that won't happen without meaningful joint political work between the party and YS. Pursuing this course means the end of not giving a political explanation for everything we do together." It means being able to answer the question, "Well, what do you do in industry?" In other words, it means meeting the challenge of revitalizing the party's branches and union fractions by putting politics first, narrowing the gap between their form and content, which is at the heart of the third campaign for turn.

Carrying out this campaign is a precondition for opening up recruitment of young workers and students to the communist movement, Waters said. The nose for recruitment, the nose for mass work in the trade unions and elsewhere, and the nose for the working-class to take power are fundamentally the same thing, she noted.

Parallel to these developments in the Young Socialists and the proletarian initiatives by workers in the party was a series of decisions and actions by the party's trade union leadership, beginning with a meeting June 27-28 that made final preparations for the Active Workers Conference in Pittsburgh. Immediately following the Pittsburgh gathering, the members of all of the elected steering committees of the SWP's work in the International Association of Machinists; Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers; United Auto Workers; United Food and Commercial Workers; Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees; United Steelworkers of America; and United Transportation Union, as well as the party's Coal Committee, met for about six hours. They discussed the need to focus on initiating timely policy guidelines that can be used to competently lead every local unit of the fraction to participate in the working-class resistance to the employers' offensive on wages, safety and other working conditions,



Militant/Doug Jenness

Young Socialists join protest organized by Hmong youth against racist remarks by radio host in St. Paul, Minnesota, September 26. Worker-bolsheviks who turned to openings in the working class two decades ago, together with the youngest generations of leaders in the party and YS, are capable of helping to transform the party today.

and living standards. Meeting over the next two days, the party's National Committee called meetings of all of the national trade union fractions for the beginning of August.

Following those national fraction meetings, two expanded meetings of the SWP Trade Union Committee took place in Chicago and in Los Angeles that made more concrete what it means to respond to developments in the class struggle with timely policy guidelines.

Stirrings among women in industry

One example that came up in the International Association of Machinists (IAM) was how to respond to the call by the union officialdom in October 1997 for setting up women's committees in every local. Socialist workers in the IAM in Seattle helped to establish and participate in the women's committee at the Hexcel plant there. But a national meeting of socialist workers in the IAM in February did not draw any broader conclusion from this experience.

At the August meeting, the IAM fraction voted to "initiate work to find out about women's committees or other developments among women unionists in their area..." The trade union leadership conference at the end of August in Los Angeles reversed this course. Based on the facts that were already known, said Nan Bailey and Norton Sandler in a letter on behalf of the Trade Union Committee to the IAM fraction steering committee, "the party IAM fraction needed to immediately look for and try to become part of or help initiate such developments in other workplaces across the country." This is true across the board, for both men and women in the party.

In calling for the formation of women's committees, the IAM officialdom is responding to demands being raised by female workers, including layers of women who've

gone through previous experiences in struggles, such as civil rights and affirmative action battles, and new generations who have come into plants and airports across the country in a recent spate of hiring. The union tops sense the stirrings and potential struggles among these workers, and attempt to channel them toward the officialdom. But this also means the potential is there to strengthen the fighting capacity of the unions. Socialist workers need to be part of this.

Participants in the trade union leadership meeting in Los Angeles considered whether this also reflects a broader development of resistance among women in industry. After going around the table describing their own experiences in the workplace in recent months, it was more than obvious that this is the case, said Barnes in summarizing that discussion.

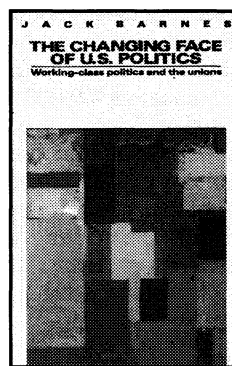
There are also signs of an upturn in the fight for Black rights, concentrated again among industrial workers. In many of the labor battles that break out today, workers who are Black are in the leadership of the fight, such as in the recent transit workers strike against SEPTA in Philadelphia. Black farmers are also in the vanguard of rural toilers resisting the increasing price-credit squeeze that is forcing more and more farmers off the land.

One decision of the SWP trade union leadership meetings in Chicago and Los Angeles was to establish a party farm work committee as a step towards leading the party's work to bring militant workers and fighting farmers together and strengthen the worker-farmer alliance.

Special meeting of socialists in rail

The steering committee elected by socialist workers in the United Transportation

Continued on Page 10



The Changing Face of U.S. Politics

WORKING-CLASS POLITICS AND THE TRADE UNIONS

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SWP meeting

Continued from Page 9

Union took the initiative to call a special second fraction meeting, eight weeks after the August 1-2 gathering to place before the entire fraction the challenge of rebuilding a multifraction party, revitalizing the UTU fraction in the course of doing so.

In his report to that meeting, UTU fraction steering committee organizer Sam Manuel pointed to the "dangerous logic of the tendency for more and more of the party to end up in the UTU." Without a perspective of building fractions in all eight of the unions where the party has decided to concentrate its forces, "being in the UTU no longer becomes a political assignment but a job."

Speaking at the National Committee meeting, airline worker Norton Sandler noted that the same is true in the International Association of Machinists.

At the UTU meeting, Manuel pointed to another sign of slipping from functioning as a unit of worker-bolsheviks in the rail union. At the August meeting, only half of the UTU members who received bonuses from their employer turned them over to the party, "reversing a proud tradition of the fraction." Participants in the September UTU fraction meeting voted unanimously to reaffirm the norm that worker-bolsheviks who get job bonuses or similar windfalls — often given by the rail bosses and other employers in lieu of a pay raise — contribute them to the communist movement, and encourage their coworkers to give as well.

Discussing this tradition at the expanded National Committee meeting, Amanda Ulman, who organizes the steering committee of socialist workers in the United Auto Workers (UAW), said, "The bonuses are blood money that the bosses rob from us, that they give us to dull the fight for pay raises we need or as payoff for accepting conditions that damage life and limb. Socialist workers have an obligation not just to the party but to our class" to use this money to advance the fight for the emancipation of the working class.

The meeting of UTU members also decided to adopt guidelines for dressing appropriately for their national meetings, which are usually held in hotels. This policy, adopted earlier by the UAW fraction, is not a checklist of dos or don'ts, but rather a question of having an attitude of "pride in the party," noted Cecelia Moriarity, who organizes the party's Coal Committee. The SWP National Committee adopted a proposal by the Trade Union Committee that this appearance code adopted by the UAW steering committee be universally binding on all national fraction meetings and other similar meetings.

The socialist workers in the UTU also discussed the practice that had started to occur of party members taking a leave of absence from the railroad instead of quitting while moving to another city or taking full-time assignment for the party. The fraction was becoming more of a "job trust" than a unit of worker-bolsheviks, Manuel pointed out in his report to the meeting of rail workers. The UTU members decided that fraction members in the UTU who move onto another union job, transfer to another city, or accept full-time assignment for the party quit their jobs.

The National Committee decided that the Trade Union Committee will present these policies for discussion and adoption by the other six trade union fractions at their national meetings October 24-25.

Digital transformation of printshop

At the Pittsburgh Active Workers Conference, the new opportunities to strengthen the party's branches and union fractions through mass work had been linked to steps by the communist movement to transform the production of revolutionary books and pamphlets needed by fighting workers and youth. As SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters had explained at an international socialist conference in Toronto in April, the size of the printshop of the communist movement had to be substantially reduced "by drawing more heavily on volunteers, cutting the labor time necessary to produce Pathfinder books, increasing the productivity of that labor, lowering the skill levels needed to work in the printshop, and driving down the production costs while sacrificing nothing on Pathfinder's standards of quality." This report was recently published in the Education for Socialists booklet *Pathfinder Was*

Born with the October Revolution.

The communist movement had six months to carry out this transformation, Jack Barnes told participants in the Pittsburgh conference. Otherwise the printshop would be unable to

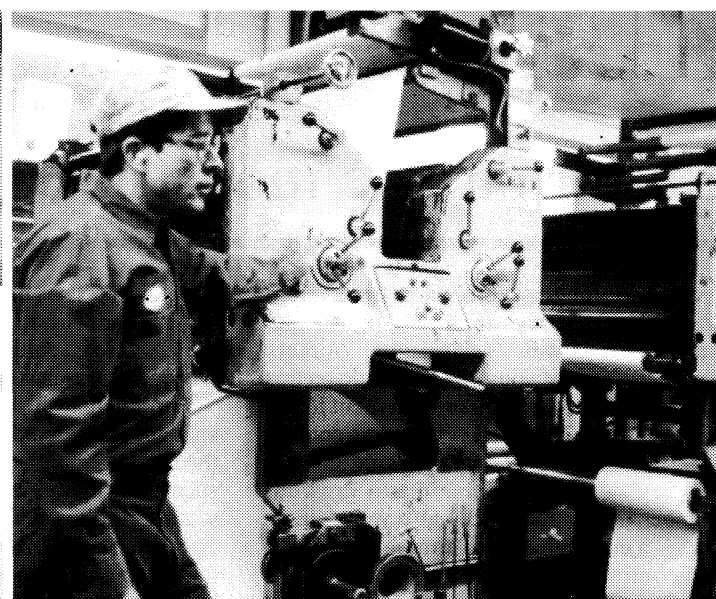
pay its bills. At the very moment when communist workers and youth are facing the biggest political openings since the 1990-91 Gulf War, the leadership of the party would face the task of dismantling the shop and qualitatively reducing the number of Pathfinder books and pamphlets in print.

At the Pittsburgh gathering, the SWP leadership had presented two interconnected fronts on which the communist movement could fight to maintain the printshop and keep the production pipeline of revolutionary literature flowing.

First, supporters of the communist movement in North America and around the world had volunteered to scan, proofread and format the text, and prepare the covers and internal photographs and other graphics for each one of the some 350 books, pamphlets, and magazines that Pathfinder publishes or distributes. This international volunteer effort was a response by these supporters to the rise in working-class resistance over the past couple years. They wanted to do whatever they could to help the party respond to the expanded political opportunities to attract workers and youth and recruit them to the Young Socialists and to the SWP.

By producing finished books in electronic form, this volunteer effort would make it possible for the printshop to use up-to-date computer-to-plate technology to get books and pamphlets on the presses with many fewer hours of labor. As a first step toward complete digital production, an image setter was being purchased by the printshop to eliminate labor-intensive camera work and strip up of film.

In line with these measures, SWP leaders announced at the Pittsburgh conference that nine people were being released from the shop immediately. Further savings of labor



Workers throughout the printshop, including press operators, sales representatives, and bindery staff, will learn to operate the new digital equipment. At left, new digital image setter. At right, web press used to print the *Militant*.

Militant photos by Hilda Cuzco

time with the installation of computer-to-plate technology would soon make possible to free up several more people to get jobs in union fractions. Some \$235,000 was pledged to a capital fund launched at the conference, covering the costs of the digital image setter and repair of the exterior of the Pathfinder Building in New York City. And an appeal was made for an additional \$400,000 to buy and install the computer-to-plate system, with any funds raised over and above that going to pay down the outstanding debt on the presses in the printshop, eliminating the lien held by the finance company.

In a report to the SWP National Committee meeting on "The Digital Transformation of the Printshop and Volunteer Reprint Campaign," Steve Clark reported that coming out of the Pittsburgh gathering the leadership of the printshop had not carried out these policies but had instead continued to organize production guided by the "dead hand of the past." The result, Clark said, is that "we are simply three months closer to losing the printshop." In July, August, and September, the bottom line of the printshop had dropped below sustainable levels, bringing the day of reckoning closer. Over the past few weeks, as the source of this ruinous course became apparent to the party's Political Committee, it had relaunched the campaign to maintain the printing and publishing apparatus of the communist movement.

As Mary-Alice Waters explained during the discussion, the resistance to carrying out the third campaign for the turn in the branches, in the fractions, and in the National Committee itself was taking on its most concentrated expression in the apparatus of the communist movement.

The need for a campaign to carry out the

party decisions presented in Pittsburgh, Clark said, had been presented and discussed at two three-hour meetings of the workers who volunteer to run the printshop just prior to the opening of the National Committee meeting. The prepress department — which had not only been maintained but in fact expanded following that Active Workers Conference — had been eliminated. As decided months earlier, all work in the shop, including the use of the new digital equipment, will now be organized through two production departments: the press department — including press operators, the sales force, and customer service representatives — and the bindery.

This is how the books, pamphlets, and other communist literature needed by fighting workers and youth will now be produced. And this is how the sales force can work with customers to bring them over to this new digital process, as well as break into new markets to compete for printing jobs, in order to help sustain the publishing program of the communist movement.

Central to carrying out this course is the decision to move ahead over the next four to six weeks with the purchase and installation of the new computer-to-plate equipment. A report on the Capital Fund Campaign by Jack Willey at the National Committee meeting in Chicago relaunched the international effort to raise the \$550,000 needed to finance this equipment and pay off earlier loans (see accompanying article).

On what basis can the National Committee, and the members and supporters of the communist movement as a whole, responsibly judge that this effort to save the printshop can succeed, when the very same decisions announced in Pittsburgh three

Continued on Page 14

Capital Fund Campaign seeks \$550,000 to buy platemaker, pay off press loans

BY STEVE CLARK

CHICAGO — The Socialist Workers Party National Committee meeting here October 3-5 voted to back an immediate six-week campaign to raise \$300,000 for the Capital Fund that will make it possible to purchase state-of-the-art computer-to-plate technology (CTP) for the Pathfinder printshop — part of an effort to raise \$550,000 in all. The meeting discussed and adopted a report on the Capital Fund Campaign presented by Jack Willey.

The CTP equipment will enable printshop volunteers to produce plates that can go on printing presses directly from CD-ROM's or computer disks — bringing the shop fully in line with what are rapidly becoming the latest industry standards. The aim is to cut labor time and costs, reduce the size of the printshop staff, and maintain Pathfinder's high standards of quality.

The shop leadership is currently completing the research on different CTP machinery and will make a decision on what equipment to purchase in the next couple weeks.

This purchase is directly related to the effort by some 140 volunteers around the world to convert Pathfinder books to digi-

tal form — from the scanned text, to the covers, photos, and other graphics.

The campaign for half a million dollars builds on the earlier capital fund effort launched at the Pittsburgh Active Workers Conference in July. Altogether, 57 people contributed \$258,000 to that fund, including \$9,500 in donations of bonuses by workers in the party's IAM, OCAW, UAW, USWA, and UTU national union fractions. Of this total, \$151,866 has been collected. These contributions made it possible to purchase an Avantra Image Setter, a first step in the transition to a digital shop, and to carry out long-needed structural repairs and waterproofing of the east wall of the Pathfinder Building. The rapid collection of the outstanding pledges will make it possible to complete payment for these projects.

The \$550,000 campaign discussed in Chicago comes on top of what has already been raised, and will make it possible to purchase the CTP equipment and to pay off and eliminate outstanding liens on the printing presses purchased in the early 1990s for the Pathfinder printshop. A \$30,000 contribution toward the goal was made by one supporter a couple of days after the meeting adjourned.

At the Chicago meeting, Willey reported that a team of Sam Manuel, Dave Prince, Norton Sandler, Maggie Trowe, and him-

self are organizing the Capital Fund Campaign.

During the discussion, SWP national secretary Jack Barnes pointed out that at least three of the younger generations in the party have not been drawn into the effort to raise capital for the communist movement over the past decade. The success in doing so now will determine in large part whether the needed half million dollars is raised, as well as future capital needs. Union fraction leaderships, Barnes said, must pay attention not only to organizing collection of employer bonuses for the fund — part of the fight for the political soul of a proletarian party — but must be on the lookout for individuals in special situations that give them access to capital. The same is true for the leaderships of party branches and the Young Socialists.

Such suggestions can be forwarded to members of the Capital Fund committee, who will set up discussions with these individuals. Most contributions come from inheritances (trust funds, stocks and bonds, home sales, etc.), accident settlements, and similar windfalls.

To find out how you can make a donation, write: The Capital Fund Campaign, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014.

Steelworkers should reject bosses' anti-import crusade

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Beating the drums of American nationalism, the U.S. steel bosses have launched a reactionary campaign against steel imports. A series of full-page ads have appeared in capitalist dailies over the past several weeks in which major U.S. steel companies are promoting their "Stand Up for Steel/Stand Up for America" drive. Joining in this effort is the officialdom of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA).

This campaign, slated to run from Labor Day until the November elections, is a deadly trap for working people. The steel bosses claim this crusade is needed to save "American steel jobs." But they couldn't care less about jobs — in any country. What

UNION TALK

this campaign is actually designed to do is save American steel bosses' profits, while pitting working people internationally against each other. It will simply embolden the steel bosses to step up their demands for more concessions from the union, all in the name of making "our" industry more competitive. While railing against imports, the steel barons are preparing to step up their attacks on our right to a job, wages, and social benefits.

At a September 30 news conference held at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., top executives from Bethlehem Steel, USX Corp., LTV, Weirton Steel Corp., National Steel, and Geneva Steel announced they had filed a complaint with the U.S. Commerce Department and International Trade Commission against the "dumping" of steel in the U.S. market at what they claim are unfair prices by steel producers in Japan, Russia, and Brazil.

"The U.S. steel industry is just the front line of what will be a growing number of U.S. industries lining up to defend themselves against unfair foreign steel dumping, unless we take action quickly," claimed Paul Wilhelm, president of the U.S. Steel Group of the USX Corporation. In Canada, five

steel producers also announced they were preparing antidumping cases against imports of hot- and cold-rolled steel against Russia, South Korea, Slovakia, and Romania.

"Our current trade laws did not anticipate the level of economic collapse that is taking place in many foreign countries today," stated USWA president George Becker in arguing in support of this pro-company campaign. "This is an extraordinary situation — and it deserves an extraordinary response from our government to keep a foreign economic crisis from becoming a crisis for the U.S. steel industry and other strategically important American industries."

Becker warned that 100,000 of the industry's 145,000 jobs could be lost if the Clinton administration fails to impose tariffs on imported steel. USWA officials have also taken the lead in organizing a series of rallies to promote this chauvinist campaign. This includes one scheduled at Bethlehem Steel's Sparrows Point plant on October 29, an October 24 event near the Great Lakes Steel mill outside of Detroit, and an October 22 event in Fairfield, Alabama.

At the Sparrows Point plant, workers are being encouraged to sign form letters of protest to be sent to local legislators. "I am a steelworker in need of help," states one such letter. "If not, I will be an extinct worker and so will the Steel Industry.... Do the right thing and support legislation to stop the dumping of foreign steel in the United States." In Canton, Ohio, one day after Timken Co. announced the layoff of 222 steelworkers, the vice president of the company, Robert Lapp, appeared for the first time ever on the speakers platform at the union hall at a Stand Up for Steel rally. Prior to this rally a Timken representative had never been in the union hall for official business.

It's worth remembering that in the 1980s, under the banner of an anti-imports campaign, the steel companies slashed hundreds of thousands of jobs and successfully implemented some of the steepest concessionary demands upon the Steelworkers union.

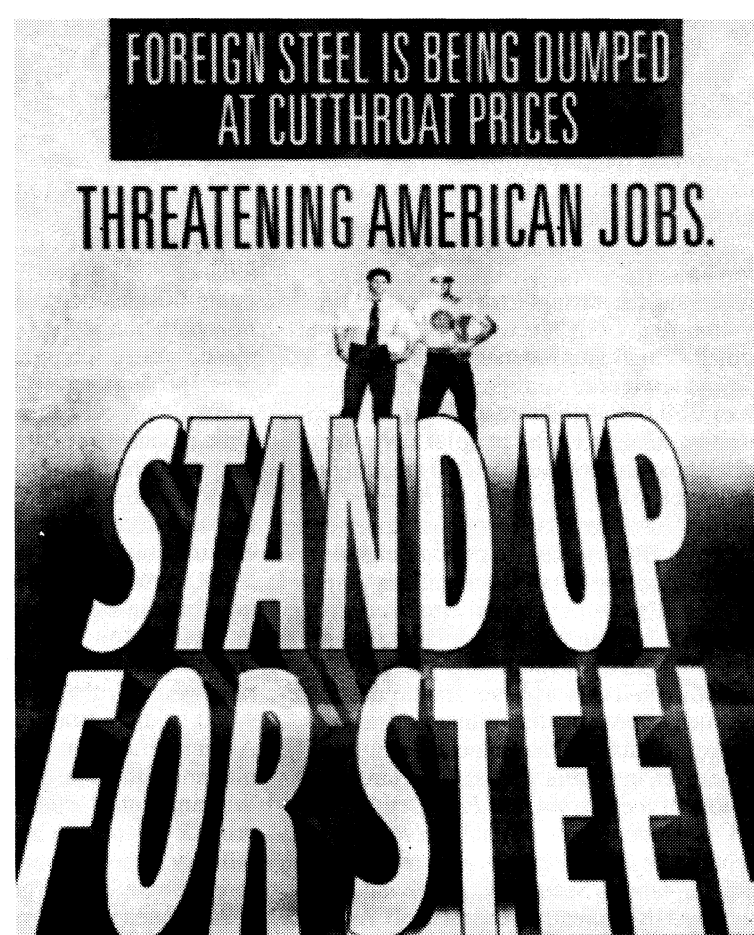
The Stand Up for Steel campaign is also being hailed by ultraright-wing politician Patrick Buchanan. In a September 29 na-

tionally syndicated article entitled

"An America First Coalition — To Save Steel," Buchanan writes, "Economic patriotism is now the first consideration in making trade policy of a majority of the people's House It is now time this bipartisan coalition moved off defense — battling International Monetary Fund bailouts and unfair trade deals — onto offense, writing an America First trade policy and imposing it on a weakened Clinton. The place to begin is with steel." This anti-imports drive occurs at a time of stiffer competition among steel companies for markets to sell their product and as deflationary conditions drive down the prices of raw materials and thus cut into the profit margins of the steel bosses. "In my 43 years working in the steel business, I've never seen the market turn so bad so fast," stated Carl Valdiserri, chairman of Dearborn's Rouge Steel Company.

Steel production worldwide has begun to stagnate as we enter the beginnings of a crisis of capitalist overproduction. World steel output is expected to decline by as much as 4 percent by year's end. Among the hardest hit have been Japanese manufacturers. In Japan, production was already scaled back by 15 percent in the first quarter and is forecast to be the lowest in 25 years by the end of the year. In fact, Nippon Steel Corp. of Tokyo, the world's biggest steel company, said its exports to the United States for the October-December period will likely fall 10 percent from year-ago totals as a result of shrinking markets. Despite these facts, the steel bosses are continuing to press their protectionist drive.

The steel bosses rail against steel imports as they step up their demands for more concessions from the union in an effort to become more competitive in the hopes of reversing their declining rate of profit. This means more downsizing to cut costs — eliminating and combining jobs, deteriorating working conditions, and attacks on union rights and safety on the job. Five steelworkers were killed in 1997 at the Great Lakes Steel mill. At Bethlehem's Sparrows Point plant six workers were injured — several of them severely — in an explosion at the plate



Portion of ad placed in capitalist dailies by steel bosses and USWA officials. This jingoistic campaign pits workers in the United States against those in other countries for the profits of the employers.

mill depot in early September. This occurs as Bethlehem is in the process of cutting 1,400 jobs at its Sparrows Point site.

The employers, echoed by union officials, keep talking about "American jobs," "our company," "our steel," "our government." But we have no common interests with the employers. It's *their* companies, *their* profits, and *their* government — a bosses' government. At the same time, we share the same interests with working people in other countries — whether in Japan, Brazil, Russia, or anywhere else — in our common fight to win jobs for all.

Rather than signing on in support of this pro-company, anti-imports campaign, steelworkers need to take steps to strengthen and defend our union to be able to better withstand the accelerating attacks against us as the corporate giants seek to solve their profits crisis on our backs. Union activists need to put at the center of our work extending solidarity to steelworkers and other working people on the front lines of standing up to the bosses' attacks. This includes the steelworkers on strike against Kaiser Aluminum plants, Titan Tire in Iowa and Mississippi, and Magnetic Specialties Inc. in Marietta, Ohio, among others.

And to win jobs for all, the labor movement must champion a struggle to reduce the workweek from 40 to 30 hours with no cut in pay. That's the road to strengthening the working class, union and nonunion alike.

Brian Williams is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 2609 in Sparrows Point, Maryland. Jay Ressler, a member of USWA Local 1299 at Great Lakes Steel, contributed to this article.

3,000 Steelworkers walk out at Kaiser Aluminum

Continued from front page

rate over the last decade. Kaiser also proposed a wholesale gutting of seniority agreements and locally negotiated understandings on issues such as overtime, shifts, and vacation scheduling. The company's offer also included pension increases that would keep Kaiser retirees below the industry standard for at least five more years and a proposal to cap retirees' health insurance, forcing them to pay for increased costs.

The strike is centered in the Spokane, Washington, area where Kaiser's Mead smelter and Trentwood rolling mill employ more than 2,000 workers. Three hundred unionists are also striking at the smelter in Tacoma, Washington; 345 at the aluminum refinery in Gramercy, Louisiana; and 230 at the extrusion plant in Newark, Ohio. The USWA also represents workers at Kaiser plants in Richmond, Virginia; Tulsa, Oklahoma; and London, Ontario, that are covered under separate contract agreements.

This is the second USWA strike against Kaiser in the company's more than 50-year history. The first strike was carried out three years ago, mostly by the same workers who are walking the picket lines today.

From the start of negotiations, USWA representatives have charged that Kaiser committed unfair labor practices, which made reaching an agreement impossible. First and foremost was making the contract offer contingent on not striking. In addition, the company also threatened to take pension service away from employees if a strike was called and refused to bargain over certain issues the union considered mandatory.

Many workers on the picket lines point to the company's strike preparations — in particular the temporary mobile homes brought in for the scabs — as proof that the

company had no intention of bargaining in good faith.

Rich Marsden, recording secretary for USWA Local 7945 in Tacoma, told the *Militant* that between 65 and 70 scabs are living in trailers on company property at the Tacoma smelter. These trailers were ready to go a week in advance of the strike. "On the afternoon of September 30 I saw two buses with 40 to 50 scabs line up at the back gate," said Marsden. "At 8:15 p.m. we walked out, and the scabs were brought in."

In the 1980s Kaiser asked for and got massive givebacks from the union, claiming this was necessary to improve the financial health and future of the company. The company went through two buyouts in 1987 and 1988 resulting in the closure of eight plants. Because of the decade of concessions to the bosses, Kaiser workers' wages and benefits are below the industry standards. Workers are determined to win parity with other aluminum workers.

Kaiser spokeswoman Ashe told the press that the five struck plants are producing aluminum and plan to do so "indefinitely."

The USWA strikers are receiving solidarity from other workers in this fight. The International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union Local 23 in Tacoma hosted a barbecue at the Kaiser picket line for the strikers October 5.

Members of Local 8 of the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees in Seattle have shown their support by visiting the picket lines. And hundreds of people turned out for a public rally to back the strikers in Spokane two days after the strike began on October 3.

Estelle DeBates is a member of International Association of Machinists Lodge 79.

Telephone workers push back two-tier wages in Northeast

BY GREG McCARTAN

HARTFORD, Connecticut — Members of Local 1298 of the Communications Workers of America (CWA) returned to work September 18 after approving a new 31-month contract by a 3-1 margin. Some 6,300 telephone workers walked off the job August 23 against Southern New England Telephone to demand higher wages and an end to a steep two-tier setup of wages, work rules, and medical benefits imposed by the company in 1992.

Glenn Kalata, a service delivery technician and shop steward in North Haven, Connecticut, said the two-tier system will be phased out over the life of the contract for most job titles. Installers, whose jobs had been downgraded to a lower pay scale, will be returned to the higher-paying classification as well.

Asked what he thought about the union as a whole fighting to end the two-tier setup, John Raposo, who served as a strike captain, said, "It's fantastic. If you all work for the same

company and you do the same job, it doesn't make sense that you get paid two different wages and have different work rules. Ending this will help strengthen the union."

The CWA members had not had a wage increase since 1992, opening a large gap between them and telephone workers in other parts of the United States. The company had originally offered a 10.9 percent increase over three years, which was rejected by the union. The new contract will increase wages an additional 4 percent above the initial 10.9 percent offer for all job classifications where wage parity does not exist.

"Our strike was a major victory brought about by every single member," Kalata said. "We stuck together, grew together, and got the job done. It was our turn to step up to the plate. We stuck together in solidarity and that is why we did so well."

Greg McCartan is a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees in Boston.

Washington escalates military threats

Continued from front page
autonomous status and shut down Albanian-language schools.

This brutality has led to widespread support among Kosova Albanians for independence and, increasingly, for the Kosova Liberation Army (UCK), which is leading an armed struggle for independence.

Since Belgrade's military offensive more than 250,000 Albanians have fled their homes, nearly 1,000 people have been killed, and an estimated 50,000 are without shelter.

The U.S. rulers, who oppose independence for Kosova, have seized on Belgrade's latest atrocities to press for military intervention. Their ultimate goal is to overthrow the workers state and restore capitalist social relations throughout Yugoslavia.

"Now NATO warplanes should destroy as much as possible the military infrastructure responsible for the genocidal campaign, (wherever in Serbia it lies)," declared the editors of the *Washington Post* October 2.

U.S. government officials have cited a September 23 resolution adopted by the United Nations Security Council and a report by UN secretary general Kofi Annan as cover for intervention. The Security Council resolution, which calls for Belgrade to withdraw its army and police forces from Kosova, was passed under a provision of the United Nations Charter that imperialist governments use to claim a "legal" basis for military assaults.

"I am outraged by reports of mass killings of civilians in Kosovo," said Annan. "It is clear...that the majority of such acts have been committed by the security forces in Kosovo acting under the authority of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia." Annan also repeated charges that the UCK rebel fighters were responsible for human rights violations, which UCK leaders denied.

While Belgrade has pulled some of its paramilitary forces out of Kosova, U.S. government representative Holbrooke has said the move falls short of the Security Council's demands.

Washington has sought commitments from other NATO members to support bombing missions throughout Serbia. Four British Harrier GR7 aircraft flew from Germany to Italy to join the four already there. There are now some 200 warplanes in the region. The imperialist military arsenal deployed for attacking Yugoslavia involves up to 80 aircraft, as well as ships and submarines carrying cruise missiles. NATO military commanders have drafted plans to en-

force a "no fly zone" over Kosova and to send nearly 26,000 imperialist troops to occupy Kosova.

The North Atlantic imperialist military alliance already has 33,000 soldiers occupying Bosnia, including 7,700 U.S. GIs. A new battalion, which includes Rome's domestic police force, has been sent to suppress protests in Bosnia. The battalion, known as the Multinational Specialized Unit, includes 380 carabinieri officers from Italy, 70 gendarmes from Argentina, and 23 cops from Romania. The specialized military unit recently forced Croatian protesters from blocking the roads. The U.S.-led NATO powers have maintained an occupation force in Bosnia since late 1995.

Washington has also established the "Southeastern European Defense Ministerial," which will be a military force of up to 4,000 soldiers from Italy, Greece, Turkey, Albania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, and Romania, and Slovenia. U.S. defense secretary William Cohen said Washington will not provide troops, but has pledged to provide military expertise and equipment for the force. Some 1,000 "peacekeeping" troops are stationed in the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia, including 350 soldiers from the United States.

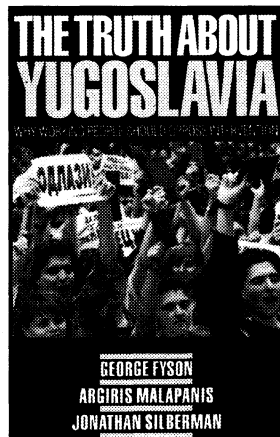
Altogether, the 16 NATO powers have committed 400 military aircraft — more than half from the U.S. forces — to the projected intervention. NATO's chief commander, U.S. general Wesley Clark, "has already completed plans for a range of strikes, starting with a short, relatively limited cruise missile attack followed by a widening series of air raids that would hit targets throughout Serbia," the *New York Times* reported October 8.

Meanwhile, the governments in Beijing

and Moscow have voiced opposition to Washington's war moves against Yugoslavia.

"If they [the NATO military alliance] start bombing, a war will simply begin," said Gennadi Seleznyov, speaker of the Russian parliament. Russian defense minister Igor Sergeyev said NATO military intervention would lead to another "Cold War."

Far from waging a "Cold War," U.S. imperialism is headed toward a hot war in the Balkans, and ultimately against the workers state in Russia. The eastward expansion of NATO and its occupation force in Bosnia are aimed at preparing the way for forcibly overturning proletarian property relations in Russia, Eastern Europe, and elsewhere in the region.



FROM PATHFINDER

The Truth about Yugoslavia

Why Working People Should Oppose Intervention
George Fyson, Argiris Malapanis, and Jonathan Silberman

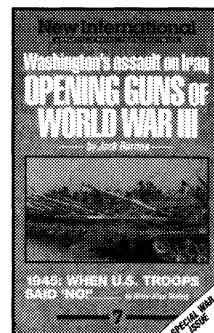
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MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

CALIFORNIA LOS ANGELES

The Clinton Crisis and the Pornographication of Capitalist Politics — A Marxist View. Fri., Oct. 16, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W. Pico Blvd. (1/2 blocks west of Vermont). Donation: \$4. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

MASSACHUSETTS Boston

U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War: Celebrate the Publication of *New International* no. 11. Speakers: Representative of the Socialist Workers Party and others to be announced. Fri., Oct. 23, 7:30 p.m. 780 Tremont St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

MICHIGAN Detroit

Puerto Rican Political Prisoners in U.S. Prisons: Their Fight for Freedom. Speakers: Noemí Cortés, political activist and daughter of political prisoner Edwin Cortés; Jorge Jiménez, Puerto Rican Solidarity Organization at the University of Michigan; and Rosa Garmendía, Socialist Workers candidate for governor of Michigan. Sat., Oct. 17, 7:30 p.m. 7414 Woodward Ave. Donation: \$4. Tel: (313) 875-0100.

BRITAIN Manchester

A Giant on the Doorstep of Imperialism: The Grenada Revolution, How It Was Overthrown, and Prospects for Revolution Today.

Speaker: Julie Crawford, Communist League. Fri., Oct. 16, 7 p.m. Upstairs at 60 Shudehill. Donation: £2. Tel: 0161 839 1766.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

U.S., NATO: Hands Off Kosova! Speaker: Brendan Gleeson, Communist League. Fri., Oct. 16, 7 p.m. 203 Karangahape Road. Donation: \$3. Tel: (9) 379-3075.

Christchurch

U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War: Celebrate the Publication of *New International* no. 11. Speaker: Nathan Simms, Young Socialists. Fri., Oct. 16, 7 p.m. 199 High St. Tel: 365-6055.

— CALENDAR —

MINNESOTA

St. Paul

Art and Culture in Cuba Today. Three evenings of discussion with Norberto Codina, 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., October 14, 7 p.m. *University of Minnesota, Coffman Memorial Union Theater*. Thurs., October 15, 7 p.m. *St. Paul Public Library, Riverview Branch, 1 E. George Street, St. Paul*. Fri., October 16, 7:30 p.m. *CreArte, 1921 Chicago Avenue, Minneapolis*. For more information, call: (612) 624-1512 Sponsors: University of Minnesota's College of Liberal Arts Scholarly Events Fund, Department of Spanish and Portuguese, Department of Theater Arts and Dance, Program in American Studies, Department of English, Department of Afro-American and African Studies, Friends of the St. Paul Public Library, CreArte, and the Loft.

WASHINGTON

Seattle

Cuba: Diary of a Revolution. Lecture and slides by Cuban photographer Alberto Korda. Fri., October 30, 7 p.m. *Campion Hall at Seattle University 914 E. Jefferson*. Korda's photographs will be on display November 1-29 at the Photographic Center Northwest, 900 12th Ave. Artists Reception: November 1, 4-6 p.m. For more information, call: (206) 720-7222. Sponsors: Photographic Center Northwest, Seattle Art Museum Photograph Council, Seattle Cuba Friendship Committee, Seattle University Art Department and Foreign Language Department.

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Stamp ran dry? — A secret federal court established by the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act has approved 11,950 wiretaps and



Harry Ring

searches of homes, cars computers, and other property of suspected "spies."

One request was turned down.

But they're easy to spot — Jaime Gorelick, former deputy attorney general, says the increased surveillance is due to increased espionage and "terrorist activities." He says, "There's a greater quantity of the folks who are potentially problematic out there."

Managing the managers — Bristol-Myers Squibb is negotiating a deal with Foundation Health Systems in which it would pay the HMO chain \$1 million a month to instruct its doctors to prescribe Squibb medications in five categories, including high cholesterol and bacterial infection. A Foundation

official said, "It's probably just a step beyond what everybody else has done, to date."

Poor? Elderly? Give 'em the shaft — At least 15 million U.S. people pay for medications out-of-pocket because they can't afford insurance coverage. Research confirmed they pay at least double the amount paid for prescriptions by federal and private med plans.

Hey Dilbert — "Executives say 14 percent of each 40-hour work week is wasted because of poor communication between staff and managers.... Poor communication

from upper management is a frequent problem linked to emotionally charged situations." — News item

Shop early for Xmas — "Consumer Outlook Declines Sharply," "RJR Nabisco, Goodyear, Issue Profit Warnings," "Gillette to Trim Jobs After Profit Shave," "Cendant Restates Earnings — \$55M gain turns into \$217M loss." — September 30 headlines.

At least better understood — A survey of major British industries found an increase in strikes last year and predicted a greater increase in

the coming year. "Ironically," a dispatch said, "the report found that relations between employers and workers had improved."

Thought for the week — Hundreds of people living near or working at nuclear weapons plants and research installations in 11 states are suffering from an array of unexplained illnesses, the *Tennessean* reported. The newspaper interviewed people whose ailments include tremors, memory loss, and muscular and reproductive problems. No direct link has been established between the illnesses and the Energy Dept. sites. — News item

1985-86: union meatpackers strike Hormel plant

On Aug. 17, 1985, the 1,500 union meatpackers at Geo. A. Hormel & Co. in Austin, Minnesota, went on strike for a new contract. The battle by members of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local P-9 marked a break in the rout of the labor movement in the United States of the early 1980s, as one union after another had accepted the employers' concession demands without a fight. The Hormel strikers won broad support from working people across the country.

BOOK OF THE WEEK

The P-9 workers not only faced company strikebreakers and the Minnesota National Guard, but also attacks from the UFCW international officialdom, which eventually put the local under trusteeship and declared the strike over in March 1986. The story of this strike, which served as inspiration to a wave of resistance to the bosses' offensive among meatpackers in the Midwest, is told in the pamphlet *The 1985-86 Hormel Meat-Packers Strike in Austin, Minnesota*, by Fred Halstead. Below are excerpts from that pamphlet, which is copyright © 1986 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BY FRED HALSTEAD

In the last full year before the strike, the Hormel plant in Austin had one of the highest injury rates in the U.S. meat-packing industry. In that year, there were 202 injuries for every 100 workers in the plant. The national average for all industries was 10 per 100. The meat-packing industry average was 33 per 100. In 1984, fully one-third of the workers in the Austin plant suffered injuries serious enough to cause lost time on the job.

In October 1984, Local P-9 members were hit with a 23 percent wage cut, from \$10.69 an hour to \$8.25. This cost the average worker almost \$100 from the weekly paycheck.

Six months later, an arbitrator's ruling put the wage at \$8.75, but allowed the company to cut benefits deeply, including the coverage under the company-carried health insurance plan. These cuts were made retroactive to September 3, 1984.

Workers who, in the meantime, had used the health plan for themselves or members of their families were suddenly in debt to the company for their retroactively not-covered medical and dental bills. In some cases this amounted to thousands of dollars, in others many hundreds. The company deducted this, chunk by chunk, from the already mangled weekly paychecks....

In early August 1985, the company made its final contract offer. It was so bad even the UFCW officials recommended rejection and promised the International's full support if P-9 turned down the contract. It did. The Local then requested that the International sanction a strike, and this was granted by telegram August 9. But the same telegram attacked P-9 and placed restrictions on the right to strike....

As soon as the strike started, the Local and its supporters set in motion a number of democratic committees and procedures to involve all the P-9 members. The United Support Group, which had been formed earlier by spouses of P-9 members, stepped up

its activities.

No member who wanted to participate, both in activity and decision making, was left out. This has greatly strengthened the struggle and kept the members well informed. The International Union and UFCW Region 13 provided a total of \$65 per week strike benefit, soon cut to \$40. But the strikers were able to survive through their own efforts and solidarity from supporters.

A kitchen was set up to feed pickets as well as volunteers around the hall. A food shelf and clothing closet, stocked by donations, provided necessities to strikers and their families. Every once in a while a truck pulled into the parking lot of the Austin Labor Center, from a farm group, another packinghouse union local, or other supporter, to unload bags of potatoes, canned goods, and other food. Throughout the struggle, no strikers or their family members have had to go hungry, though the fare has been light on meat and other expensive items.

P-9 established the Tool Box, a support program to help with emergencies and the stress of the struggle; a War Room, to coordinate the various activities of the Local, including picketing; a Communications Committee, which organizes P-9 members to travel across the country, telling the truth about their fight to unions and other organizations and appealing for aid....

According to [Local P-9 president Jim] Guyette, "In the fall of 1985 the rank and file of Local P-9 voted to extend their picket lines to places performing struck work and to support any local union members honoring our roving picket lines." The members of Ottumwa Local 431, Fremont Local 22, and Dubuque, Iowa, Local 150A pledged to honor P-9's lines. They each also asked the International Union to sanction P-9's extended pickets, as well as a national boycott of Hormel products....

UFCW President [William] Wynn then agreed to issue a joint statement with Guyette saying the International would sanction extension of the picket lines if Hormel did not bargain in good faith.

On November 15, however, Wynn told the press, the company, and P-9 that: "No sanction has been granted to extend picket lines... and that we will evaluate reports from our representatives as to the good faith evinced by both the company and the Local.... Unless and until we sanction an extension our members outside Austin would be taking serious risks and the local unions could be faced with costly and risky litigation if they respected extended picketing...."

In late December a federal mediator presented a proposed contract that the company accepted. It was essentially the same as the company offer that had precipitated the strike. It left safety entirely up to the judgment of the company, gutted the seniority system, and prohibited handbilling and other constitutionally guaranteed union and political activity by employees. It contained a similar wage to that forced on the rest of the chain. (In January 1986, the annual cash compensation for Hormel Chairman Richard L. Knowlton was increased by \$231,000 to \$570,000.)...

The UFCW officialdom recommended — or rather insisted — that P-9 accept the mediator's proposal, and that a mail-in ballot be conducted by the International. Instead, Local P-9 held an open meeting on December 21 to discuss the contract and prepare for a vote the following week. In a secret ballot, the membership rejected the mediator's proposal by better than two to one. The International officials challenged the vote, demanding the mail-in ballot. This was held and the



Militant/Tom Jaax

Unionists and others across the United States brought food in solidarity with the P-9 strikers. Above, an April 1986 food caravan arrives in Austin, Minnesota.

contract was again rejected.

On January 13, 1986, Hormel opened the plant to scabs, though not many got past the pickets and mass demonstrations by P-9 supporters.

While local police and deputies under the command of Mower County Sheriff Wayne Goodnature tried to break up the picket lines, UFCW President Wynn sent a message to P-9 President Guyette. Wynn refused to sanction roving pickets or the Hormel boycott, declaring: "Boycotting Hormel products produced under the chain agreement, which has some of the best wages and conditions in the industry, would undermine union jobs paying base labor rates of \$10 an hour simply to try to secure the \$10.69 an hour in Austin that you have

unsuccessfully fought for for 13 months." He insisted Guyette "lead them back to work...."

Thus Wynn helped set the stage for Hormel's next move: getting Democratic-Farmer-Labor Governor Rudy Perpich to send in the Minnesota National Guard.

On January 20, 1986, the Guardsmen arrived in Austin, and by January 23 they were escorting the scabs — mostly nonunion labor — through the picket line.

On January 26, P-9 called for a national boycott of Hormel products. The next day, the Local sent its roving pickets to other plants in the Hormel chain, including Ottumwa and Fremont.

At Ottumwa the great majority of the 750 workers refused to cross the picket lines.

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—



October 19, 1973

SAN ANTONIO, Texas — Seventy-five anti-deportation activists attended an emergency conference in defense of undocumented workers held here Sept. 29.

The conference, called in response to stepped-up harassment and deportation of so-called illegal aliens by U.S. immigration authorities, was sponsored by Trabajadores Unidos-Centro de Acción Social Autónomo (TU-CASA — United Workers-Center for Autonomous Social Action). Mario Cantu, director of TU-CASA, spoke on the need for mass action by Chicano and Mexican workers to combat their exploitation. "Women's rights, the gains of Black people in the civil rights movement, and the organization of labor were not won through the courts, but through mass confrontations in the streets," Cantu said.

A major theme of the conference was the importance of combating the Rodino bill, which is supposed to make it illegal for employers to hire undocumented workers, which would only facilitate the exploitation of these workers at the lowest wages and under the worst working conditions. It would also mean increased harassment of all Raza workers, who could be forced to provide proof of citizenship or other "legal" status at any moment.



October 18, 1948

RICHMOND, Calif., Oct. 7 — Seasoned by thirty days experience on one of labor's toughest picket lines the members of the CIO Oil Workers International Union have entered the second month of their strike against the six major refineries on the West Coast. At first the only major issue was wages. The union asked for an increase of 23 cents an hour and the best company offer was 12 1/2 cents per hour. This the union rejected and pointed to the higher wages being paid by the same companies in the East and Middle West for the same work.

Several attempts to smash the picket lines were defeated. Scabs, led by AFL officials from the Boilermakers union and police, were hurled back from the gates of the Standard Oil refinery in Richmond. Tear-gas and clubs were rendered ineffective when massed pickets held their ground and returned blow for blow with police and thugs.

The strikers have set up an excellent organization which includes a series of soup kitchens managed by wives and daughters of the members, flying squads to keep scab oil trucks from moving and a veritable "navy" of fishing boats to patrol San Francisco Bay so that oil barges and tankers can be stopped. Local strike bulletins are issued daily and several sound trucks patrol the lines with the latest news and instructions.

U.S. hands off Yugoslavia

Continued from front page

to do with stopping a “humanitarian catastrophe, “saving lives” or defending the national rights of Albanians in Kosova. Washington’s war moves in the Balkans are aimed at increasing its dominance at the expense of its rivals in Europe. The U.S. wealthy class is pressing to take another step toward using its military arsenal to crush the resistance of workers and peasants and reimpose the system of wage slavery in Yugoslavia and the other workers states in the Balkans.

Washington established itself as the major imperialist power in Europe on the corpses of the Yugoslav people, after conducting 3,000 bombing and shelling attacks in Bosnia between 1994 and 1995. This laid the groundwork for an invasion of 60,000 NATO troops, who have occupied Bosnia since late 1995. Three years later, the U.S. rulers still have not gained one inch toward their goal of restoring capitalist social relations in Yugoslavia.

Washington, which is pressing to extend the imperialist military occupation in the Balkans, is just as opposed to the Albanian people’s struggle for independence as the Milosevic regime in Belgrade. Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic, in the chauvinist war he is leading in Kosova, is doing the dirty work for the imperialists. But he is proving unable to suppress the fighting capacity of the Albanian toilers, whose resistance reflects the underlying strength of the workers state. The U.S. rulers know they will have to take on and try to defeat working people directly in order to reimpose their class rule.

The imperialist powers face the challenge of wiping out the remaining social conquests won through the 1945 socialist revolution in Yugoslavia, in which an alliance of millions of workers and peasants overthrew the landlord and capitalist exploiters and began organizing a thorough-going land reform, economic planning, and a state monopoly of foreign trade that abolished the profit system.

NATO’s occupation of Bosnia and its planned assault on Kosova are one link of Washington’s military encirclement of the workers states in Russia and other former Soviet republics. The U.S. class of super-wealthy families is preparing, with cold-blooded awareness, to organize an eventual bloody counterrevolution against the workers and farmers in these countries.

The latest issue of the Marxist magazine *New International*, which features the article “U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War,” is an excellent tool to get into the hands of fighting workers, rebel-minded youth and others opposed to the imperialism’s march toward fascism and war. It is supplemented by the Pathfinder book *The Truth about Yugoslavia: Why Working People Should Oppose U.S. Intervention and New International* no 7, featuring “The Opening Guns of World War III: Washington’s Assault on Iraq.”

Active workers should take these tools to fellow working people on strike picket lines, to campuses, and to political events. We should discuss with them co-workers and other fighters. In particular, the Socialist Workers election campaigns around the country will be one of the primary ways to carry out the effort to explain the truth about Washington’s war moves in the Balkans and why working people should join protests to demand:

- No to the U.S. war moves!
- Imperialist troops out of Yugoslavia!
- Support the Albanian people’s fight for independence in Kosova!

Collect NI fund

The publication of the latest issue of *New International*, titled “U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War,” could not come at a better time for working-class fighters. This political weapon is needed by those who want to understand the driving forces behind Washington’s latest moves toward a military assault against the Yugoslav worker state and why we should oppose them. It’s needed to arm workers, farmers, and young people who are repelled by capitalism and are looking — today — for a road to change the world. Initial sales reports indicate that *New International* no. 11 is already finding an eager audience.

That’s why the New International Fund was launched September 19, with the goal of raising \$115,000 by November 15. This money is needed now to cover the costs of producing *New International* no. 11, which has just gone back to press and has come out with improved photographs illustrating its pages. The funds are needed urgently to produce similar issues of *Nueva Internacional* in Spanish, *Nouvelle Internationale* in French, and *Ny International* in Swedish. Translation and editorial work is under way on all three new editions.

To raise this sum of money, supporters of *New International* must shift gears decisively this week and launch a real fund-raising campaign.

After the second week in the eight-week drive, some \$5,000 of the \$115,000 has been collected — but the campaign should already be at about \$29,000 (see the chart on page 5). Organizing a big push right now is the only way to be in a position to reach out broadly for contributions among fellow working people, students, and others who value *New International*.

This effort is intertwined with the current campaign to sell subscriptions to the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* and copies of *New International*. The sooner public fund-raising meetings can be organized — not leaving them to the end of the campaign — the more contributions can be raised. We urge our readers to take the steps necessary to turn around this campaign today and make it a success — every week for the next six weeks.

The proletarian party today

Continued from Page 10

months earlier were not carried out by the shop leadership? asked Jack Barnes during the discussion. The only basis, he answered, is the decision coming out of the National Committee meeting to lead the third campaign for the turn. As the revolution in the branches and trade union fractions of the party advances, the conditions to lead the cadres in the printshop to transform the production of revolutionary books and pamphlets will also be created.

The cadres in the shop on whom this transformation depends, Barnes said, are those who are most driven *politically* to read the communist literature they print and bind. Those who, for that reason, always subordinate individual or narrow shop considerations to the party’s political needs and priorities.

Every member of the printshop staff, Clark said in his summary of the discussion on the report, must be fighting to lead the campaign to make it possible to keep the books and pamphlets of the communist movement in print. At the staff meetings on the eve of the National Committee meeting, he said, the shop leadership finally began to confront these questions and set a course that allows the members of the shop to take the next steps forward.

Those who volunteer to take assignments in the shop, Clark said, must be those who have been leading the branches and fractions, as well as chapters of the Young Socialists, along a proletarian course. This interconnection will be the case in a particularly concentrated way in the New York and Newark branches, the organizer of the Newark branch executive committee had pointed out earlier in the National Committee meeting. The cadres who volunteer in the printshop are members of those two branches, he said, and the fight to reorient the branches along a proletarian line of march will make a significant contribution to the transformation of the printshop as well.

Volunteer reprint campaign

Clark also reported on the steps taken by the leadership of the international volunteer effort to digitize Pathfinder books and pamphlets to reach the 10 books per month needed at the current pace of sales to prevent titles from going out of stock. Since the work got under way in May, the volunteers have produced five books, an average of one per month.

The previous weekend, the San Francisco-based steering committee that leads the volunteer reprint campaign had organized a policy-setting meeting in Detroit to confront this gap between what is needed and what has been done, with the aim of adopting a battle plan to rapidly close it. Participating were the members of the steering committee — Peggy Brundy, Ruth Cheney, Jerry Gardner, and Tom Tomasko; and the members of the SWP national leadership responsible for centralizing the party’s work with the volunteers on this project — Norton Sandler of San Francisco, and Argiris Malapanis and Steve Clark of New York. Others taking part in the discussions there were Toni Gorton and Steve Marshall of Detroit; Janice Prescott and Mike Shur of New York; and Bobbi Sack of Cincinnati.

Participants in the Detroit meeting worked through a detailed schedule of deadlines to deliver 20 books to the Pathfinder printshop between now and the end of the year — five in October, seven in November, and eight in December — putting them on the road to the needed 10-plus books per month. They discussed and settled a number of policy matters to help break through the bottlenecks that had been holding up production. These included adoption of a workflow plan and quality control procedures drawn up by Toni Gorton for the reconstruction in digital form of book covers, photo signatures, and graphics, and the decision to organize volunteers’ work on graphics out of Cincinnati. Gorton will be responsible for quality control on design.

In order to break through the logjam of some 18 books suspended for weeks on end at various stages of proofreading — many of them between 80 and 90 percent done — new procedures were instituted to organize the work of the more than 90 volunteers working on this aspect of the project. The meeting decided that volunteer proofreaders will be notified immediately if they fail to meet their deadlines, and the work will be reassigned within a couple of days if the job is not completed.

A plan submitted by Tom Tomasko to organize the completion of the scanning of all 350 Pathfinder titles by January 2000 was adopted, in order to create a bank of electronic files ready for proofreading and formatting, and to free up these volunteers to join in other aspects of the work as soon as possible.

The volunteers also drew a negative balance sheet on their initial decision to format the books using Microsoft Word. They decided to get the project off the Bill Gates treadmill of planned obsolescence and perpetual “upgrades” of Microsoft’s computer software programs. The volunteer organizers voted to transfer formatting work to the PageMaker desktop publishing program instead.

Most important, the meeting made several proposals on the overall organization and leadership of this effort. These were subsequently discussed and decided at a meeting of the Bay Area steering committee two days prior to the National Committee meet-

ing. Ruth Cheney, the project director, who had taken the initiative to launch this volunteer effort at the beginning of the year, took responsibility once again for organizing the proofreading, as she had done in the opening months of the project. Jerry Gardner and Tom Tomasko, respectively, will continue centralizing the formatting and the scanning. And Peggy Brundy will function as the overall production manager, monitoring the various deadlines for each of the books in order to meet the schedule to supply the final product to the printshop.

Prior to the Detroit meeting, none of the members of the steering committee had been responsible for this overall management task — one of the main factors contributing to the slow pace at which books were being completed. The steering committee agreed that Prescott would work closely with Brundy, pulling together the text and graphics for each book and burning it on a CD-ROM for delivery to Pathfinder. Sandler, a member of the SWP National Committee and leader of the San Francisco branch, will now serve as the organizer of the Bay Area steering committee of the international project.

In addition, the volunteers reviewed a detailed budget for the graphics work necessary to digitize the Pathfinder arsenal. They estimated that it will cost \$70,000 to complete the entire project, and they launched a \$35,000 fund to cover the costs for the coming year, with the goal of \$5,000 by January 1 to complete the first 20 books and pamphlets.

From the start, the volunteers established the policy that the entire digitization effort would be self-financing by the individuals involved — that not a cent of the resources of the party would be spent on this work. Volunteers purchase their own computers and printers, software programs, scanners, and other needed equipment and materials. The proofing and other costs related to the work of the relatively small graphics team, however, are well beyond the expenses involved in other aspects of this project, requiring some centralized fund-raising.

The volunteers will organize to raise these funds through their own efforts, going after donations that do not cut into contributions by active supporters and other friends of the communist movement to the Capital Fund, to semiannual fund drives, or to regular monthly pledges. Ruth Cheney has volunteered to head up this special fund-raising effort, and Tom Tomasko will serve as the director of the fund.

Workers will join to fight fascists

In his closing remarks at the National Committee meeting, Barnes noted that workers and young people will be attracted to and join the communist movement to effectively combat the ultrarightist attacks on workers’ struggles that will grow as the class struggle sharpens, not to cope with economic depression. He was summarizing a thread of discussion that began the first day of the meeting, when one participant said that a member of his branch had asked, “What will we do when the depression hits?”

There’s nothing the working class and its vanguard can do to prevent the capitalist system from entering a depression, but what vanguard workers do to prepare for the coming battles will be decisive in whether fascist forces can triumph over the working-class fight for socialism in the coming years.

Barnes pointed to “What the 1987 Stock Market Crash Foretold,” a resolution adopted by the SWP national convention in 1988. It listed the cumulative effects of the falling average rate of profits of the capitalist rulers worldwide under nine subheadings: intensified interimperialist competition; overproduction and excess capacity; declining capital investment in capacity-increasing plant and equipment; speculative binge and debt explosion; U.S. bank and business failures; devastation of semi colonial countries; farm crisis in imperialist countries; declining real wages and accelerating speedup; and rising unemployment and growing relative surplus population. In the last 10 years all of these trends have become more pronounced than they were at the time.

The point communists must keep explaining, Barnes said, is that as struggles heat up there will be two forces, the working class vanguard and the ultraright, who know that the question of power will be settled in the streets. Rightist forces are growing in every imperialist country today. They feed off the politics of resentment, off the scandalmongering and pornographication of politics, such as the current hearings in the U.S. Congress over President William Clinton’s sexual affairs.

Commenting on this, Tom Alter, who works in a packinghouse in Iowa, pointed out that supporters of fascist politician Lyndon LaRouche were campaigning at a recent protest rally of farmers he attended. “I want to find people who will be with me when forces like that get stronger,” he said, “not people who are worried about having enough money in a depression.”

As working-class politics accelerates, there will be more workers who come to the party already leading vanguard struggles in industry, Barnes concluded. They will join the party for two reasons, he said, to broaden their political scope and because they’re convinced joining will make them more effective in the fights they’re involved in. The third campaign for the turn aims to make the SWP that kind of party.

Airport workers in Toronto strike over wages

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

for the maintenance of ground operations and emergency services infrastructure, explain that the airport cannot operate for any length of time in safe conditions without

ON THE PICKET LINE

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

TORONTO — At midnight October 1, some 520 maintenance, computer, and apron traffic workers at Pearson International Airport in Toronto walked off the job after talks between the negotiators for Local 0004 of the Public Service Alliance of Canada and the Greater Toronto Airport Authority (GTAA) broke down.

This is the first strike by these workers since 1991 and the first contract fight and strike since the airport was privatized a couple of years ago along with other major airports across Canada. Pearson is the busiest airport in Canada and the center for all Canada-wide connections. The workers, who are critical

them.

In the early morning of October 3, about 25 unionists on Britannia Road held up a long line of vehicle traffic bringing other airport workers to work, including air traffic controllers, firefighters, and others. The day before, the pickets at this key entrance caused aircraft departure delays.

Signs carried by the strikers stated: "parity not charity" and "fed up, pay up." The workers are demanding pay parity with similar workers in Vancouver and other airports. They are demanding a 15-23 percent pay hike in the first year and a further 5 percent over the following two years of a three-year contract. Other demands deal with medical, pension, and dental benefits, as well as job security.

The GTAA bosses have offered a five-year contract and a 12 percent raise. They say their offer expired on October 2. They are attempting to run the airport with untrained management personnel.

"If there is an emergency there is going to be trouble," said five-year maintenance worker Jerry Rosell.

"Ninety-six percent of 95 percent of the membership voted to strike," said picket captain Mike Miljkovic, an electrician with 20 years' experience. "They have been pushing us like a sleeping bear and now we have to fight."

"They haven't negotiated in good faith and they want to break the union," picket captain Ervin Bayley explained as he and seven other members of local 0004 held up vehicle traffic at another entrance. At the Britannia Road line, a similar opinion was given by a striker who is one of three women who work as airport electricians in Canada.

Bayley and others like him are responsible for the maintenance of emergency generators at Pearson and smaller regional airports like the one at Buttonville. "People don't know the facts," said Bayley. "After nine years I make \$16.90 an hour. My wage was higher at my previous job with a trucking company. None of us has had a raise in nine years."

Bayley reported that in the first couple of days of the strike a number of angry drivers had veered their cars toward strikers resulting in a couple of minor injuries.

"If this goes on for any length of time there are going to be serious safety problems," said a picket at another gate who didn't want to be named. "For example, in the apron control tower that directs the ground traffic, they have management people working 12-hour shifts."

The air-side apron is where the aircraft move to the ramp and position themselves to move toward the runways.

A number of strikers expressed the concern that, as the impact of the strike increases, the GTAA bosses will move to get court injunctions to limit the number of pickets and their ability to slow traffic into the airport.

200 workers in N.Y. walk out at Standard Motors

NEW YORK — Deep concession demands by the company pushed about 200 members of the United Auto Workers Local 365 onto the picket line October 2 at Standard Motors Corp.

Evaristo López, a stock room attendant with 30 years in the plant, said the main issue in the strike is cuts in their medical benefits. He said the

company's offer demanded employees pay at least \$50 a month for their medical coverage. "That's why we went on strike. They didn't want to give anything," said López. In addition the company wanted to end providing health-care benefits to retirees.

Pickets said that other company concession demands included eliminating three sick days, two holidays, and eight hours of vacation, and offered no raise in the three years of the contract.

Picket lines are being staffed around the clock at the large auto parts manufacturing facility. The unionists are often met with cars honking in support.

Strikers said they felt the company was taken by surprise when workers took to the streets and refused to accept the concessions. The highly automated plant supplies manufacturers with ignition parts on a just-in-time basis, which workers thought put them in a good position to force the company back to the negotiating table.

UAW Local 365 is an amalgamated local of more than 15 shops in New York and Long Island, constituting the largest UAW local in the city. Strikers said the contract has expired in at least one other shop. It is working on a one-week contract extension. Several more plants in the local have contracts expiring in the next couple of months.

200 striking copper workers are still fighting

COPPERHILL, Tennessee — Some 200 union members at the acid plant here are still walking the picket line after being on strike for more than two years. At one time there was an underground copper mine, a mill, a smelter, and a sulfuric acid plant. The mine and smelter were shut down decades ago. The strike began April 30, 1996.

Unions involved in the strike include the International Association of Machinists, the Boilermakers, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, and the International Chemical Workers Union (ICWU) who merged with the UFCW over a year ago. The ICWU represents the majority of strikers. Workers are on strike to prevent job combinations and the subsequent loss of jobs.

Jewell Cole, who worked at the plant for 32 years, said, "There have been no negotiations within the last year. They are bringing in one-half the number of rail cars with sulfur in them compared to before the strike. They are running the plant with 50-60 scabs and the salary people. I believe they're producing bad acid, which their customers sometimes return."

Gerald Horne, a maintenance painter with 26 years' seniority at the plant said, "Three former workers, two of them union, have crossed the line. The picket line has turned away some potential scabs and some Teamster truck drivers. And

even nonunion truck drivers are respecting our picket line."

Mitchell Loudermilk, a striker with 30 years in at the plant explained, "The company wants big reductions in retirement benefits. We've kept up these picket lines for the principles involved."

The unions are organizing a rally and picnic for later in October.

Auto parts workers in England vote on strike

LONDON — Workers at Johnson Controls are voting on industrial action in their contract fight with the company. Johnson Controls builds seats for the Fiesta Ford compact in Dagenham, England.

Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) members at Johnson Controls are demanding wage parity with Ford production line workers. Johnson workers get about 70 percent of Ford production workers' pay.

Ford outsourced seat production to Johnson some three years ago. The Johnson plant stands within the Ford production complex at Dagenham, and is directly connected by conveyor to the point of fit on the main Ford assembly line a few hundred yards away.

Another issue the workers want addressed is the increased ratio of "temporary" agency workers Johnson is using to carry out regular production. Around one-third of the workers in the plant are now contracted from an employment agency.

The Johnson bosses have so far refused to concede on the principle of parity — even over the lifetime of several contracts. They have so far offered a pay hike in the package, which amounts to around 3.5 percent.

A further 5.5-6 percent raise is also offered in non-guaranteed bonus payments. Workers want to eradicate this component of their pay. In an attempt to sideline the union, Johnson's manager called a lunchtime meeting to win workers to back the company's deal.

But a counter-meeting organized at the union hall half a mile away at short notice drew the whole shift. One shift has also staged a work stoppage to protest the company offer.

Strike action at the Johnson factory would rapidly affect production on the Ford assembly line, which produces 700 cars per shift.

A walkout by Johnson workers in the United States last year left Ford with thousands of parked vehicles needing seats.

John Steele, a member of the International Association of Machinists, and Maria Isabel LeBlanc in Toronto; Don Mackle, a member of UAW Local 365 in New York; Dan Fein in Atlanta; and Ian Grant, a member of the TGWU at Ford Dagenham in London, contributed to this column.

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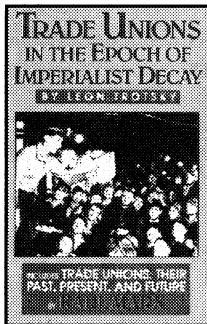
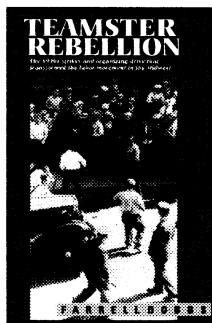
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The author, Farrell Dobbs, was a central organizer of these labor battles during the rise of the CIO, and subsequently national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party.



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LETTERS

Thanks for correction

I am impressed by the candid and thorough correction and admission of error re: the men and women accused of spying for Cuba, which you published in the *Militant* [see October 12 issue]. Most editors tend to be defensive when presented with the kind of criticism the author sent you, and it is to your credit that you published both his letter and a statement understanding and backing up the points he made.

Karen Wald
Havana, Cuba

'Free Tibet' is reactionary

Some co-workers and youth on the campuses have been confused

by the "Free Tibet" movement, seeing it as a struggle by an oppressed nationality for self-determination. A recent news item in the October 2 *New York Times* should help in answering that argument.

"The Dalai Lama's administration acknowledged today that it received \$1.7 million a year in the 1960's from the Central Intelligence Agency, but denied reports that the Tibetan leadership benefited personally from an annual subsidy of \$180,000." The article added that "the money was allocated for the resistance movement [and] was spent on training volunteers and paying for guerrilla operations against the Chinese...."

The decades-long covert pro-

gram, according to the *NYT*, was to support the Tibetan independence movement and part of the CIA's worldwide effort to undermine communist governments.

Over the years similar CIA programs and financing have been exposed that were carried out to undermine the revolutionary government of Cuba since 1959 and Nicaragua in the 1980s.

Mark Friedman
Los Angeles, California

Correcting a translation

In reading the speech of Fidel Castro to the South African National Assembly in *Militant* number 34, I came across the following sentence: "At the same time 80,524

Cuban civilian volunteers, of whom 24,714 are doctors, stomach specialists, nurses, and health technicians...have provided internationalist services in Africa...." The word that Fidel used was "estomatologos." When I was in Cuba some years ago I was curious to see a number of establishments advertising "estomatologos," and I thought that perhaps Cubans had a lot of stomach problems. When I asked, however, I was told that this is the word that is used in Cuba for "dentists."

In the same issue, in the article entitled "The pit of sex scandals and politics of resentment," there is a sentence that reads, "From the standpoint of the working class, it's

much better when every worker could care less about the sex life of Clinton...." From a grammatical and political point of view I think it would be better if every worker couldn't care less about the sex life of Clinton.

Tony Prince,
Cleveland, Ohio

Editors' reply: Thanks, you're right on both counts.

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.

Adams: 'British partition of Ireland means repression and injustice'

BY TONY HUNT

LONDON — "British policy toward Ireland at this time is to uphold the Union. It is to uphold the partition of Ireland," said Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams September 29. "But to uphold the Union means repression, denying civil and human rights, and defending inequality and injustice." Adams was speaking in Blackpool, England, at a "fringe" meeting organized by the *Tribune* newspaper during the annual conference of the governing British Labour Party.

Adams, whose party leads the struggle for a united Ireland and an end to the British occupation in the northern six counties of the island, was speaking amid a rear-guard action being mounted by pro-British Unionists to check the continuing progress of that struggle. David Trimble, leader of the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) and first minister of the new Northern Ireland Assembly, has tried to impose a precondition that the Irish Republican Army (IRA), which is on ceasefire after waging a military campaign to end British rule, begin surrendering or "decommissioning" weapons before a "shadow" executive of the new assembly is formed. Sinn Fein is entitled to two ministerial positions on this executive.

In June the nationalist party increased its share of the vote in elections for the new assembly established by the April 10 Belfast Agreement that called only for "decommissioning" of weapons within two years.

Addressing a September 14 meeting of the assembly, Trimble said, "There can be neither trust nor equality if one party to the agreement is not prepared to destroy their weapons of war." UUP assembly member Reginald Empey stated September 20 that the surrender of some weapons by the IRA, before the formation of the executive, was the "bottom line" for his party. Neither Trimble or Empey made any mention of the weaponry held by the militarized police force, the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), by occupying British troops, or by pro-British right-wing death squads.

The Unionists have also sought to weaken any dynamic toward a united Ireland contained in provisions in the April 10 agreement for a North-South ministerial council, which would involve the Dublin government



Sinn Fein Youth protest in September in front of British barracks Belfast, Northern Ireland.

and other cross-border bodies.

The Unionist maneuvers were even too much for Seamus Mallon, the deputy first minister of the Northern Ireland Assembly and a leader of the reformist Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), the largest nationalist party in Northern Ireland. "I have made it clear to Mr. Trimble and everyone else that there must be a shadow executive, that I will not break the agreement by agreeing to a contrived situation to cover up the fact that the shadow executive has not been formed," Mallon said September 24. Irish Prime Minister Bartholomew Ahern, one of the signatories of the Belfast agreement, stated the next day that decommissioning of weapons was not a precondition to the establishment of the new executive.

London is responsible

"Blair bids to broker deal" was the headline in the Unionist *Belfast Telegraph* during the Labour Party conference, as British prime minister Anthony Blair falsely posed as an impartial go-between while holding meetings with Adams, Mallon, and Trimble. In his remarks September 29, however, Adams placed the responsibility for resolving the developing crisis firmly on this leader of the imperialist government. "There is no such thing as a neutral British government," he declared. "It is not a referee."

Sinn Fein leaders have explained that it is not in their power to hand over IRA weap-

ons. "We don't have weapons. We don't have control of them and we can't deliver them," said Sinn Fein councilor Francie Molloy at a fringe meeting in Blackpool. Molloy explained, "If you look at the history of Ireland there is no history of decommissioning and no history of surrender. Those who talk about token decommissioning are talking about token surrender. That is not in the nature of republicanism...."

Speaking in north Belfast, Gerard Kelly, a Sinn Fein Assembly member, said that nationalists in that area were opposed to the IRA handing in weapons. The residents of north Belfast have sustained around a quarter of all the deaths in the conflict since 1968 at the hands of British forces and "loyalist" death squads, that is those who want to remain "loyal" to the British crown.

In his September 29 speech Adams said that the Unionists' maneuvers were "not about guns or the decommissioning issue" but their "refusal to fully embrace the kind of changes which are required if a genuine peace settlement is to be built."

Divisions in Unionism

Divisions in Unionism also lie behind the recent moves by Trimble. The Ulster Unionist leader, who supported the April 10 agreement, would have to "face down" members of the UUP who were opposed to it, Adams told reporters September 29. At the *Tribune* rally he explained that Unionist divisions

"thus far" were "tactical" between "those who won't countenance a new dispensation based on equality and those who are prepared to do a deal, but only on their terms.... For many Unionists their sense of being more equal than the rest of us is what makes them who they are."

These cracks have continued to widen. In a speech to the Ulster Young Unionist Council's conference October 3, UUP honorary secretary David Brewster attacked the Trimble leadership for accepting the April 10 agreement and said the "the early stages of the disintegration" of the UUP had begun.

The divisions have also been evident over right-wing loyalist mobilizations in Portadown, which continued after the Orange Order was humiliated in early July, when its annual march from the Drumcree church was banned. The yearly round of pro-British marches is aimed at terrorizing and intimidating majority Catholic communities in Northern Ireland and reinforcing the Protestant privileges that are a pillar of British rule. On September 23 Trimble, who is the local member of the Westminster Parliament and a member of the Orange Order, had to be escorted to his car by the RUC when he was confronted by 200 rightists outside a meeting. Marches aimed at intimidating local nationalists have been taking place almost every night. Catholic-owned businesses have been firebombed. But the rightists' support continues to drain away. Some 2,000 people marched in Portadown September 27, for example, not the 10,000 that organizers predicted. The march was followed by skirmishes with the RUC. Protestant Church leaders and local business people with shops in Portadown town center, who are losing money, demand an end to these mobilizations.

Meanwhile, the 67th political prisoner was released October 2 under the terms of the Belfast Agreement. Two hundred prisoners are expected to be freed by year's end. Also, British Army patrols in Belfast ended September 12, and 1,000 British troops were withdrawn two weeks later. Some 16,000 occupying troops remained deployed, however, as well as 13,000 armed members of the RUC. On September 29 RUC chief constable Ronald Flanagan announced the scrapping of a number of military installations in Belfast and along the border.

Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams to tour U.S.

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Pork farmers in Canada protest gov't cuts

BY MARIE-CLAIRE DAVID
AND ANNETTE KOURI

DRUMMONDVILLE, Quebec — After 11 days of stopping traffic on Highway 20, one of the main commercial routes in Quebec, pork producers were forced to take down their blockades by the Quebec Provincial Police September 22. The hog farmers began their protest September 11 to draw attention to the crisis they face and demand that the Quebec government respect its commitment to the Revenue Security Law, which provides some measure of economic stability for farmers.

Jean-Guy Vincent, president of the pork producers association in the Quebec Center region, declared at a press conference on the site that "40 percent of producers can't meet their payments." Because of the collapse of the demand from Asia and increased pork production worldwide, pork prices have dropped from an average of Can\$200 (Can\$1 = US\$0.65) a head to \$110 in one year. Raising each pig costs \$140 a head. With weekly losses reaching \$2,000 to \$3,000, many pork farmers don't think they can hold out until Christmas.

These *Militant* correspondents visited the blockade September 19. Producers brought their hogs, tractors, hay, and troughs and in-

stalled a small pig farm on one side of the highway. Many people driving by showed solidarity by honking their horns.

"We budget in consideration of the law," said hog farmer Lise Trépanier, "but we don't receive what the government owes us; therefore we cannot meet our costs and our suppliers insist more and more on being paid on delivery."

Since 1975 the Revenue Security Law provides for a "Stabilization Insurance Program" in Quebec, where producers contribute according to the number of hogs sold and their profit margin. When producers are forced to sell at a loss, like now, they are supposed to receive a subsidy from the program. Since 1992 the government has been cutting back on those payments, claiming the need to fight the deficit.

According to the Quebec Federation of Pork Producers, the Revenue Security Program for agriculture has been cut by close to \$100 million over the last six years, and the last cut of \$10 per head in June 1997 was just too much. "For a business that has 5,000 pigs, this represents \$50,000 [in lost revenue]," summed up Vincent from the federation.

"We want the government to respect its promises. They say there is no more money

but we don't know where the money went," said Louis Roy L'Avenir, a pork farmer in the Quebec Center region.

The government also argues that producers do make profits and point to some of the huge hog farms. But the majority of the pork farms in Quebec are family owned.

Andre Forcier, a pig farmer who helped to organize the action, explained, "A few years ago there was an emphasis on the family farm. There was a certain stability. The government took away the ceiling and that was the beginning of the mega pig farms." Forcier further explained how this was the basis for the government's argument that producers did not really need any subsidy. "But the big money goes to the big producer.... The government auditor raised the fact that a pork producer recently received \$5 million from the Stabilization Insurance Program, but it's tied to the volume."

There are 3,000 pork producers in Quebec and the industry provides nearly 30,000 jobs. Since the end of the blockade, the Quebec government has begun negotiating with the pork producers.

Annette Kouri is a member of the United Steelworkers of America. Josée Séguin contributed to this article.