

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

'The Cuban revolution ended exploitation of small farmers'

— PAGES 7-10

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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Workers are stronger after year-long Continental Tire strike

BY MIKE ITALIE

ROCK HILL, South Carolina — After one year on strike, members of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 850 are returning to work, strengthened by their fight against Continental General Tire in Charlotte, North Carolina. By a vote of 876 to 289, the strikers approved a new contract with the company September 19. Roger Hall, a tire builder with 8 years at Continental General, said, "I never thought we would be out this long, but after giving back in 1989 and again in 1992 and 1995, people were fed up. That's why we were united; that's why we stood together."

Nearly 1,200 strikers, who had received contract summaries a few days earlier, attended the meeting at the Winthrop Coliseum in Rock Hill to debate and discuss the contract and cast their vote. When the 1,450 tire workers walked off the job Sept. 20, 1998, it became a test of strength between a company aiming to break the union and a united workforce determined to hold its ground, reverse previous concessions, and assert its rights and dignity on the job.

The final six-and-a-half year contract includes substantial pension increases for those with more than 30 years on the job, and offers buyouts to all workers in a company drive to reduce the workforce from 1,450 to 1,300 people. There is a \$0.75 per hour wage increase over the life of the contract, cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) will be put in effect, and for the first time 12-hour shifts will be instituted.

Sixty days into the strike the company had begun hiring scabs, and ran production with over 700 of these strikebreakers along with supervisory personnel. Continental General president Bernd Frangenberg announced in January 1999 that "It will be a sticky point."

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Contributions are needed now for Pathfinder fund drive

BY LUIS MADRID

"The success of the three-pronged effort to publish, promote, and distribute Pathfinder books necessitates sharply stepping up the pace of contributions to the Pathfinder Fund," said Michael Baumann in an interview.

"We need funds to take advantage of the new openings to sell Pathfinder books to an increasing number of working people," added the managing editor of Pathfinder. "And we need them now. Every dollar that comes in can be put to good use—right away."

As we approach the halfway point in the drive, 12 percent of the goal—nearly \$15,000—has been received by Pathfinder. With a handful of areas yet to report, goals adopted by supporters of the fund internationally add up to \$112,500. This is still short of the goal of raising \$125,000 by the fund's November 15 deadline.

Baumann described expanding openings and

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Australian, U.S. troops out of East Timor now!

Strutting onto the United Nations stage September 21, U.S. president William Clinton sanctimoniously defended his sending of U.S. troops to East Timor as part of an occupation force disguised as "peacekeepers." More such "humanitarian interventions" will be carried out elsewhere in the world, he warned.

But the soldiers from Australia, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, and the United States, among others, are

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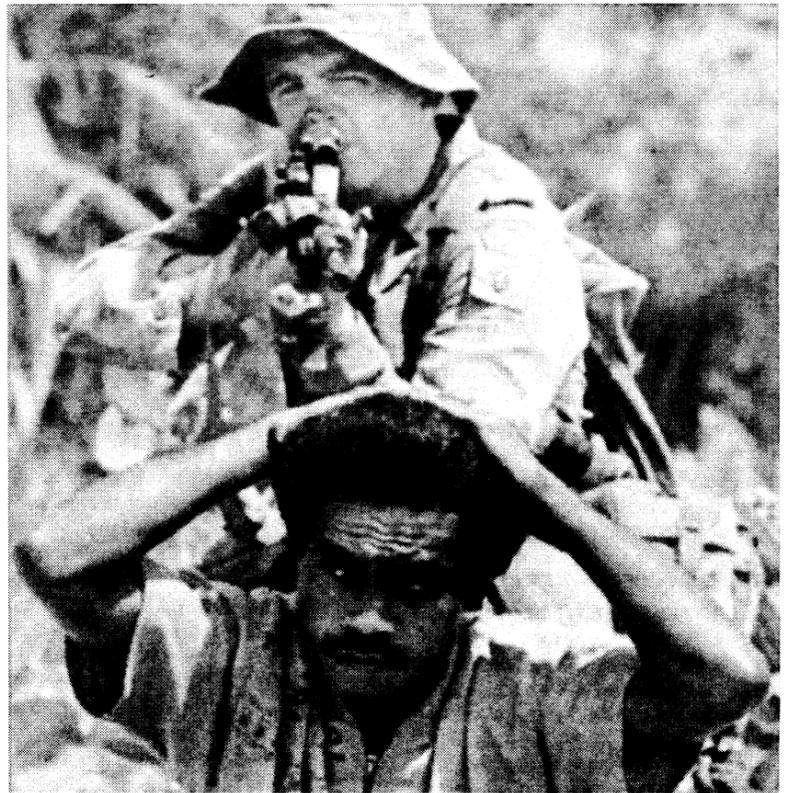
Imperialist troops land in East Timor

BY BOBAIKEN AND LINDA HARRIS

SYDNEY, Australia — Some 2,500 troops, spearheaded by Australian infantry, landed in Dili September 20 beginning an imperialist intervention aimed at "restoring order" in East Timor. Indonesian president B.J. Habibie agreed September 12 to the deployment of "peacekeepers" from "friendly nations" in the territory, where a large majority voted for independence from Indonesia August 30.

Commanded by Australian Maj. Gen. Peter Cosgrove, the United Nations-mandated International Force for East Timor (Interfet) is due to increase to 7,500 troops in the coming weeks. Around 400 New Zealand troops and 250 British Army Gurkhas soldiers were among the first forces to land, with troops from Thailand and the Philippines also involved. Nine warships from Australia, New Zealand, and Britain, carrying troops and heavy equipment are off the East Timor coast.

U.S. ambassador to the UN Richard Holbrooke declared September 17, "This is not a peacekeeping force, with all the complications that entails. It is a force controlled by Australia that can use all necessary measures to achieve its objective." Referring to the UN force organized by Euro-



Australian soldier in Dili aims at a Timorese for allegedly carrying weapons

pean powers in Bosnia in the early 1990s, which didn't have Washington's backing, he said, "What has to be remembered is that, unlike the misbegotten [UN] forces of Bosnia, the multinational force will shoot first

and ask questions later."

Admiral Dennis Blair, commander-in-chief of the U.S. forces in the Pacific, said he was "very optimistic" about Indonesian army cooperation. As "the biggest mother in the valley" the Interfet force had the power to domi-

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Ultrarightist Patrick Buchanan probes Reform Party presidential nomination

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

Ultrarightist politician Patrick Buchanan, who has been running for president as a Republican in the 2000 elections, has said he is seriously considering a break with the Republican Party and a bid for the presidential nomination in the Reform Party.

Speaking September 12 on the NBC TV program "Meet the Press," Buchanan denounced the Republicans as a "Xerox copy" of the Democrats and charged that the Republican contest was "closed and rigged" with the well-financed candidacies of Gov. George Bush of Texas and Malcolm Forbes Jr.

"I think what we have here is a one-party system in Washington, D.C., that is masquerading as a two-party system, and I think what we need is a real opposition party," he stated. He said he will announce his decision on whether to run in the Reform Party in mid-

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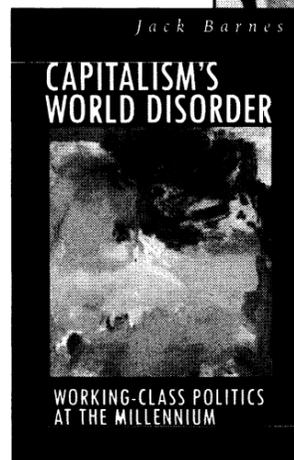
CAPITALISM'S WORLD DISORDER: WORKING-CLASS POLITICS AT THE MILLENNIUM

Jack Barnes

"It is often said that great historical crises are only resolved in struggle; that's true. But what is not said as often is that the odds — the probability of victory or of loss — are determined long before these class battles themselves break out. The odds depend on the self-confidence, political clarity, and previous combat experience of the cadres of disciplined proletarian organizations who are already among the fighters in the labor movement, and who know that what they do *beforehand* will be decisive when the working class moves toward revolutionary action."

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**Moscow bombs Chechnya,
rounds up Muslim immigrants**

Moscow announced September 18 that its military launched air and artillery strikes against Chechnya to crush rebels based there, who they claim have organized raids into neighboring Dagestan. Moscow said Russian warplanes would have flown up to 100 sorties by the end of that day. The Kremlin began to beat the war drums against Chechnya and ordered a crackdown on Chechens and others from Russia's Caucasus region after a spate of explosions in Moscow and other cities that killed 294 people in two weeks. Russian troops have been fighting a war in Dagestan against rebels pushing for independence of that region, who reportedly receive support from inside neighboring Chechnya.

"The main threat is coming from Chechnya," said Moscow's mayor Yuri M. Luzhkov, announcing the crackdown on Chechens and other Muslims from the Caucasus. Although no one has claimed responsibility for the explosions, police blame Chechen militants. Beginning September 14 Russian cops mounted sweeping search operations at Moscow's airports, railway stations, markets, and in private homes to check residence permits. Those unable to produce proper documents received notice of expulsion from the city. Russian interior minister Vladimir Rushailo announced September 17 that more than 11,000 people had been detained for questioning.

Killers ordered out of UK army

Sinn Fein parliamentary representative Gerry Kelly welcomed the ruling of the Belfast High Court that two soldiers convicted of murdering a man be thrown out of the British army. The September 3 decision overturns an Army order that Scots Guards James Fisher and Mark Wright can remain in the ranks. The soldiers were convicted of shooting Peter McBride in North Belfast in September 1992. Sentenced to life imprisonment, they were released by British Secretary of State Maureen Mowlam after having served only six years.

"Fisher and Wright shot an unarmed teenager in the back," said Kelly. "Any attempt by the British Army to retain the killers... will show once again that they believe themselves to be above the law. They have dem-



Palestinian prisoners freed by Tel Aviv take bus to Ramallah, West Bank, September 9.

onstrated this belief on countless occasions in the Six Counties throughout the past 30 years."

Tel Aviv cedes West Bank land

The Israeli government announced September 10 it had "transferred" power on 7 percent of West Bank land (about 160 square miles) to the Palestinian Authority (PA). Tel Aviv, however, will maintain military control over the area. The move came one day after the Zionist regime released about 200 Palestinian prisoners as part of the deal Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian Authority chairman Yasser Arafat signed early September.

These concessions on the part of Tel Aviv are a result of the unbroken resistance by Palestinian working people for the right to a sovereign nation. The PA will take control of land registries and issuance of building permits. This is important given the continued provocations by Zionist forces that attempt to occupy territories that are supposed to be transferred to the PA. The agreement originally called for Tel Aviv to withdraw from 11 percent of the West Bank. Less than 5 per-

cent of Palestinian land is under full Palestinian Authority control.

New Zealand First woos farmers

The leader of the New Zealand First party, Winston Peters, has stepped up his nationalist rhetoric as the party competes for the electoral support of working farmers in the general election scheduled for later this year. Speaking to Northland dairy farmers in early September, he said that the New Zealand economy is based on "cheap imports, on cheap exports, and a quaint people performing for tourists." He opposed legislation that allows for the creation of a massive dairy company that will process more than half the country's milk supply, saying that it would make "grassroots farmers... enslaved serfs" of foreign business owners.

Peters, a former National Party cabinet minister, built New Zealand First into an electoral force in the last election three years ago, with a campaign blaming better-off immigrants for many of the country's ills. His demagoguery targeted recent arrivals from Asian countries in particular.

U.S. gov't presses for military action against Colombia rebels

Washington has "strongly urged [Colombian president Andrés] Pastrana to be more aggressive in meeting the combined guerrilla and drug trafficking challenge," the *New York Times* reported September 18. The White House "drug czar," Gen. Barry McCaffrey, has called for at least \$1 billion to be used for beefing up the Colombian military and police. The Clinton administration has already promised Colombia's regime \$289 million for its police and military that includes six Blackhawk helicopters, patrol boats, high-power machine guns, and other weapons and ammunition.

In response to this prod, the government is

preparing to escalate military action against guerrilla forces there if negotiations with them collapse, presidential aide Jaime Ruiz told a group of reporters in Bogotá September 17. "A country cannot bet everything on a peace process," said Ruiz, who outlined a "peace plan" to strengthen the army under the guise of fighting the drug trade. President Andrés Pastrana will meet with U.S. president William Clinton the following week to discuss the plan, which calls for a \$3.5 billion aid package from Washington.

House committee passes bill aimed at right to choose abortion

In another probe against a woman's right to choose abortion, the House Judiciary Committee approved the "Unborn Victims of Violence Act" on September 14. The measure was backed by Congressional opponents of the right to choose and the National Right to Life Committee, which touted it as "a major new right-to-life bill." The bill would impose punishment if a fetus inside a pregnant woman was harmed during the course of a criminal act. Similar measures have been passed in 11 states.

Black workers to sue rail bosses

A three-judge panel of the United States Court of Appeals ruled July 30 that some 1,300 Black workers — past and present employees — at the Metro-North Railroad in New York can file a class-action lawsuit charging the company with racial discrimination. The complaint includes unfair disciplinary policies for tardiness and safety violations, as well as discriminatory promotion practices.

The workers have relied on company records to back their claims against the Metro-North bosses. "We conclude that class plaintiffs' statistical evidence supports a finding of commonality," said Judge Jon Newman, a member of the panel. The July 30 decision overturned a ruling by the Federal District Court in Manhattan last year that said the attorneys for the workers failed to prove the company discriminated against Blacks.

Farmers charge USDA with discrimination against women

Mary Visconti, Mary Ordille, and Anna Codario are three farmers in southern New Jersey who filed complaints with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in 1981 and 1986 saying they were denied requests for low interest loans because of they are women and Italian. They are among at least 50 women across the United States who are fighting for financial compensation for being denied services offered by the USDA.

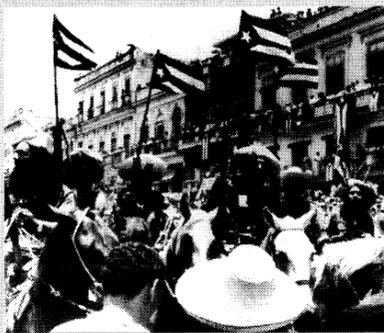
Thousands of farmers who are Black are still fighting for financial compensation even after Secretary of Agriculture Daniel Glickman admitted racist practices permeated the government agency.

— PATRICK O'NEILL
MAURICE WILLIAMS

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France: Farmers protest low farm prices

BY JEAN-LOUIS SALFATI

PARIS — Thousands of farmers have been demonstrating in the streets throughout France in September, protesting declining farm income following a steep drop in prices of agricultural products.

Hundreds of farmers answered the call of the FNSEA, the country's largest farmers union, and demonstrated September 10 in front of dozens of prefectures, the local centers of the government administration.

These rallies follow dozens of similar actions that have been taking place throughout France on a daily basis. On September 2, about 350 dairy farmers in the Mayenne region demonstrated in front of several giant milk distributors and supermarkets protesting falling milk prices. Big industrial dairy companies had just announced their decision to lower milk prices by 5.4 centimes a liter. In the suburbs of Rennes in the Brittany region, 200 farmers blocked access to a supermarket. Similar actions took place in other regions the same day.

In Saint-Rémy-de-Provence in southern France, several dozen fruit and vegetable farmers dumped potatoes in front of two supermarkets. The same day a hundred dairy farmers blocked access to the Danone factory in Neufchâtel-en-Bray. Danone is a giant capitalist corporation that dominates the milk industry.

On August 27, some 50 farmers from Cavaillon in southern France forced the assistant director of a local supermarket to pick apples on a nearby farm while wearing a poster saying, "My occupation: I kidnap the farmers' income."

Nationalist actions in August

In August a number of actions of an openly nationalist character were organized by the Confédération Paysanne (Peasant Confederation), a smaller group representing 19 percent of farmers in France. The larger FNSEA represents 60 percent of farmers.

These actions advanced the French bourgeoisie's "anti-Americanism," directed at beating competition from Washington by rallying support for French protectionism.



Farmers in Avignon, southern France, dump apples near the town hall September 10, protesting new U.S. tariffs on French products. Many are drawn into nationalist actions, while others put fire on French rulers and get encouragement from labor struggles.

They were directed against McDonald's, seen here as a symbol of the influence and dominance in Europe of the U.S. ruling class. These actions were launched after a decision by the U.S. government to raise customs duties on various French products to 100 percent in retaliation for the decision to forbid the importation of beef from the United States from cattle treated with hormones.

During an action on August 12, which tried to break up a McDonald's under construction in Millau, located in the center of France, José Bové, a central leader of the Confédération Paysanne, was arrested.

A campaign with clearly anti-American character developed throughout the country to free Bové. It brought together forces from the far left to the far right. Bové was finally freed after posting 105,000 francs (US\$1 = 6 FF) bail. One third of the bail came from U.S. farmers organizations.

Upon leaving prison, Bové declared that "the struggle continues in Seattle at the millennium round," referring to the upcoming meeting of the World Trade Organization

in the United States.

Talking about the large support he got from both ends of the political spectrum, Bové declared: "In jail, what surprised me the most is that politicians from all sides have supported the meaning of our action. From Voynet [Green Party, part of the government coalition] to Saint-Josse [right wing] and from Krivine [Revolutionary Communist League] to Sarkozy [Gaullists]. There is a national consensus against 'junk food.' So let's take advantage of this momentum in public opinion to create the necessary balance of force before Seattle." Asked if he was not troubled by support from the fascist National Front of Le Pen, he answered that some people supported him without him asking them to do so.

Interior Minister Jean-Pierre Chevènement declared that while not supporting the form of action he easily understood the meaning of actions against McDonald's.

Not all farmers are sidetracked by the nationalist anti-American campaign. Many

don't see Washington, but Paris, as the center of their problems. A dozen farmers came from the Lot-et-Garonne department in southern France to protest and sell their goods in front of Montparnasse station in Paris on Saturday, September 11. They put up a large poster of the National Center of Young Farmers (CNJA) denouncing "the racket" of the big supermarkets.

Many farmers aim fire at employers

"All their profits are made on our backs," one of the farmers who did not give his name told passersby. In discussions with *Militant* reporters, none of these farmers even mentioned the United States. They instead put great emphasis on the super profits made by the supermarkets and other merchants and big corporations. "Look at the fusion of Promodès and Carrefour," said one of the farmers. "They control everything and have us by the throat when they impose their own prices!" Promodès and Carrefour recently announced their future merger, giving birth to the second largest retail distributor in the world after the U.S. giant Wall Mart.

Two other events have given emphasis to this point of view. The first one was the announcement by Michelin, the giant tire company, that it would cut 7,500 jobs in Europe in the next three months.

This sparked anger among large layers of workers and working farmers all over France. Trade unions in Clermont-Ferrand, where the headquarters and main factories of the company are located, announced a one-day walkout and a national demonstration in the town on September 21.

Champagne workers walk out

The other event on the front page of newspapers was the two-day strike by workers who manufacture champagne. Through "negotiations" to implement the new 35-hour workweek law, the bosses of this highly profitable industry launched an offensive against workers by trying to change the framework of the champagne workers contract. They tried to cancel the champagne agreement and impose the wine and spirits one, which is less advantageous to employees.

One thousand workers demonstrated September 17 in front of Bruno Paillard Champagne, near Reims. The strike started the day before, paralyzing virtually the entire industry.

"This contract pays 30 percent less than ours," said Thierry Cordier, a General Confederation of Workers (CGT) member who was outside the building with a few other workers waiting to know the results of the negotiations taking place there. "We are ready to strike for weeks if they don't change their mind. Our future is at stake."

Eighty percent of the production workers at Mumm and 95 percent at Piper-Heidsieck are on strike, the *Militant* reporters were told. Among the demands, apart from keeping the same contract, is to impose the same wage for temporary and permanent workers, to not include the break time in the reduction of working hours, and a 3 percent wage increase. "With the current contract, they're allowed to employ up to 10 percent of temporary workers. They're well over the top," Cordier said. "Wine harvest is due to start Tuesday," he added. "It's their choice whether grapes will be picked or not. This is our first strike at a time of harvest since 1986. We won't move."

Cuban farmers tour British Columbia

BY AIDEN BALL

VERNON, British Columbia — "The most significant thing that has been accomplished on the tour has been everything regarding affection and solidarity between us," stated Alcides López Labrada. A representative of the International Relations Department of the Cuban Ministry of Agriculture, López spoke at the Vernon Farmers Market in the Okanogan Valley August 30. López was part of a delegation of 27 Cuban farmers, scientists, engineers and officials from numerous provinces throughout the Caribbean nation who were on a 21-day tour of British Columbia's farmland.

The Cubans, traveling in a tour bus, had visited farms, agricultural research centers, a packinghouse, and a number of other agricultural related places before coming to the Vernon Farmers Market. At the market the Cubans braved a torrential downpour as they toured the various produce stands.

The tour of the Cuban farmers was part of a Canada-Cuba farmer exchange program organized by farmers, agriculturists, and nongovernmental organizations from British Columbia in collaboration with Cuban counterparts. Earlier this year, as part of the exchange, 20 farmers from British Columbia visited Cuba and toured the island's farmland.

Neil Butler, a greenhouse farmer from Armstrong, British Columbia, who had a stand at the market, had heard much about the tour from a farmer in his region of the Okanogan who had gone to Cuba. The agrarian reforms that were at the heart of the Cuban revolution and eliminated the class exploitation of working farmers make a big impression on family farmers here who find out about that example (see feature on pages 7-8). Butler said he had done some reading on Cuba since his discussion with the fellow farmer and would like to have gone to Cuba himself. "I understand that they hold farmers in higher regard in Cuba than they do here," he stated. "Here the farmer has to eke out a living."

The last couple of years have been hard for orchard farmers in the Okanogan Valley. Randy Kubbernus, an orchard farmer

with a five-acre orchard in Oyama, British Columbia, lost 90 percent of his cherry crop this year and was reduced to dealing solely in peaches. He explained that cool morning temperatures and frost had been responsible for this. It wasn't just cherries that were hit, all crops of fruits and vegetables in the Okanogan were at least two weeks late in ripening this year. Last year fruit crops were damaged by unusually hot weather.

This crop damage, coupled with low commodity prices offered by the packinghouses, has devastated small orchard farmers in the Okanogan. As a result many small orchard farmers, like Randy Kubbernus, now rely entirely on the farmers markets for their income as they could not receive enough return from the packinghouses to survive. In response to this growing crisis, approximately 400 orchard farmers, predominately apple growers, held a rally on the lawn of the British Columbia legislature in Victoria in May demanding emergency aid.

Over the course of their tour here, the Cubans met with 600 farmers and visited a total of 120 farms throughout the province. Their visit concluded with a September 9 public meeting at the Roundhouse Community Center in Vancouver. The gathering, which was attended by approximately 150 people, summarized the tour and what was accomplished.

At the meeting the Cubans were able to explain the gains that have been made in agricultural production in Cuba. López, the head of the Cuban delegation, described the special period in which Cuba lost more than 80 percent of its foreign trade as a result of the abrupt end of trade relations on fair terms with the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and the sudden need for Cuban products to compete in the world capitalist market. As a result, Cuba had to drastically cut petroleum imports and production and use of fertilizers and pesticides. Out of necessity they also shifted a greater portion of agriculture from mechanized farming to organic cultivation. Through this experience Cuban farmers have discovered many positive aspects of organic farming, López said, and have made other improvements in agri-

cultural production. For example, they are now able to produce a more diverse variety of crops. They also concluded they didn't need some of the fertilizers and pesticides they relied upon under the previous system.

At the end of the meeting, López presented a gift to Wendy Holmes, the main organizer of the tour in British Columbia. He gave her a copy of the letter Ernesto Che Guevara wrote to Cuban president Fidel Castro upon leaving Cuba for the guerrilla campaign in Bolivia in the late 1960s. In the letter, Che, the Argentine-born revolutionary who became one of the central leaders of the Cuban revolution, explains the importance of proletarian internationalism. In presenting the letter, López said the Canada-Cuba farmers tour was in the spirit of that internationalism.

Aiden Ball is a member of the Young Socialists and an activist in the Cuban Youth Tour 2000 Committee.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Upcoming Labor and Farm Actions

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One Year Anniversary Rallies to Back Locked-out Kaiser Aluminum Workers

SPOKANE, WASHINGTON
Rally 2 p.m. October 2 at Trentwood Local Union,
14015 E. Trent Ave

For more information, visit
www.USWA329.org
NEWARK, OHIO

Rally 11 a.m. October 3 at Frontier Ranch on York Rd, 10 miles west of Newark

For more information call:
(740) 928-4494 or (614) 888-6784

Sat., October 2

The Struggle for Justice Continues: Second Anniversary of Steel-

workers Lockout in Pueblo, Colorado

11 a.m. to 8 p.m. at Bessemer Park,
800 W. Northern Ave., Pueblo
For more information call: (710) 566-9056.

Sat., October 16

March for Immigrants' Rights
Washington, D.C. — Assemble 10 a.m. at Malcolm X Park. For more information call: (212) 473-3936 or 633-7108.

Sat., October 16

Rally and March for Justice for Max Antoine

Irvington, New Jersey — Join protest at noon to demand justice for Max Antoine, brutally beaten by cops. At Irvington Police Station, 1 Civic Plaza. For more information call: (201) 487-1531.

'There is a demand for these ideas among workers'

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

On September 19, when members of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 850 voted on a new contract at a meeting in Rock Hill, South Carolina, they mixed and mingled with members of a team selling *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium* (see front-page ad). "We sold one copy of the book, and three other workers invited us to contact them later about buying it," Floyd Fowler told the *Militant* in a phone interview September 22. The team of 10 socialist unionists and Young Socialists members hailed from Atlanta, Birmingham, and Washington D.C.

"We were very well received," said Fowler. Fifty-six workers bought copies of the *Militant*. Several team members had traveled many miles to bring solidarity to the Continental General Tire picket lines on many occasions over the year of the strike. "Maybe 10," said Fowler when asked how many times socialist workers from Atlanta have made the trip. They have sold "around 14 introductory subscriptions to the *Militant*" over the last 12 months.

"Four workers have renewed their subscriptions," said Fowler. One who took out a six-month subscription was "a member of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) at Eastern Airlines who struck for 686 days in 1989-91." Earlier this year he had bought a copy of the Pathfinder book *The Eastern Airlines Strike* by Ernie Mailhot and others. "Every month he goes to a meeting of ex-Eastern strikers, and the book's been going hand-to-hand." This USWA member also bought a copy of *New International* no. 11 featuring "U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War."

Another worker who is Native American

has taken out a year's subscription to the *Militant*, and already owns *Capitalism's World Disorder*. Several members of his family are farmers.

"Outside the meeting we sold the one copy of *Capitalism's World Disorder* to a striker I had met on the parade on the 3,000-strong Labor Day parade in Charlotte," Fowler continued. "We ended up talking not so much about the strike as about the September 10 ruling by a federal judge to end busing in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school district. All his kids grew up in the Charlotte school system and benefited from busing. Under this desegregation measure, a lot of kids who were Black were bused from the city to the suburbs, and students from white families went the other way. Without busing, the city schools will be overcrowded, and there will be empty classrooms in the suburbs."

"This guy is attuned to the *Militant's* view that we should defend affirmative action measures, and he was very interested in *Capitalism's World Disorder*."

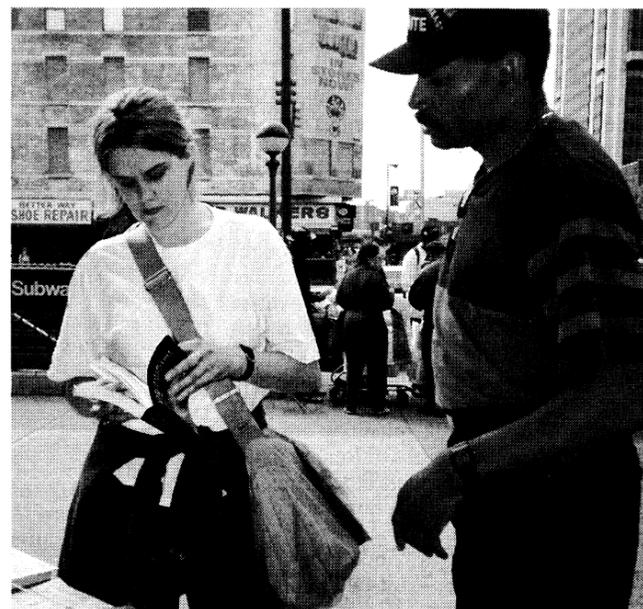
Many store owners who cater to a working-class clientele appreciate meeting face to face socialists selling Pathfinder books.

This was underlined in the story reported by Andy Buchanan, a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE) Local 1733 in Paterson, New Jersey. Along with Elena Tate from the New York Young Socialists, Buchanan traveled to Eastern Pennsylvania September 19-20. "We visited a bookstore in the town of Jim Thorpe, tucked away in the mountains in the southeastern corner of the coalfields. We came on the store by accident," said Buchanan in a note to the *Militant*.

"The owner told us that he had just decided to build up the bookstore part of his

business, particularly with titles on the coalfield and its history. He took one look at the newly-reprinted pamphlet *Coal Miners on Strike* about the 1977 coal strike (see ad on page 11), and ordered five copies. We showed him *Capitalism's World Disorder* and drew his attention to the picture of the Jeddo miners strike last year. The Jeddo mine is about 15 miles north of Jim Thorpe. We got into quite a discussion about the idea that a sea-change in working-class politics is already behind us and what that means for the possibilities of selling books to workers.

"We told him that we were getting out to small towns and to stores like his because there is a demand from workers for the ideas in Pathfinder books. Just that morning, we told him, we had been talking on the picket line to steelworkers on strike against ZCA in nearby Palmerton, and they had given us some leads on other stores to visit. He ordered two copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder*. The store owner was clearly impressed by this approach to selling books. He told us 'You've got all these 1-800 numbers and web-sites, but I'll give my business to someone who visits and talks to me



Militant/Hilda Cuzco

Selling *Capitalism's World Disorder* in New York City

any day."

"He ended up paying up front for an order of nearly \$250, including several books on women's liberation and labor history, and five copies of the pamphlet *Genocide Against the Indians* by George Novack. We were able to leave the two copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder* with him when we left."

Over the next couple of weeks the *Militant* will carry reports from teams in the Western coalfields, Southern Georgia and Tidewater, Virginia areas. Other reports of promotion and placement of *Capitalism's World Disorder* are welcome.

Tire workers are stronger after one-year strike

Continued from front page but the [permanent replacements] are going to stay."

Under the contract, however, 900 strikers will go back to work immediately, and the remainder are guaranteed to return within six months while receiving 80 percent of their pay.

Strikers never broke

The strikers never broke. They maintained their seven-day around-the-clock picket lines. Everyone points with pride to the fact that 99 percent of union members refused to cross the picketline in the year-long walkout.

Local 850 held rallies outside the factory gates, won support from workers throughout the Charlotte area, and began to reach out in solidarity with other unionists in struggle. Strike rallies were joined by workers from the two other Continental General plants in the U.S. — union members from the plants in Mayfield, Kentucky, and Bryan, Ohio, and workers trying to organize a union at the factory in Mount Vernon, Illinois. More than 30 Local 850 members attended the September 11 rally in Natchez, Mississippi, on the anniversary of the strike of Steelworkers against Titan Tire (see article on page 11). Local 850 also led 3,000 workers on September 6 in Charlotte's first-ever Labor Day parade.

Striker Brenda Roach, a tire builder with 26 years at the plant, pointed to "regional issues" involved in the strike, that compa-

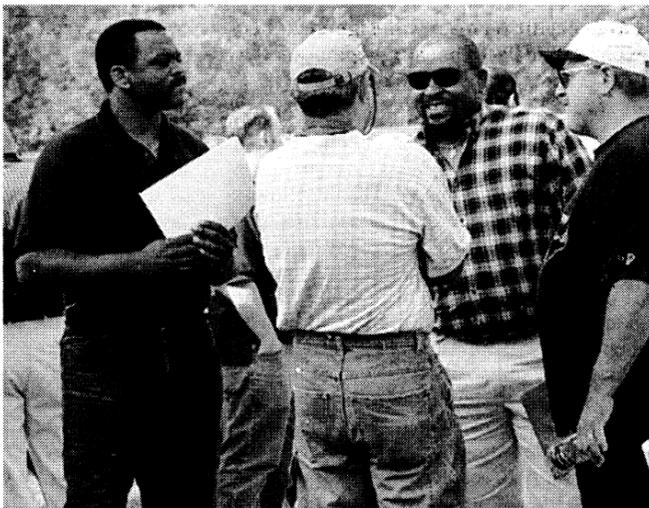
nies think workers in the South "should only look forward to lower wages." When big-business papers like the *Charlotte Observer* print articles on the strike they often crow that North and South Carolina have the two lowest rates of unionization among the 50 states.

But like many others, Roach was happy to see the victory of 5,000 workers at the Fieldcrest Cannon mill in nearby Kannapolis, North Carolina, who voted in the union three months ago. "It's been up for a vote a lot of times," she said of the textile workers election victory, "We in the South are stronger with unions."

Tire builder Greg Roseboc expressed similar feelings, asking "Why do we have to be treated like this? I saw more solidarity than I ever saw before, we didn't stand alone," he said, explaining the linking up of other labor fights in the region from Newport News, Virginia, to Natchez, Mississippi.

In the course of the strike the USWA International led a campaign focusing on the fact that the company is owned by Continental AG, a German corporation. Although full-page ads were placed in national and local papers claiming the problem was that "German executives are double-crossing American workers," workers on the picketline and solidarity rallies did not present the issue as one of "Germans vs. Americans."

The big-business press took note of the settlement in Charlotte. "Long wary of the Deep South, organized labor has made inroads below the Mason-Dixon Line this year to score some impressive wins," was the lead of an article in the September 16 *Wall Street Journal*, titled "Labor unions make headway in



Militant/Stu Singer

Continental General Tire strikers discuss proposed contract before vote Sunday, Sept. 19, 1999 in Rock Hill, South Carolina, just south of Charlotte, North Carolina.

southern states."

"Labor's latest victory came yesterday when the United Steelworkers of America announced a tentative deal to return 1,450 striking workers to a Continental General Tire Inc. plant in Charlotte, N.C.," the article continued. "Labor also scored gains this year in other Southern organizing campaigns. Last month, a Steelworkers local representing 9,200 people at Newport News Shipbuilding in Newport News, Va., ratified a contract ending a 15-week strike that brought workers significant wage gains. And in June in Kannapolis, N.C., the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees won a tentative victory in a lengthy battle to unionize more than 5,200 Fieldcrest Cannon workers."

While both the bourgeois press and USWA top officials described the Continental settlement as an unequivocal victory before workers even saw the contract, unionists in the Charlotte area had a variety of views on the deal.

A range of opinions on the contract

Strikers expressed a range of opinions about the terms of the new contract. James Williams has worked 31 years at the plant. "This is the best we're going to get and I'm taking it," he said. Like a number of other

workers interviewed, Williams stated, "I plan to immediately retire. With this contract my pension will go from \$850 per month to about \$1,600."

Maintenance worker John Richmond, who worked 18 years at B.F. Goodrich in Akron, Ohio, before starting at General Tire 13 years ago, said he voted for the contract even though "I have mixed emotions. It's not everything we wanted, but it has reopening clauses" for pension benefits in 2003.

Williams did not like the new mandatory 12-hour work schedule, with overtime only paid after 40 hours worked in a week. "People fought a long time for the 8-hour day," he pointed out, "and to go back to 12 hours is going back to the time of Andrew Carnegie!"

Strikers voting "no" on the contract expressed their dissatisfaction by pointing to the imposition of 12-hour shifts, a 75-cent per hour wage increase over the six-and-a-half year contract, and the six-month "transition period" in the bargaining agreement during which workers hired to break the strike will stay on the job.

The biggest issue for many strikers was having to go back to work with strikebreakers. Wayne Jamison, a 28-year veteran of the plant, was both happy and thoughtful while relaxing after the contract vote totals were announced. He spoke of his participation in the solidarity rally for Titan Tire strikers a week earlier, and explained that at Continental General "It's been a tough fight. But only 14 union members crossed the line. We could have toughed it out even longer if we had to." Jamison liked the contract because "there's an improvement in money and pensions, there's more than when we went out. The only problem," he concluded, "is that the scabs will still be in the plant. But they will be out in six months" and all the strikers will be back.

Jackie Knight, a cover operator with 13 years at the plant, spoke for most of the strikers when she said, "We stood our ground and stayed out together. So we won more together this time than the strike in 1989."

Pointing to another potential fight down the road, Knight said, "Now we're hoping the workers at the plant in Mt. Vernon, Illinois, will vote in the union and join us."

Mike Italie is a member of UNITE Local 1997 in Atlanta, Georgia. Roberto Guerrero from Birmingham, Alabama, contributed to this article.

Young Socialists/Socialist Workers Party East Coast educational conference Philadelphia, October 2-3

Saturday, October 2

6 p.m. Dinner and raffle to kick off YS fund drive
8 p.m. Forum: "Puerto Rico: Independence is a Necessity" followed by party

Sunday, October 3

10 a.m. and 3 p.m.
Classes and discussion on *Teamster Rebellion* by Farrell Dobbs, and *To the Rural Poor* by V.I. Lenin

12 Noon
Young Socialists meeting to discuss fall perspectives

District Council 47 AFSCME 1606 Walnut St.

For more information, contact:
Philadelphia: (215) 546-8218; Newark: (973) 643-3341; New York: (718) 399-7257.

Contributions are needed now for Pathfinder Fund

Continued from front page
accomplishments in three areas: new books to be published this fall and winter, several dozen reprints currently in the pipeline, and initial results from the campaign to place *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium* in libraries, bookstores, and a variety of other stores around the world.

Five new books coming soon

For a small publisher, Baumann explained, "Pathfinder has an extremely ambitious publishing and promotion schedule. With the help of volunteer translators, designers, proofreaders, and typesetters, we'll be bringing out five new books in the next few months."

The top priority is answering those who have been asking when *Capitalism's World Disorder* will be available in Spanish and French. Volunteer translators are working full steam now to ensure that at least the Spanish-language translation will be in print prior to the Havana International Book Fair, in February 2000. The French-language translation will be published about the same time.

The first new book to come out this fall is *Making History: Interviews with Four Generals of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces*. It is scheduled for publication in October. These revolutionaries tell the story of the campaigns in which they personally participated during the last four decades to help advance struggles to end class exploitation and for national liberation, from the Sierra Maestra and Bay of Pigs in Cuba, to the Middle East, Nicaragua, and the victory over the apartheid army in southern Africa. *Making*

History will be featured by Pathfinder at the international book fair in Guadalajara, Mexico, in November, one of the largest book fairs in the world.

The Spanish edition, which will be brought out at the same time by Editora Política, the publishing house of the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party, is scheduled to be presented at the fair as well.

Also this fall Pathfinder will bring out *Che Guevara Talks to Young People*—an entirely new collection of speeches and writings by the Argentine-born leader of the Cuban revolution. To be released by Pathfinder in December, the book will be possible thanks to the collaboration from Havana-based Editora Abril, the publishing house of the Union of Young Communists.

Promotional materials for the new titles will be highlighted at the New York Pathfinder Bookstore's booth during the New York Is Book Country fair, September 26. A display featuring *Making History* will also be used to encourage book fair attendants to make donations to the Pathfinder Fund.

New step forward in reprint program

At the same time, thanks to the work of volunteers in the field turning Pathfinder's entire arsenal into digital form, and in Pathfinder's print shop, the pace has picked up on the reprint program as well. All 350 Pathfinder titles are being reprinted in new, easier-to-read type, and some with new covers as well.

"Two reprints we want to call special attention to are due out next month, just in time for celebration of the October 1917 revolution by workers and farmers in Russia," Baumann

said.

Leon Trotsky's *History of the Russian Revolution* will be re-issued, as will *Teamster Politics*, part of the four-volume series by Farrell Dobbs on the 1930s strikes and organizing drive that transformed the labor movement in a big chunk of the Midwest into a fighting industrial union movement.

Baumann noted that while Pathfinder is out of stock of many more books than it would like to be—some 65 at last count—an indication of the tide beginning to turn came last month. In August the income from filling back orders of recently reprinted books—\$5,200—was greater than the loss from orders of out-of-stock titles for the first time in more than a year. Titles sold that month included *To Speak the Truth* by Fidel Castro and Ernesto Che Guevara, *Rosa Luxemburg Speaks*, and Leon Trotsky's *Women and the Family*.

Once the books are in electronic form, Baumann added, they can be printed virtu-

Making HISTORY

Interviews with four generals of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces



Cover for the soon-to-be-published book *Making History*. Contributions to Pathfinder fund make new titles like this possible.

ally on demand. A recent example was *How Far We Slaves Have Come!* by Nelson Mandela and Fidel Castro. Pathfinder's print shop is going to be able to reprint it within a week to meet a last-minute classroom order for more than a hundred copies.

Best seller: *Capitalism's World Disorder*

"Right now," Baumann said, "the presses are rolling to bring out the third printing of our best-selling book this year, *Capitalism's World Disorder* by Socialist Workers Party national secretary Jack Barnes." Since the book was released at the beginning of March, more than 3,000 copies have been sold internationally.

Orders for *Capitalism's World Disorder* are beginning to come in from "bookstores, large and small, recently visited by Pathfinder sales volunteers following up on the suggestions by co-workers, farmers, students and others."

To expand its base of accounts and the sales of its books and pamphlets, Pathfinder is offering special credit terms in the course of the campaign (see letter on this page).

In the midst of these efforts, Baumann said, a large regional wholesaler based in the South sent in an order for more than 90 titles from the entire range of Pathfinder's arsenal.

The Pathfinder staff themselves will be participating in regional sales trips that combine visits to stores, plant gates, college campuses, and farms. Baumann will be joining a team in the western coal fields at the end of the month.

The 40th anniversary of the Cuban revolution will be the theme of several Pathfinder Fund events across the country. Martín Koppel, editor of the Spanish-language *Perspectiva Mundial*, for instance, will be speaking in Chicago, October 9. The same weekend, *Militant* staff writer Brian Taylor will be giving a similar presentation organized by the New York and New Jersey SWP and Young Socialists and other supporters of the fund.

"The first few weeks of the fund drive also show that we can expect contributions from co-workers, from youth and others who appreciate the place of Pathfinder in their political education and work," added Baumann. Some may want to contribute by helping to organize a fund-raising activity at their house, he said. "But we need to ask."

To find out more about the fund, to get involved or to make a contribution, contact your nearest Pathfinder bookstore listed on page 12. Please make all checks and money orders out to Pathfinder, earmarked Pathfinder Fund, and send to:

Pathfinder, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014.

'Militant' on microfilm

This publication is available in microform from University Microfilms International

Call 1-800-521-3044, or mail inquiry to University Microfilms International, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106

Pathfinder announces new credit terms to aid campaign to expand book sales

Pathfinder Press announced special credit terms on September 17 in a letter addressed to all Pathfinder bookstores and sales volunteers that's printed below.

These credit terms are designed to help expand the sales of books and pamphlets as part of the campaign to place *Capitalism's World Disorder* in a variety of stores and libraries around the world.

The terms will be in effect for the duration of this special campaign, which will continue through the end of the year.

For questions or more information about the terms write to Pathfinder at 410 West St., New York, NY 10014-2570, or send an e-mail to 73321.414@compuserve.com.

The publisher's catalog, which lists the books and pamphlets Pathfinder publishes and distributes, is available at your local Pathfinder Bookstore (listed on page 12) or can be ordered from Pathfinder at a cost of only 50 cents.

Dear Friends,
During the campaign to place *Capitalism's World Disorder* in bookstores suggested by workers, farmers, and other fighters, Pathfinder is offering the following special credit terms to expand our base of accounts and sales of books and pamphlets.

1. Pathfinder salespeople should offer a \$75 credit limit to any new bookstore or other outlet that wants to place an order. This means that new accounts can order up to \$75 worth of books, including *Capitalism's World Disorder* and other titles,

without a credit check and approval by Pathfinder.

2. The 40 percent discount will now apply to all bookstore orders, including those for less than five titles, an increase from the 25 percent discount currently offered for small orders. (Libraries, which do not buy books for resale, pay full price.) This will help expand Pathfinder sales to small bookstores that order just one or two books. These stores can reorder as books are sold. The bookstore pays shipping for all orders.

3. In many cases sales volunteers will leave several copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder* at the bookstore during the sales visit, instead of having the books sent from New York. In these cases, Pathfinder will bill the commercial store for the books and credit the Pathfinder Bookstore that supplied them. Copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder* that are left at commercial stores should be reported on the attached form so Pathfinder can send the store an invoice.

4. In cases where the local Pathfinder Bookstore is not in a position to order adequate stock of *Capitalism's World Disorder* to effectively help Pathfinder carry out this promotional campaign, the bookstore can place a special consignment order. These orders will not be billed to the Pathfinder bookstore at this time. Any saleable copies left over at the end of the campaign can be returned to Pathfinder, if the Pathfinder bookstore does not want to purchase them. The local Pathfinder bookstores are responsible for maintaining a record of where consignment copies of the book have been placed, including the name, address, and buyer for the store, the date of the visit, and the name of the volunteer salespeople who placed the books.

Please make sure to ask each store that places an order to complete a credit form, so we can set a higher limit for future orders. A digital copy of the credit form is attached. Initial orders for more than \$75 can be filled immediately if the customer either prepays the additional amount, or agrees to have the order shipped C.O.D. for the amount over \$75. There is an additional \$5 charge for shipping orders C.O.D., in addition to the regular shipping charge.

Sincerely,
Sara Lobman
Pathfinder business manager

| PATHFINDER FUND | | | |
|--|----------------|---------------|-----------|
| RAISE \$125,000 TO HELP PRODUCE THE BOOKS WORKERS AND FARMERS NEED NOW | | | |
| Area | Goal | Paid | Percent |
| United States | | | |
| Twin Cities | 10,000 | 3,314 | 33 |
| Detroit | 4,500 | 1,050 | 23 |
| Boston | 4,100 | 810 | 20 |
| Cleveland | 4,000 | 760 | 19 |
| Chicago | 8,000 | 1,350 | 17 |
| Houston | 6,500 | 925 | 14 |
| Atlanta | 3,500 | 450 | 13 |
| Pittsburgh | 4,000 | 425 | 11 |
| New York | 13,000 | 1,375 | 11 |
| Newark | 9,000 | 935 | 10 |
| Miami | 3,500 | 300 | 9 |
| St. Louis | 1,300 | 100 | 8 |
| Philadelphia | 3,600 | 200 | 6 |
| Washington, D.C. | 6,000 | 200 | 3 |
| Los Angeles | 8,000 | 160 | 2 |
| Des Moines | 1,800 | 25 | 1 |
| Seattle | 11,000 | 100 | 1 |
| Birmingham | 3,000 | 10 | 0 |
| Cape Girardeau | 150 | - | - |
| Chippewa Falls | - | 150 | - |
| Ft. Collins | - | 10 | - |
| San Francisco | - | 300 | - |
| Other U.S. | 1,382 | 662 | 48 |
| Canada | 3,650 | 905 | 25 |
| New Zealand | 2,550 | 40 | 2 |
| France | | 250 | |
| United Kingdom | | 40 | |
| Totals | 112,532 | 14,846 | 12 |
| Should be | 125,000 | 48,075 | 38 |

Australia, U.S. troops land in E. Timor

Continued from front page
nate, he declared. "You may find Americans on the first planes," he said. "Neither my military people nor [the Australian military] send people into places that we can't back up if we have to." Washington has dispatched 200 troops at present.

In his September 21 speech to the UN General Assembly, U.S. president William Clinton called for more such interventions ostensibly to "end violence."

The imperialist intervention comes in response to a rise in the independence struggle in East Timor following the resignation of Indonesia's dictatorial ruler Suharto in May 1998. Tens of thousands of East Timorese seized the space created by mass student-led protests against the Suharto regime, and by deepening struggles by working people in Indonesia, to demand their right to national self-determination.

The governments of the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom — the same imperialist powers intervening today — backed Suharto's brutal occupation of East Timor in 1975. With the crisis of Jakarta's rule there from late 1998, in face of the undefeated East Timorese struggle for independence, these powers were forced to shift course to one of establishing domination over the emerging country, as part of their attempt to stabilize capitalist rule across Indonesia.

Earlier this year, rightist gangs organized by the Indonesian military were unleashed against working people, especially proindependence activists, in East Timor. Despite a campaign of terror in which hundreds were killed and thousands driven from their homes, these gangs failed to block a massive vote for independence at the UN-sponsored referendum August 30. After the vote, the Indonesian military that's backed by the imperialist powers now intervening unleashed the so-called militias with even greater brutality.

Out of East Timor's population of just under 900,000, an estimated 300,000 have taken refuge in the mountains, with another 150,000 also "displaced" inside East Timor. Around 150,000 have been forcibly trucked to camps in West Timor. Estimates of the number killed range from 600 to 7,000. Throughout this period the Australian government repeatedly called for the Indonesian police and army to "restore order."

The carnage has now become the pretext



Australian troops in Darwin, Australia, heading for East Timor Sept. 18, 1999.

for the intervention. General Cosgrove said, September 16, "This violence has been visited on defenseless people. We won't be defenseless. I think the best thing for the militias would be to surrender their weapons and become peaceful, law-abiding citizens of East Timor. If that's not to their liking, then maybe they need to leave East Timor."

As the imperialist intervention began, Indonesian commanders in East Timor ordered the withdrawal of up to 20,000 Indonesian troops and police. Many of the rightist gangs are also reported to be pulling out along with their sponsor, the Indonesian army.

Cosgrove traveled to Dili September 19 with an advance party, including Interfet deputy commander Maj. Gen. Songkitti Jaggabatra, from Thailand, to meet Indonesian commander Maj. Gen. Kiki Syahnakri to discuss the deployment of the intervention force. As Australian and other troops occupied Dili the following day, Cosgrove reported the soldiers had been given "a benign and cordial reception" with full cooperation from Jakarta's forces.

Darwin, the logistical base for the intervention has become "a city preparing for war" as the military personnel and hardware for the intervention are brought together.

Forces from more than 20 countries are expected to take part — including Portugal, Canada and France — along with Australia, United States, New Zealand and Britain. The governments of Thailand, the Philippines, and South Korea are also sending troops. Beijing has committed to send civilian police as well. Troops in the Australian-commanded force will continue to wear their national uniforms, with blue UN helmets. The force of 12,000-15,000 is scheduled to be fully deployed within several months.

Canberra: most significant intervention

Admiral Chris Barrie, the commander of the Australian Defense Forces (ADF), described the intervention as Australia's "most significant military undertaking" since the World War II. At the peak of its involvement in the Vietnam war the ADF had 8,300 troops deployed. Australian troops also took part in the imperialist interventions in Korea and Malaysia in the 1950s and in the "confrontation" with Indonesia in Borneo in the early 1960s.

Former Australian army chief John Sanderson, who commanded the UN force in Cambodia in the early 1990s, said he expects East Timor to be "fairly secure within three months." He projected a "peace enforcement" phase likely to last six months, fol-

lowed by "peacekeeping" over the next year, and finally a mainly "civilian" phase of up to five years to oversee a transition to self-government. East Timorese resistance leader Xanana Gusmao, released from house arrest by the Indonesian government September 7 arrived in Darwin September 19.

With the build-up of the multinational force, the Australian government continued its efforts to draw working people to voice support for the Australian "diggers" (GIs). "There will be a danger. There could be casualties and the Australian public should understand that," Australian prime minister John Howard said on ABC TV September 14. "All I can say is they will...take whatever action is necessary."

After speaking to the mother of one of the soldiers on Melbourne radio station 3AW, on September 17, Howard said, "It is also in our national interest to [intervene in East Timor]. Continued instability in a territory so close to Australia could have harmful consequences for us in the longer run."

Howard, Australian Labor Party leader Kim Beazley, and Australian Democrats leader Meg Lees traveled to Darwin to farewell the troops September 19.

In a special address to the nation Howard declared, "Months ago we made ready the Australian army...Our soldiers go to East Timor as part of the great Australian military tradition." Beazley in his message to the troops told them "You are the new generation of Australian warriors." He has promised bipartisan support for increased military spending.

On September 16 Jakarta scrapped the 1995 military cooperation agreement between Indonesia and Australia, which recognized "their common interest in the peace and stability of the region." Howard said that while relations between the two countries were under strain the implications of the scrapping of the treaty were not great. The Australian government continues to place great stress on working with the Indonesian government and military.

Union tops organize reactionary rallies

Rallies demanding more rapid deployment of troops in East Timor, and echoing proposals for a "war crimes tribunal in Australia" took place in most main cities in Australia on Saturday 18, including one of 1,500 in Sydney. Following Indonesia's acquiescence to the UN intervention, trade union officials ended their campaign of anti-Indonesia boycotts.

A continuing protest at the Indonesian embassy in Canberra features a string of baby shoes placed across the entrance. One of the protest organizers, Trades and Labor Council secretary Jeremy Pyner, said that this is an intended cultural insult. "Muslims remove their shoes before entering a place of worship," he said. "To display the sole of your shoe is an insult."

The Indonesian press has reported that the intervention has sparked widespread nationalist sentiment. "With its aggressive policy in East Timor, prime minister John Howard has begun a dangerous game, the consequences of which he might never have expected," university lecturer Aleksius Jemadu wrote in the September 20 *Jakarta Post*.

While reports of anti-Australian protests in Indonesia have been given prominence in the media in Australia, other protests continue to take place there. About 1,000 people rallied in Jakarta September 14 blaming the Indonesian government and military for the bloodshed in East Timor. Three days later 2,000 students demonstrated against proposed new security laws giving extensive powers to the Indonesian military.

There are reports of rising tensions in West Timor, where many local residents resent the activities of rightist gangs from East Timor. Some have opened their homes to refugees. Calls have been made for the UN "aid" effort to be extended to the West Timor camps.

As part of the build up to intervention, the Australian air force began air drops of food into East Timor September 17, with the go ahead from the Indonesian military.

On September 14, some 110 UN staff and 1,300 East Timorese from the UN compound in Dili were evacuated to Darwin. Up to 2,000 refugees will be housed in special camps in Australia. East Timorese were relocated from Darwin to the Melbourne camp just vacated by refugees returned to Kosova.

Bob Aiken is a member of the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union.

Washington resumes joint military exercises with New Zealand gov't

BY MICHAEL TUCKER

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — Amidst the build up to the imperialist intervention in East Timor, U.S. president William Clinton announced in Christchurch September 15 that Washington would resume joint military exercises with Wellington on a "case by case" basis. Clinton made the announcement during a week-long state visit to New Zealand following the September 10-13 summit of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum in Auckland.

The U.S. government up to now has excluded Wellington from participation in its ANZUS military pact with Australia and New Zealand, and barred it from joint mili-

tary exercises with U.S. forces. Washington took these steps after the New Zealand government banned visits by nuclear-armed or nuclear-powered warships in the mid 1980s. Legislation adopted by parliament in 1987 banning the visits remains in force.

Since that time, Canberra has conducted military training with the U.S. and New Zealand separately. New Zealand's armed forces are closely integrated with those of Australia. Despite the rift, Wellington has continued to commit personnel to U.S.-led military interventions from the Gulf War, to Somalia, to Bosnia.

Clinton's announcement was viewed by ruling circles here as a breakthrough in restoring Wellington's military relations with Washington. The decision opened the way for U.S., Australian, and New Zealand forces to begin joint exercises with troops from Southeast Asian countries in preparation for the East Timor occupation.

New Zealand's prime minister Jennifer Shipley announced September 16 that her government was dispatching an initial force of 420 soldiers and 265 naval and air force personnel to join the Australian-led intervention force in East Timor. The troop commitment is expected to grow to full battalion size of more than 700. Two New Zealand warships have already been sent.

The last time the New Zealand government dispatched a battalion-strength force overseas was to Malaysia and Singapore in the 1950s and 60s. Together with British and Australian forces, they backed the Malaysian regime in quelling resistance by workers and peasants and in its conflict with the Sukarno government in Indonesia. This included fighting against Indonesian forces on the island of Borneo (Kalimantan) in the mid 1960s.

A battalion-strength force was also sent to participate in the imperialist intervention in Korea in the early 1950s. New Zealand forces sent to support Washington in Vietnam in the 1960s peaked at 543.

Announcing the troop commitment, Shipley warned of the need to expect casualties, a warning that was repeated in a bold front-page headline the next day by the *New Zealand Herald*. "We are talking about war," proclaimed the *Herald* in an editorial. "The Australians and their allies could be fighting for a very long time to secure East Timor. New Zealanders should be alongside them, properly equipped and prepared, with the country united behind them. And there's no time to waste."

Shipley called a special sitting of the New Zealand parliament September 17 where the government gained the united backing of all parties for the imperialist intervention. Opposition politicians of the left-wing Alliance and Green parties had been leading calls for intervention in East Timor over the previous weeks.

"Now in our region...we have our own Kosovo," Shipley proclaimed in her address to parliament. Rightist New Zealand First politician Ron Mark used the occasion to agitate for building a stronger military, a call that was echoed by the ruling National Party's minister of defense, Max Bradford.

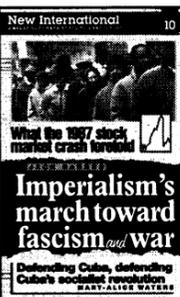
An editorial in the *New Zealand Herald* September 20 also took up this theme. "Predictably, we find the chickens — or rather doves — coming home to roost. For the best part of 20 years, we have neglected the Armed Forces," it said, expressing the hope that this would now be reversed.

Michael Tucker is a member of the Service & Food Workers Union in Auckland.

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'The Cuban revolution freed small farmers from exploitation'

Fidel Castro's 1963 speech on Cuba's second agrarian reform



In October 1963 Cuba's revolutionary government enacted and began to implement its second agrarian reform, which ended capitalist property relations on the land.

The First Agrarian Reform, signed into law in May 1959, had expropriated the large plantations, eliminated the system of rents and mortgages that was crushing the peasantry, and guaranteed use of the land to those who worked it. It granted each peasant family 67 acres. Every tenant, sharecropper, or squatter cultivating up to 165 acres was given clear title to the land. Some 200,000 peasant families were granted deeds.

Land could be mortgaged only to the state, not to banks or private individuals. The peasants were freed from the threat of foreclosures; no matter what their debt, they could not lose the land as long as they worked it. The government made credit available at favorable rates. The law limited the amount of land an individual family could own to 1,000 acres in most cases, and prohibited foreign ownership. The May installment of this series (see *Militant* no. 21, May 31, 1999) featured a 1959 speech by Castro explaining this law and its significance.

The 1959 Agrarian Reform Law "was a step from which there was no retreat," Castro said in a speech on the law's 40th anniversary. It was an agrarian revolution that consolidated the worker-peasant alliance on which the revolution was based, and brought the workers and farmers into head-on confrontation with U.S. imperialism and its allies among the exploiting classes in Cuba, for whom the law was a mortal challenge. By the end of 1960, in order to defend the revolution against increasingly hostile acts by Washington, Cuba's workers and farmers government, with the support and mobilization of millions of toilers, had nationalized U.S.- and Cuban-owned companies.

The second agrarian reform brought property relations in the countryside into harmony with the social ownership of other industry. The 10,000 or so capitalist farmers holding between 165 and 1,000 acres (some 20 percent of Cuba's agricultural land) had become the base for forces that wanted to roll back the revolution and they were bitter class enemies of small- and medium-size farmers. For this reason, they were barred from membership in National Association of Small Farmers (ANAP), which had been formed in 1961.

As Castro explains in the speech printed here, the continued existence of this layer threatened the worker-farmer alliance. Many rich farmers had either refused to cultivate their land, or turned to speculation with badly needed products such as milk. It was difficult for the revolutionary government to provide incentives for small farmers without favoring the capitalist farmers, thus increasing the inequality in the countryside. And the hostility of the capitalist farmers, along with the uncertainty about future expropriations, affected the outlook of many small farmers.

The 1963 agrarian reform expropriated land in excess of 165 acres owned by these large farmers. By nationalizing these sizable hold-



Cuban president Fidel Castro (inset, shown on cover of Oct. 5, 1963, Cuban magazine *Obra Revolucionaria*) delivers speech to students at schools for administrative assistants, Oct. 2, 1963. Many in the audience left that evening to begin implementing the second agrarian reform, which ended capitalist property relations in rural Cuba by nationalizing the land of some 10,000 capitalist farmers, and solidified the worker-peasant alliance. Above, mechanized sugar cane loader used on state farm in 1963 to increase production.

ings, which could be cultivated only by hiring wage labor, the second agrarian reform eliminated the capitalist sector of Cuban agriculture. Most of the large holdings confiscated were turned into state farms.

The second agrarian reform law was accompanied by a commitment by the revolutionary government that there would be no further expropriations. Every individual farm family was guaranteed the right to remain on their land and produce as long as they wished. They would receive as much aid as the resources of the revolution permitted. The decision to join a cooperative or turn over land to a state farm (referred to in Castro's speech as a People's Farm) would be strictly voluntary, as it had been from the first days of the revolution. This pledge has been adhered to ever since.

Fidel Castro gave the speech excerpted here Oct. 2, 1963, to a meeting of some 2,500 students from the Martínez Villena school and the schools in Santa María del Rosario and Rancho Boyeros in Havana. The schools had been set up to train young people from the countryside to take on the responsibilities of administering state farms and cooperatives. "Let the children of agricultural workers . . . children of peasants go to the [schools] . . . so that it may be people from the countryside who are guiding and leading the work in the countryside. That is what we want," Castro told the students in a part of the speech not included here. The students, many before even completing their studies, were to be on the front lines of carrying out the new step in the revolution in the countryside. Most left that night, headed for various landholdings where they arrived within hours or days of their occupation.

These remarks by Fidel Castro will appear in the second volume of a collection of his speeches from the early years of the revolution to be published by Pathfinder. The translation is copyright © Pathfinder Press and reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

BY FIDEL CASTRO

Compañero students from the Schools for Administrative Assistants:

You were chosen for certain tasks, to fulfill certain missions. That is why these schools were organized a little over a year ago, which at first we were going to call Schools for Agricultural Administrators, but

then we thought they should rather be called Schools for Administrative Assistants. Why? Because we thought that would be healthier and better suited for the education of your minds, so that you wouldn't get the idea that you would become administrators just for having passed your classes at the school. So that your minds wouldn't get used to that, and so you wouldn't think that you would be given such a responsibility so easily.

The example I'm about to give you occurred recently, but it confirms this very perspective — that we should instill in your minds the idea that responsibilities must be earned through work.

One young man studied aviary science in a school where a group of young people just like yourselves — good young people, too — were chosen, and when they finished the course, in about ten months, they went off to work. Recently I was told by a compañero who heads up that plan that this young man asked him, "Well, aren't you going to make me an administrator?" Look, that school isn't even a school for administrators; it's for aviary specialists. And he said, "Oh! I thought that when I finished school they were going to make me an administrator."

Of course the compañero answered him nicely. I told him, "No. You go tell that compañero that he can forget about it, that he might be the last one to be made an administrator, or to be given any responsibility."

I think it's very important that every young person being educated in the revolution know and understand that under the revolution, and

in the world that we want to build, every responsibility, every honor, every bit of trust must be earned through work, through effort, by fulfilling one's duty. . . .

Carrying out second agrarian reform

You are going out to the countryside, and you're not going there to cut sugarcane. You are going out to fulfill a mission that the revolution is assigning you, and that task is nothing less than the Second Agrarian Reform. In other words, we are going to carry out the Second Agrarian Reform. The second and final Agrarian Reform, since, as we see it, and as we've explained it, there will be two types of production: production by state enterprises and production by small farmers.

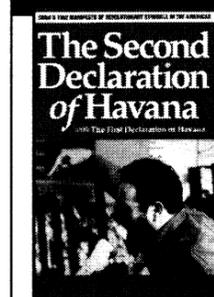
We have given definitive guarantees to small farmers, and they trust the revolution. The revolution can go forward with its state farms and with the efforts of small farmers, and then there will be an evolutionary process. Some small farmers will want to organize themselves into agricultural associations. Others will want to continue as small farmers. For how many years? That doesn't matter.

Small farmers are able to march with the revolution because the revolution freed them from exploitation. They used to pay rent, they used to pay dearly for supplies, they used to pay sky-high interest rates on loans, and they used to have to sell their products cheap to middlemen. They didn't used to have teachers, schools, hospitals, and roads. Small farmers represent a sizable layer of the population who were aided and freed by the revolution. They march with the revolution, and always will.

There are small farmers whose children are all in school or in the army, and then they themselves say, "I want to retire." There will be a long process, in which new small farmers won't be emerging. New small farmers won't be emerging from the nation's lands, but those farmers who are already there will stay as long as they wish. That does not affect production. What we have to accomplish is for small- and medium-size farmers to organize themselves well, apply sound production techniques, and produce as much as possible with their land. Through their efforts and those of the workers on the People's Farms, you will see how we can develop our agriculture. Because from now on there will only be small- and medium-sized farmers and People's Farms. [Applause]

The rural bourgeoisie will disappear, because the rural bourgeoisie will never march with the revolution. It will always be, as a class, an irreconcilable enemy of the revolution. There may be — and in fact there are — a few rural bourgeois who, as individuals, have a good attitude, but the class as a whole is the irreconcilable enemy of the revolution and will always be the enemy of the revolution. It will always be allied with imperialism against the proletariat and against the farmers. It will always be the enemy of socialism, because it held a privileged social position and had even greater aspirations of enriching itself by exploiting

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human labor. That is why, as a class, they will never be with the revolution.

They have lasted more than four-and-a-half years and have done as much damage as they could. Their economic position is strong. They control a lot of money. They often sell their products to their friends from the urban bourgeoisie, they sabotage production, they don't breed their cattle, they don't clear the cane fields, and they try to pirate workers away from the state farms. Now they've become better bosses than ever, whereas before they wouldn't even give you the time of day. But now that they think they will lose their land someday, some of them even treat their workers to a night out. So they've become their best friends, and have even given them small plots of land.

Rural bourgeoisie creates obstacles

Many of these rural bourgeois have been distributing small plots of land and allowing sharecropping. Of course, they've done this to create difficulties for the revolution because they know this isn't the policy of the revolution. Why? Because that's dividing land up into tiny plots. That will never provide for anybody. The revolution is fully responsible for providing for the entire country. And that can only be accomplished through mechanization and technology.

They have done things to create obstacles for the revolution in nationalizing their land.

¹ At his closing speech to the Second National Congress of the National Association of Small Farmers (ANAP) in August 1963, Castro had explained, "Naturally, we give no guarantee to the rural bourgeoisie. The revolution offers them no guarantee. . . . To whom does the revolution give full guarantees and why? To the small farmers. Because they have a different attitude. It had to be different because of their social position, because of their qualities as workers. They have truly cooperated with the revolution in the main. And it is logical that they should, because the revolution conceives the future development of agriculture on two bases: state production and the production of small farmers."



Granma

"Small farmers march with the revolution because the revolution freed them from exploitation. They used to pay rent, they used to pay dearly for supplies, they used to pay sky-high interest rates on loans, and they used to have to sell their products cheap to middlemen," Castro said. "Small farmers represent a sizable layer of the population who were aided and freed by the revolution. They march with the revolution, and always will." Above, peasants rally in Camagüey in 1961 as they receive title to their land.

They have been doing that.

One of the reasons why we need to move quickly with this measure is to deny them the time to continue causing damage. They know what the revolution's policy was; it was explained to them in the meeting held with the small farmers, so that the small farmers could rest assured once and for all. They were told that the same assurance could not be given to the others, to the rural bourgeoisie.¹

And what has happened? Well, many of them have even been distributing land and sabotaging things in order to do as much damage as possible when the new revolutionary

measures are implemented. That's why it is necessary to move quickly — to deny them the time to do further damage.

The revolution will make some exceptions for those who have truly assumed an attitude of cooperation with national production and have kept their farms in optimum production. The revolution will make exceptions because the revolution won't lose anything by making exceptions. The revolution won't lose anything by showing special consideration toward those who have been loyal to the revolution and have worked and produced.

Those exceptional cases will receive spe-

cial consideration. That does not affect the policy of the revolution.

But the vast majority of the rural bourgeoisie's land will be taken over by the revolution. And if I'm not mistaken, this comes to more than 150,000 *caballerias* of land.² [Applause] And it's good land, too!

Exceptions will also be made in those cases where, for example, several brothers are working on the same farm at the time the limit on land size is set. You will all receive information on this when the text of the law is published. Exceptions will also be made for those cases. All other land — that is, all other land belonging to the rural bourgeoisie — will become national lands.

A sharp class struggle

Now comes the most important task, the most difficult task, because this brings up two issues. First, a sharp class struggle. That is, this Agrarian Reform Law, this new Agrarian Reform Law will give rise to a sharper class battle than did the first Agrarian Reform Law, which went after the vast plantations. This one will affect a greater number of owners of landholdings than did the first law — people who have some education, a certain cultural level, and are well connected — and they have had time in these years to do some favors and even to do some politicking. So they will be a more sizable class enemy than those who were affected by the first Agrarian Reform Law.

Clearly, from this moment on they will lose their social influence and the source of economic resources with which many of them have been funding and supporting the counterrevolution.

It's clear that U.S. imperialism and the Central Intelligence Agency will lose a lot of collaborators, because they'll no longer have use of farms belonging to this or that landowner for infiltrators to hide in or to establish contact. No. Imperialism, the counterrevolution, and the Central Intelligence Agency will suffer a harsh blow, because we are not

² One *caballeria* equals 33 acres, or 13.43 hectares.

Series marks key steps by Cuban revolution

BY MIKE TABER

This is the ninth piece in a series appearing in the *Militant* each month throughout 1999 celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Cuban revolution. The series features speeches by central leaders of the revolution marking turning points and accomplishments as the workers and farmers of Cuba pressed ahead in the opening years of the revolution, defending their interests against the capitalists, landlords, and imperialist rulers in the United States.

The revolutionary struggle that toppled the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista on Jan. 1, 1959, was led by the July 26 Movement and the Rebel Army commanded by Fidel Castro. These organizations mobilized Cuba's toilers to bring down the bloody regime, throw off the yoke of Yankee economic and political domination, and initiate radical land reform. Also opposing Batista were substantial bourgeois forces, most of whom did little to bring down the dictatorship but were energetic in seeking to block the Rebel Army's victory.

When it became clear this could not be prevented, these forces — in league with Washington — set their hopes on buying off and corrupting the revolutionary leadership. They confidently expected to engineer the sequence of events often seen elsewhere in Latin America throughout the 20th century: that the July 26 Movement's program would remain only a piece of paper, while in practice the interests of Washington and of Cuba's landlords and capitalists would be secure. Eventually, they anticipated, the situation would "stabilize" enough so that the bearded rebels could be discarded altogether and more reliable political and military forces reinstated.

They were wrong. From the beginning, Washington and its Cuban bourgeois soul mates underestimated the political caliber, class firmness, and repeated bold initiatives of the leadership forged by the Rebel Army, and the determination of Cuba's workers and farmers

to defend their interests.

The first government that came to power in January 1959 was a coalition of the revolutionary forces led by the July 26 Movement and bourgeois opposition figures, among them the new president, Manuel Urrutia. Fidel Castro remained commander-in-chief of the Rebel Army. He had no position in the new government.

The July 26 Movement and Rebel Army forces under Castro's leadership, both inside and outside the government, continued to mobilize the toilers to carry out the program they had fought for. As the revolution deepened, Fidel Castro became prime minister in mid-February. Among the measures decreed by the government in early 1959 and implemented in practice by the Rebel Army at the head of the workers and farmers vanguard were the dismantling of the military and police forces of the Batista regime; the eradication of the extremely profitable U.S.-dominated gambling and prostitution operations; the outlawing of racist discrimination in hiring and social services; and the slashing of rents and prices for other basic goods and services, such as telephone and utility rates, that consume most workers' income.

Most decisively, in May 1959 an agrarian reform law was implemented. Millions of acres of large landed estates held by U.S. and Cuban ruling-class families were confiscated, and hundreds of thousands of peasants received title to the land they worked. To implement the land reform, the new government established the National Institute of Agrarian Reform (INRA) and Castro was named INRA's president.

These measures provoked a sharpening class polarization inside Cuba, including within the coalition government. During the summer and fall of 1959, as the land reform advanced, Washington's economic and military hostility escalated. As Cuban workers and peasants responded, they deepened their determination to defend their gains and realize their dreams. Under popular pressure, the representatives of capitalist forces resigned from the government one after the other. These included Urrutia, who was re-

placed as president by Osvaldo Dorticós, a prominent lawyer with ample credentials as an anti-imperialist and anti-Batista fighter and a member of the July 26 Movement.

The July 26 Movement as well as other groups that participated in the fight against Batista were profoundly affected as procapitalist forces split away. More than a few joined armed counterrevolutionary organizations.

By November 1959, the last of the bourgeois forces had left the government. Washington launched a full-scale political, economic, and military campaign to overthrow the workers and farmers government.

From August to October 1960, in direct response to the escalating U.S. attacks, Cuba's working people mobilized by the millions to support and implement government decrees nationalizing the factories, refineries, mills, and other holdings of U.S.- and Cuban-owned corporations. The domination of capital was broken and the foundations laid for beginning a transition to socialism. In April 1961, the day after U.S.-organized bombing assaults on Cuban airfields and on the eve of the landing of U.S.-trained and -financed mercenary troops at the Bay of Pigs, the socialist character of the revolution was proclaimed. The invaders at the Bay of Pigs were defeated in 72 hours.

The standoff between the two irreconcilable forces represented by Havana and Washington, which continues to this day, has marked much of world politics throughout the last 40 years.

Most of the speeches that will be included in this series will appear in books that Pathfinder is preparing for publication. These include two volumes of speeches by Fidel Castro from the first decade of the revolution, *Che Guevara Talks to Young People*, and a new edition of *Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution*.

Some of the speeches planned for this series have never before appeared in English. Others have been out of print for many years. *Militant* readers who are interested in helping with the translation are invited

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going to tolerate or stand idly by in face of acts by the enemies of the revolution. It's the very attitude of those class enemies that has forced us to move quickly with these measures, in face of this class's sabotage of production and in face of U.S. imperialism and its subversive plans — for which it counts on these gentlemen.

But they'll no longer have their farms or their resources to count on.

Therefore, the enemies of the working class will suffer a strong blow. But that will involve a harsh struggle, and at the same time it will involve another very important task, which is the need to put those lands to maximum production. It involves replacing all those gentlemen in their positions as organizers and managers of production on those lands. In other words, our task consists of putting those lands into production and learning how to use them. This is the task we must figure out how to accomplish; this is the task that all of you must help to accomplish.

Clearly it's nothing like the first time. The first time, we didn't have a contingent of disciplined *compañeros* to send out to accomplish that task. That's why so many mistakes were made in so many places. On some farms, the revolution's administrator did a worse job than the bourgeoisie had done. And that is a real shame for the revolution. It's a blow to the revolution's reputation when one of those enterprises — a farm owned by a bourgeois — is taken, and regardless of how poorly administered and poorly used it had been in the past, the revolutionary administration does a worse job. That is unacceptable.

There are many places where implements were taken away and other implements were left abandoned. Tons of crazy things committed by people with no experience or sense of responsibility. These were committed in the first period of the revolution, when there were so many people with simplistic ideas in their heads, who thought everything was easy. They thought it was easy to get rid of somebody, start managing it, and put it into production. How much did it cost? Who cared! How much did they spend? Who cared! What did they produce? Who cared! There were people out there who didn't care about costs and never kept any books.

The credits would arrive, the money would arrive. When they set out to produce a *caballería* of something, they wouldn't calculate how much it would cost, or how much it would yield, or what land they would plant on, or what crop they would destroy in order to plant another, or how much the crop they were destroying was worth, or how much the new crop was worth. They would grab a tractor and start racing up and down, and they wouldn't oil it or take care of it. They would grab some irrigation equipment, and they wouldn't take care of it. All kinds of things were going on. Errors made once must not be repeated by any means.

The first thing: take inventory

Wherever any of you are placed, the first thing you must do is take inventory of everything there. Right away, take inventory: one cart, two carts, three carts, one truck, one tire, this many cows, this many calves, this many steers, such and such facilities, such and such equipment, such and such number of plows, what condition everything is in. Secondly, don't move anything at all from there.

At first, of course, whoever was acting as administrator of a province or an area wanted to have some cattle there, so he would go buy them somewhere else. And maybe he would take all the cattle away from one area in order to bring them somewhere else.

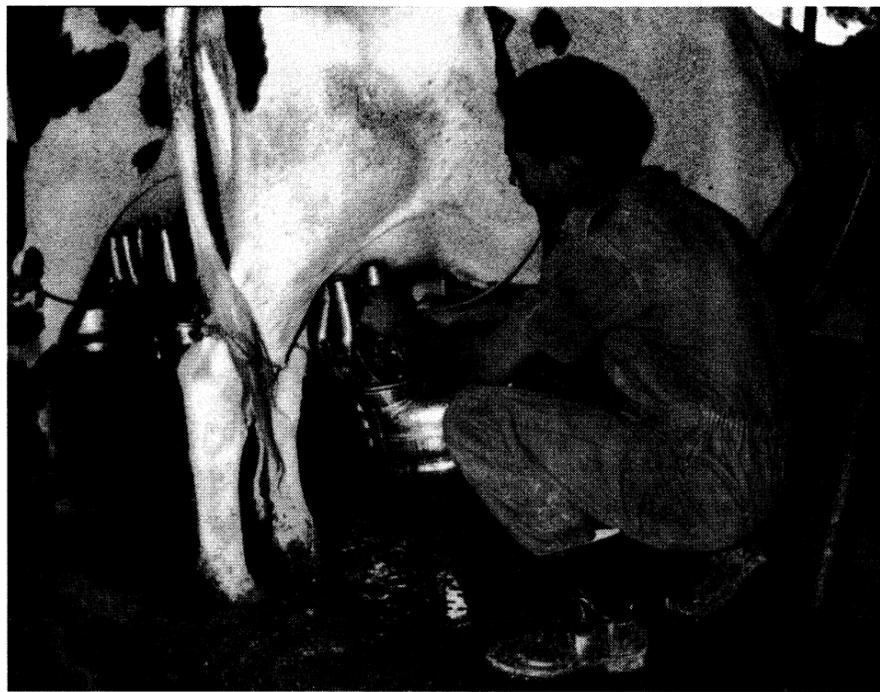
This is how many dairy farms were messed up. Many things were messed up.

We have to start with whatever is at each place we take over. With whatever is there. We must take inventory of everything that's there — what's being produced, how many workers there are, and how much each of those workers earns. Those are some of the first things we have to look at. And what the owner had planned to produce there, and what credits and loans he received from the bank.

As I said, there are many of them who had started distributing their land in plots for sharecropping. The new law voids all land concessions or contracts, all land concessions made by the rural bourgeoisie after the Agrarian Reform Law. It voids them. That's why you all have to see if there's anyone living there, and how long he's been there. Whether he's been there for five years, or for four. Whether he was there before the revolution or got there after the revolution but before the Agrarian Reform Law. The

Agrarian Reform Law declares null and void everything prior to January 1, 1959, and it's obvious that many bourgeois have taken some of these actions in order to cause problems, to compete with the People's Farms. They have been distributing plots of land, and they've done other things as well.

In other words, they have been taking advantage of the circumstances in order to create obstacles for the revolution. That's why you must all examine the concrete situation in each place, and be very cautious, very cautious. No one outside INRA [National Insti-



Prensa Latina

"The crime of barren cows will be no more, the crime of wasted land will be no more," Castro said. Children of the ruling class never lacked "food, because they would have the milk delivered to their houses. The child of a worker might go without milk every day.... Now there needs to be more milk, as well as a fair distribution system that treats everyone as equals. Let the children of the bourgeoisie drink milk, but let the children of the working people and the proletariat drink milk as well." Above, youth on a farm in Cuba uses automatic pump to milk cows, December 1963.

tute of Agrarian Reform]³ will make a single change or a single transfer, or move a piece of equipment anywhere. But it won't happen right away, because naturally the entire agricultural system is being organized and restructured. The landholdings will be part of People's Farms, and the People's Farms will be part of state farm associations. But a lot of those landholdings will be kept together as units, just as they are, while others will be grouped together. But that's the basic idea: we have to start with what is there, and improve what is there.

The only thing that cannot happen is for any of those farms to be producing less in six months or a year than they're producing now. Because anyone who has less production in a year than the bourgeoisie has now is unsuitable for work on the economic front of the revolution. First of all, we have to look at how well each of those farms has been administered or run. Does it yield more or less? And not just whether it yields more or less, but at what cost. Is it being produced at a lower cost or at a higher cost? What is its income? Because there should not be a single one of those farms that is not profitable. That's the purpose of keeping figures, and each of you must begin by finding out how much it costs to clear a *caballería*, how much the irrigation costs, how much the fertilizer costs, and where to get the fertilizer.

First of all, you have to find out what technique is being used for each of the crops being raised there. If it's rice, you have to find out how much rice has been planted, how much is scheduled to be planted, and the amount of credits obtained for it, how much fertilizer, what the specific conditions of each rice field and each facility are, and when the crop is harvested. If it's rice that has not yet been planted, [you have to find out] when it is to be planted, what day, with what seed, and what characteristics it has. If it's sugarcane, how many times it needs to be cleared, how many people are available to clear it, and what wages are being paid to clear the fields. You don't just get everyone together and start paying them ten pesos per *cordel*.⁴ No. Because

³ The National Institute of Agrarian Reform (INRA) was formed by the Agrarian Reform Law as the instrument for its implementation. Staffed by cadres of the Rebel Army and the July 26 Movement, INRA was granted sweeping powers over virtually every aspect of the economy.

⁴ One *cordel* equals 414 square meters, or about 500 square yards.

you are going to be asked to account for the expenses. You are going to be asked to account for the costs of every agricultural operation.

You have to look at how much labor is available and what the costs are. You have to be there in the fields. You have to know how much one person can do in a day. You have to monitor the work on site, in the fields, everywhere. You can't just be riding your horse all over the place. No. You have to go there, but you have to do something else too: work with the people. Because if it's an enterprise that has 30 or 40

workers, then of course the job of the person heading it up might be more important — monitoring, managing, and organizing everything. But if it's a small enterprise, with few workers, then you have to set an example through your work. Because it's a luxury to have an administrator not working where there are only three workers. That's a luxury. And it's very costly!

Go to the farms, work with the people

No. We are not inventing a chemically pure type of administrator. We don't want an administrator who doesn't do anything — no! He must set an example through his work. If a tractor is broken, he must find out what it needs and how to fix it. He must find out what condition the engine is in. He can't wait for things to be brought to him. He must go out and look for them, and do the work himself; he has to take care of it all and monitor everything. And when there's a need for someone to do something, he is the first one to step forward — provided he's not busy with administrative tasks — to work alongside the workers [Applause] . . .

Initially, when you go to all of these places, you're not going to have much outside contact for a while. Immediately thereafter you'll start making contact, mainly with the party and INRA. Because the occupation of all the remaining large farms will be carried out by the party soon, before long. [Applause] The *compañeros* from the party will get there, they'll use students from the Schools of Revolutionary Instruction, and then you'll go there.

I was telling you that this is going to be a harsh struggle. You will find many cases where the large landowners have homes in the city. That's no problem; they can go to the city. They're going to want to take a little furniture with them. Fine; they can take personal items like furniture. If you have furniture there, no. "I want to take this sofa; it belonged to a relative." Fine; he can take it. Let those things be mementos. Do you want to take the furniture from the house? Do you have furniture over there already? Then he can't take the furniture from that house.

You're going to find some who don't have a house in the city, and you'll have to coexist with them. You won't be living in the same house, and you won't be moving into the houses there. But you're going to have problems. You must be as courteous, polite, and friendly as you can be, but — at the same time — as firm as you have to be.

Don't forget some people will try to paint a picture of tremendous poverty and suffering.

There will be no poverty and no suffering. They will be compensated. They will receive at least 100 pesos [a month] over five years.⁵ They will be paid. They will not go hungry, they will not be "left in the street with nowhere to go." They'll get a compensation that will be guaranteed to them for ten years.

Some of those people might want to join the revolution. In some of the towns where we've taken over the land, we've found that the bourgeoisie has adjusted better after being defeated than while still fighting. Do you get my point? It's very unusual for a member of the bourgeoisie engaged in battle to want to adjust. But what might happen afterwards is that he doesn't have anything, he likes agriculture, and he doesn't want to leave or has no way of leaving. So he adjusts. But there will be human problems: they have a wife, they have children. There will be some who burst into tears, crying tragedy — those human displays.

That's why you must be respectful, friendly, and at the same time firm — especially if you have to live near a former owner, because disputes might arise.

The Law is clear. It says what will be left to them and what won't be left to them. They're going to want the yard next to the house. You can leave them the yard about ten meters around. They'll say they want the horse. I don't remember what the rule is regarding horses. I think that if they have a horse and they live there — because they don't have a house in the city — then they can have two horses, and something around the house, not very big. Because it's not as if their lot will be reduced. They'll either have everything taken away, or nothing taken away. Otherwise, you take away a little bit and later on the guy is still there nagging about the equipment, the facilities, the dairy. No. When we take it over, we take it all over.

It's not like last time, when they were left with 30 *caballerías*. No. This time, whoever fits the law's description will have everything taken away. [Applause] Those who leave for the city, you won't see them and you won't have problems with them. The problem is those who don't have a house in the city and stay there until they find a new home, and they have to live there. Their right to the house will be respected. . . .

Student: What about those who have a small plot. . . .

Fidel Castro: What? I was just about to talk about that. You are a psychic [laughter].

You are going to come across another problem, and it's just been well put. You first have to find out who owns the small plot, when he received it, and whether he's always had it or he got it after the Agrarian Reform Law was instituted. Above all, I think that we should mainly consider whether it was acquired after the Agrarian Reform, because the Agrarian Reform prohibited that, and it voided those done after January 1, because there were some people who started giving out land to their cousins or other people.

Therefore, any land transfer made after January 1, 1959, is invalid. That goes especially for those made after the Agrarian Reform, and even more so if they were made recently. Because some people realized what was going on and set up a food stand selling refrigerated goods. We can't accept tiny agricultural establishments, *compañeros*. Because that only provides for the people living right there: four banana trees, seven stalks of corn, yucca. That's barely enough for him and his family.

What are the railroad and transportation workers going to eat? What will hospital patients eat? What will industrial workers eat? The small agricultural establishment isn't productive.

Of course, in order for them to keep their workers from leaving for the People's Farms, where there's a house and better conditions, some of these people would give away a little piece of land in order to steal the worker away, to win him over even. We don't accept that on those lands, because it's a violation of the law.

That doesn't mean that we're going to get there and tell the worker, "You must leave." No. You must not mistreat those workers in any way, but you do have to tell him, "Look, this land does not belong to you, because that guy did it for such and such a reason. Don't think he did it out of kindness or anything like that. He did it to make a mockery of the laws of the revolution, he did it to create obstacles for the revolution, when these lands passed over to the nation, to cause problems

⁵ In 1963, one Cuban peso equaled US\$1. The average monthly income in Cuba in 1962 was 105 pesos.

for it because you are here." And tell him, "You have to give that land back." What if he doesn't want to? He won't be removed. He is to be told, "What are you going to farm it with? Credit? No. Go talk to ANAP." This person is not to receive a single penny of credit. No. Let him see if he can make it alone, selfishly and in defiance of the Law. Because some people have done that in order to corrupt people, win them over, and thus widen their base of support.

Because even though there are only a few thousand of these bourgeois, they influence tens of thousands of people. Those they did favors for, and those they gave things to. When the revolution came along they became nicer than ever. You understand? There might be seven or eight thousand of them, but they influence tens of thousands of people. They are really smooth talkers, well educated and refined. They can really be "super-solicitous." Really. After the revolution some of them would take their workers on a trip to Varadero⁶ and everything; they would even take them riding around in their cars. Do you see what I mean?

Property system is cruel, inhuman

Some people have been confused by them. They have money, and they'll do a favor for anybody. Someone goes to him in a bind and he says, "Here you go." So people say, "Mr. Rich Man is so nice! Poor fellow, he's such a nice man." He might indeed be a kind person. That might be the case. Such people do exist. But their kindness has nothing to do with the social system they defend — a system that is not kind, but cruel. An individual might be kind, but the institution and the system they represent is criminal and inhuman.

Because, of course, the entire philosophy of that property system is based on one individual having forty working for him, so that he and his family can get rich, and that's that. But then he uses the wealth that he extracts from the sweat of the workers to do favors and cast himself as the good guy. All that is true. . . .

Our weakness lies mainly in our lack of experience and the lack of ability of the people working in many agricultural sites. This is not as common now. Many of them are getting better. Agriculture is a very beautiful thing. It truly is one of mankind's most exhilarating endeavors. It's one of the most enjoyable, the most pleasant, because people who work in agriculture are creating. They're seeing how crops are raised, how goods are produced, how food is produced. They develop an affection for every tree, every animal, every little thing one does, and everything one works with.

The work that you will be doing is truly enviable — for a young person to have the opportunity to go there, to struggle with nature, to produce, to improve oneself, to wage the battle of providing for the people, to organize the work so that the land, the work, and the machinery produce as much as possible,

⁶ Varadero beach is located about 60 miles east of Havana. Before the revolution most beaches in Cuba were either private estates or open only to tourists and wealthy white Cubans. One of the early—and extremely popular—acts of the revolutionary government, in April 1959, was to desegregate the beaches and open every single one to the public.

and to create abundance. The work that you are going to do, *compañeros*, is to be envied!

And you can feel truly satisfied and proud that the revolution has given you this opportunity. So you should keep in mind that you have an obligation to do right by the revolution, and you have an obligation to justify the trust that the revolution has placed in you. . . .

Do you believe that you'll be able to fulfill your missions, *compañeros*? [Shouts of "Yes!" and applause]. All right then, *compañeros*, it's good that you're leaving here full of confidence in yourselves. Go with humility as well, and get help from the *compañeros* with experience in farming, seek help from the party,



The Cuban revolution sets example for working farmers around the world. Left, farmers rally in Washington, D.C., March 2, 1999, demanding their land back and an end to decades-old government discrimination. Right, peasants protest government austerity at action in Bogar, Indonesia, Sept. 24, 1998.



Militant photos: Brian Williams (left); Hank Scheer (right)

follow the instructions they give you and the instructions that the INRA delegates give you. I'm sure that you will all do a good job of carrying out this task. It's difficult, but you can do it.

I remember that during the war, whenever new soldiers came out of the Schools for Recruits, they would win battles even though they were new, because they had been seized by faith and confidence in victory, by a sense of ability that overcame obstacles. And I remember that the older soldiers would be taken out of the different columns and the newer ones would start carrying out their first operations. I always ended up fighting with the new ones, because we would send the older ones out to the various fronts. I always went around with a troop of recruits, but that troop would win battles and overcome difficult obstacles. You are the new troop, trained in the revolution, that is going out to the economic front. [Applause]

This troop will win many battles, *compañeros*, and this will possibly mark a very important date in the development of the revolution, a real boost to agriculture, because we must take those 150,000 caballerias of land and, like a garden, get them producing as much

as possible for the people. The crime of barren cows will be no more, the crime of wasted land will be no more, the crime of speculation will be no more. Speculation is what the bourgeoisie does when it sells to the bourgeoisie: the rural bourgeoisie to the urban, and the urban bourgeois to the rural. That's why no bourgeois home lacked anything, because the bourgeoisie in the city took care of that, and so he never lacked any industrial item. Nor did the urban bourgeoisie ever lack food, because they would have the milk delivered to their houses.

The child of a worker might go without milk every day, and in many rural towns you are aware that the milk was distributed by the

returning to the countryside.

In this way, any worker who stands out will have the opportunity to study. The cadres who are going to lead must come from there, from the countryside. They must come from among the people who know what work in the countryside is all about. That is the advantage of having chosen students from among the agricultural workers. And in the future it will be youth, children who are in elementary school or in secondary school. They will work, and when they stand out they'll have the opportunity to go to the schools. The best among the best workers, to return later.

If we continue on that path, one day we'll have many thousands. If right now we have a few thousand, one day we'll have many thousands of people who rise to the circumstance — people in whose responsibility, conscientiousness, and ability the country can have complete confidence [applause] in order to conquer scarcity. . . .

And just think, *compañeros*, that one day the School City, with a capacity for 20,000 students once it's finished, will be a Basic Rural Secondary Institute, and one day it will be a Technological Institute. So one day we'll have 15,000 to 20,000 students in an Agricultural Technological Institute in the School City. [Applause] Just imagine how many technical cadres will be going into agriculture in the future, and how much knowledge and experience they'll go with. Thousands will also graduate from our Schools of Agricultural Engineering. Of course, we don't want to be training people from the city, but rather people from the countryside. Let the children of agricultural workers go to the Rural Institutes. People from the countryside, children of peasants going to the Secondary Institute, or to those Technological Institutes, and to the universities, so that it may be people from the countryside who are guiding and leading the work in the countryside, and so that they may study and return to the countryside. That is what we want.

Compañero, did you want to ask a question?

Student: I wanted to point out that when we went to Camagüey to cut sugarcane, after the job was done we were given passes to see our families.

I went to my family's home and there I met with some peasants who were waiting for the teacher to give them their scholastic achievement test. While waiting for the teacher we exchanged impressions with the people there, and they told me that they were making ten and twelve pesos for a half-day's work.

So I asked them what good it did them to be listening to Fidel Castro until one in the morning, if they don't understand what he says about how we're in the process of increasing both production and productivity at the same time.

They told me that they had no reason to work a full day, since in half a day they were making eight, ten, or twelve pesos, and they had nothing to spend it on. I told them that was precisely my point.

Fidel Castro: And with what they're getting, if they work half a day, it's enough for them to buy what can be sold to them in five or six days. It's almost as if they only need to work a half day per week.

Student: I was telling them that was precisely the reason why they should work more and make better use of the workday to increase production.

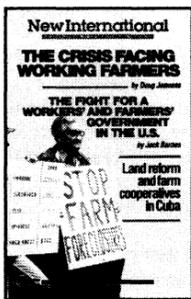
That is what I wanted to point out.

Fidel Castro: Very well, *compañeros*. I am very happy to see that you have brought these issues up. That gives us the sense that you have given these problems a lot of thought, and that you've had the chance to look at them and analyze them.

It is very important that you carry forth the banner of production and work, because you will always be able to have discussions on a solid basis with any peasant or worker and explain to them why that is deceitful, and why that only leads to economic paralysis and inflation. And therefore we must fight anyone who does that, anyone who practices those methods. And we must do so in every meeting, everywhere, because of the damage caused to the revolution by administrators who do those things, whether out of softness, weakness of character, because they're thieves, or because they're irresponsible. And these same things that you have seen and understand are wrong, you must never fall into, *compañeros*. I repeat that we are confident that you will be able to fulfill the mission that has been assigned to you.

That is all I had to say to you, *compañeros*. *Patria o Muerte!* [Homeland or death] *Venceremos!* [We will win] [Ovation]

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same members of the bourgeoisie who produced it, and they delivered it to their customers, who were also members of the bourgeoisie.

Now there needs to be more milk, as well as a fair distribution system that treats everyone as equals. Let the children of the bourgeoisie drink milk, but let the children of the working people and the proletariat drink milk as well. [Applause]. . . .

Historic battle for the revolution

Be assured that this is a historic battle. This battle is a historic battle for the revolution, and it's a heavy blow to our enemies, to the economic resources of the class enemy of the proletariat — a heavy blow to imperialism. A double blow, because not only are we taking away their trenches, but we'll also be better able to resist their criminal blockade. You are the soldiers who will march off to carry out this task, to wage a historic battle, who will mark a time of boom for our country's agriculture and economy. And you will march soon, because you'll be going out this very day, *compañeros*. This very evening you'll start leaving. [Applause]

Now, be discreet so that the bourgeoisie doesn't find out, be discreet so that the members of the United Party of the Socialist Revolution⁷ get there before the bourgeoisie finds out that the revolution has ordered this measure, so that they won't have time to start distributing cattle or do other things. Do you understand? [Applause]

So this is virtually under way, and in a matter of hours all those farms will be taken over. [Applause] And you will be going in behind them, and right behind you will be the *compañeros* who are coming from the Soviet Union. So we will be getting reinforcements, and afterwards the *compañeros* who are going to graduate from the schools will get there. Because we're going to continue training cadres for agriculture. And then in the future, everyone who will be working in agriculture will be cadres from the rural working class, and they will be

⁷ In 1961 the July 26 Movement initiated a fusion with the Popular Socialist Party and the Revolutionary Directorate—all three of which had experienced substantial splits or regroupment of forces as the revolution deepened—to form the Integrated Revolutionary Organizations (ORI). In 1963 it took the name United Party of the Socialist Revolution. In October 1965, the Communist Party of Cuba was founded, with Fidel Castro as first secretary of its Central Committee.

One year since strike, Freeman miners resist company attempts to weaken union

BY MARIAN RUSSELL

PALMER, Illinois — One year after the beginning of the 98-day strike by 350 coal miners against Freeman United Coal Co., three miners got together to discuss the aftereffects of that battle. Dave Yard, Bob Bockewitz, and Greg Mahan, members of United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) Local 1969 at Freeman's Crown II mine agreed that the workers are stronger after the walk-out despite concessions won by Freeman from the union.

"The guys who went with us through the strike are more open with each other," Yard began. "There is more friendship. You know who you can trust."

Mahan, who is the president of UMWA Local 1969, added, "The three locals are together. We know almost everyone now at the Crown III and Industry mines. Before the strike, Freeman played us off against each other."

The long strike was against cuts in medical care for retirees, as well as against job combinations and attacks on seniority and bidding rights. It lasted from September 11 to December 17, 1998. At the end, a four-year contract, which included a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), was ratified in a sharply divided vote with 55 percent voting for and 45 percent voting against.

The miners had reached out for support through rallies, expanded pickets, an Adopt-a-Family Program, Miners' Relief Fund, food bank, and strike fund. Yard said that the strikers had received donations from just about every state in the nation. Much of the Food Bank surplus was given to United Auto Workers strikers at Tazewell in Pekin, Illinois.

The miners explained that several factors were decisive in the majority vote for the MOU. Representatives of the union's international officialdom publicly lauded the proposed pact. In addition, the company threatened to turn strikebreakers they had hired into permanent workers and to hire more scabs. The bosses also threatened to close the Crown II mine.

Attendance and retiree health care

With regard to health care for retirees, no one has yet retired whom the new provisions would affect. The MOU ended company-funded health care in favor of a system of cash payments that forces each family to buy their own medical insurance. "Some 40 miners retired right before December 21, 1998," explained Mahan, "putting them under the 1993 benefit plan. So we don't know exactly how it will work out yet, but the concession on medical care could have a snowballing effect" in the industry. Recent meetings in Alabama, Indiana, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Utah, attended by thousands of retired miners and widows of miners, protested moves by coal companies to renege on contractual obligations to provide miners lifetime medical care.

The MOU also initiated a stricter Attendance Control Program for miners recalled from layoffs. Up to this point, no recalled miners have been discharged under it.

Two miners among those who were on the job prior to the strike have been fired



Militant/Jim Garrison

Oct. 11, 1998, march in Virden, Illinois, in solidarity with striking Freeman coal miners and to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the "battle of Virden" between miners and coal bosses. Nine months after strike ended, miners are pushing for the rank and file to "have a say" on questions of safety, working hours, and seniority.

since last December for absenteeism under the old attendance program. They didn't get their jobs back. Co-workers collected \$3,000 for them.

Miners have been recalled to work from the panel of laid-off miners, but hundreds have declined to return to work at Freeman.

Company attacks seniority

The real problems so far, the miners explained, have come through the job combination provisions. There are only four job classifications now: "Inby" (those who work at the face where the coal is cut), "Outby," "Repairman," and "Mine Examiner." An employee can choose to be "enhanced," that is, to receive further training and higher pay, to be reclassified to one of these four categories. Workers who were employed by Freeman before the strike may retain their old classification. Most have declined to be "enhanced." All recalled workers and anyone who bids on a job must do so in the new, combined job classifications.

"Safety-wise the new system is horrible," Bockewitz said. "People are not as well trained." When you are on one job, the miners said, you get very good at it. But not when you move around.

Some 150 grievances have been filed since the strike. Most concern the assignment of overtime out of seniority because the company gives preference to those in the new, combined classifications. Workers who are not "enhanced" have been fighting to defend their seniority. This has been expressed by a struggle for equitable distribution of overtime on "idle days" (maintenance days).

This led to a July 21 ruling by an arbitrator in a grievance by 13 members of Local 12 at the Crown III mine, which was a mixed bag. On one hand, the grievance was sustained. "The MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) does not take away the right to idle-day opportunities from employees choosing to stay in their traditional classifications," the ruling states. But the miners

"are entitled to back pay only up to the time that the 'Inby,' 'Outby,' 'Mine Examiner,' and 'Repairman' classifications comprise more than fifty percent (50%) of the workforce." Once that happens, "the Employer is entitled to change the method of scheduling idle day work to accommodate the new classifications," the arbitrator ruled.

"We were supposed to be 'grandfathered' in," said Bockewitz. Instead, the miners agreed, the company aims to gut seniority rights by giving preference to "enhanced" workers when layoffs come.

At the same time, Mahan said, "The guys who are enhanced are not going to get a day off. The big issue now is 'we want time off.'" He added, "Arbitration is not fair or equal to the working man. It's time the rank and file have a say in this."

Solidarity activities continue

Yard enumerated activities in solidarity with other embattled workers the miners have been involved in. "On April 1 we held our first annual Mitchell Day Celebration commemorating the winning of the eight-hour day and invited other local unions. We sent all proceeds to the UMWA strikers at the Jeddo mine in Pennsylvania. We sold raffle tickets in order to assist the Blue Shirts of UAW Local 974 in Peoria in their efforts to raise funds for the Tazewell strikers and we attended their benefit. Memorial Days are being called on holiday weekends to give us more time off. And we have been informing other UMWA locals about the terms of the MOU."

They also helped workers at a local coal pelletizing plant to organize into the UMWA, and sent assistance to strikers at Beverly Farm in Godfrey, Illinois.

Several miners have started Miners for Clean Water and have joined in solidarity with local farmers and others opposed to a planned large-scale confinement dairy farm in the area. Such an operation would be the largest of its kind in Illinois and would pose a threat to the aquifer under Palmer that supplies water to many farmers as well as to a number of towns.

15 Steelworkers on strike against Titan are arrested in Mississippi, appeal for support

BY SUSAN LaMONT

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama — Titan Tire strikers in Natchez, Mississippi, continue to be arrested and charged with trespass, in the aftermath of a successful September 11 rally and march that marked the one-year anniversary of their walkout. The strikers are members of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 303L.

The anniversary event was attended by 300 strikers and supporters, many of whom were steelworkers on strike at Continental General Tire in Charlotte, North Carolina; Kaiser Aluminum in Gramercy, Louisiana; and Titan Tire's plant in Des Moines, Iowa.

At one point during the march, which went from the union hall to the Titan plant a block away, several hundred workers went through an unlocked gate and into the plant for a few minutes. When security guards and local police scurried to the scene and asked them to leave, everyone did so promptly. The impromptu action was completely peaceful.

Arrests began a few days later. By September 19, about 15 strikers had been arrested, explained Titan striker Willie Evans in a telephone interview. Evans — one of those arrested — has played a leading role in Local 303L's outreach and solidarity activities over the past year. Others arrested include Local 303L's president and vice-president, Leo Bradley and Harry Gaylor. Natchez police say more arrests may be pending.

"They served papers on us, and we went down to the police station, got fingerprinted, and had mug shots taken. Now we're out, but we have to report to court on September 27," Evans said. "These arrests are in retaliation against us, to strike back at the union for our actions at the rally, and also for our long period of struggle against the company for its illegal practices. They're trying to intimidate us, to put out our fire."



Militant/Mary Ann Schmidt

Steelworkers and supporters rally in Natchez, Mississippi, September 11, on their one-year anniversary since their strike. Cops arrested 15 strikers after peaceful protest.

"September 27 is a crucial time for us," Evans added. "We want everyone to come to our aid that day, to come to Natchez and see what kind of justice we're going to get. We didn't do anything illegal."

The maximum penalty in the trespass charge is six months in prison and a \$500 fine. Those arrested had to post a \$634 bond.

Susan LaMont is a member of the USWA in Fairfield, Alabama.

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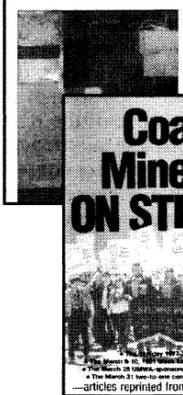
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US Air workers weigh tentative contract

BY DAVE WELTERS

PITTSBURGH — "We shouldn't just jump at whatever is being offered. We need to look at all the points across the board and weigh them." That was the response of Janine Love, a utility worker in Philadelphia, upon hearing that a tentative agreement was reached September 21 by officials of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) for maintenance workers at US Airways.

In the face of US Airways' concession demands, 7,000 maintenance workers represented by the IAM were preparing for a possible strike when the government-mandated 30-day "cooling off" period ends at midnight, September 25. A new T-shirt, inspired by one produced in the company's other big hub in Charlotte earlier this summer, made its way around the maintenance hangers in Pittsburgh. It said, "I'll Strike If Provoked!"

The mechanics, cleaners and stores workers at the country's sixth largest airline rejected an earlier concessionary contract proposed in July by a vote of 75 percent, and a strike authorization vote passed by an 81 percent margin. In negotiations following that vote the company stepped up its demands for concessions, triggering an impasse in the federally-mediated talks and beginning the 30-day countdown on August 27.

The brief highlights of the proposed contract that have been made available on the union's web page include increased signing bonus and rates of pay. But the concessionary features objected to in the earlier proposal — part-time cleaners, mandatory overtime for deicing, and the pay parity scheme — are still in the agreement, although in a "modified" form. Workers are just beginning to discuss this initial information. A date for a vote on the proposal hasn't been set as of this time.

Going into the negotiations that restarted September 13 and continued this week, negotiators for the airline were seeking the right to have workers other than mechanics and cleaners do deicing, receipt and dispatch of planes and between-flight cleaning. They want to eliminate restrictions on station closings and real estate provisions which help workers who are forced to move as a result of station closings. The work rule changes the company wants could eliminate 1,500 jobs among these workers.

In a letter to the Pittsburgh *Post Gazette*, mechanic Curtis Atwell explained that removing mechanics from the line is a safety issue. "We confer with the pilots and perform a walk-around inspection of each incoming aircraft. It is our job to confirm the mechanical integrity of each aircraft we meet," he wrote.

The company is also demanding the use of part-time cleaners for the first time. In the earlier rejected agreement, those provisions had new cleaners earning \$203 per week, if they get the maximum of 25 hours work, and required them to pay the full cost of medical benefits for their families. Many cleaners fear that the company will try to win acceptance for these provisions by creating divisions among the different classifications of workers.

"Mechanics and utility have to stick together on all the issues, specifically part-time. There has to be solidarity. The company is depending on us being divided," said Janine Love.

In Philadelphia, where US Airways has hired a large number of cleaners, some workers believe the company will try to take advantage of their four-and-a-half month probation to pressure them to work in the event of a strike. "I would never cross the picket line, because I understand what the is-

sues are," one cleaner still on probation said. "When my probation is over I will benefit from what they are fighting for. These big corporations work you, use you, and treat you like garbage. Once we're divided, it's easier for them to break us," she added. The IAM says that workers on probation will be part of the back to work agreement.

The union was initially asking for annual 4 percent raises. The company, however, wants to limit pay raises to a parity scheme based on wages at other airlines, including nonunion Delta. Pilots and fleet service workers already have the "parity" clause in their contracts, and the company wants to continue that pattern with other work groups as a way of keeping wages down.

Among the bargaining units who have yet to reach a settlement with the company are 10,000 customer service agents represented by the Communication Workers of America, and 8,300 flight attendants represented by the Association of Flight Attendants. The flight attendants showed their level of organization and determination at this year's Labor Day parade in Pittsburgh where their contingent of around 150 maintained spirited chanting throughout the march and distributed bags of peanuts to onlookers with tags saying "We get peanuts, they get big bucks", referring to US Airways Chairman Stephen Wolf and CEO Rakesh Gangwal, who earned \$16.5 million and \$15.1 million respectively last year, plus options worth millions more.

One of the chants marchers repeated throughout the march was "We support the IAM", which was not lost on IAM members marching in contingents directly in front of the flight attendants. The AFA had scheduled membership meetings September 23 through 25 in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Baltimore, Washington, DC, and Charlotte prior to a decision by union leaders whether to honor IAM picket lines in the event of a strike. According to an arbitration ruling the AFA can legally honor the picket lines without the threat of an injunction. Flight attendants will mark 1,000 days without a contract on September 27 and will begin a public campaign of informational picketing and leafleting.

Wolf and Gangwal have been criticized in the business press lately for operational decisions that have caused widespread flight cancellations, higher costs, and the plummeting price of US Airways stock. Workers in particular point to the company's decision to close three of its six heavy maintenance bases in Greensboro and Winston-Salem, NC, and Roanoke, VA, forcing 1,400 workers to transfer. This angered many workers, who had to move or commute long distances to work, and led the company to withdraw the

equivalent of 14 planes from service because necessary maintenance couldn't be done.

Many workers feel this puts the union in a more favorable negotiating position. "The company's feeling problems now that they brought on themselves", Greg Conjeski, a cleaner in Pittsburgh said. "If we take a pay cut now, or lose other things, what's going to happen next time?" he asked.

The union is in a stronger position, too, because fleet service workers, who were not represented by any union during the last strike by maintenance workers in 1992, are also members of the IAM and have a contract which allows them to honor other employees' picket lines.

The resistance by workers at US Airways is attracting attention from workers throughout the airline industry, especially where workers are facing or preparing for contract fights. "It's a very serious situation if US Airways is bringing out the part-time issue", stated Allan Miller, who works as a mechanic at the Northwest maintenance base in Atlanta. "The airline industry would like to go that way with all of our jobs, if they could. Part-time work only benefits the company. The US Airways mechanics and cleaners have my support," he said. The Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA) now represents the 9,000 mechanics and cleaners at

Northwest.

Flight attendants at Northwest, who are members of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, overwhelmingly rejected a tentative contract by a vote of 6,108 to 2,727 in August. American Airlines flight attendants, who are organized by the Association of Professional Flight Attendants, voted down a tentative agreement by a margin of 73 percent September 17.

Dave Walters is a member of IAM Local 1976 in Pittsburgh. Becca Arenson and Nancy Cole in Philadelphia and Arlene Rubenstein in Atlanta also contributed to the article.

The Eastern Airlines Strike

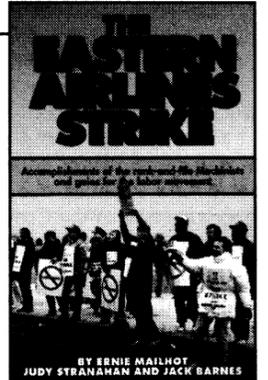
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MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

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Eyewitness Report from Northern Ireland.

Speakers: Walter Pollard, member of Lawyers Alliance for Justice in Ireland, recently returned from N. Ireland as observer at Garvaghy Rd. in Portadown; Gary Cohen, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Oct. 1, 7:30 p.m. 683 Washington St. Dorchester. Donation: \$4. Tel: (617) 282-2254.

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Youth and the Fight for Socialism: Panel of Young Socialists Leaders Report on Struggles Today. Sat., Oct. 2, 7:30 p.m. 851 Bloor St. W. Donation: \$4. Tel: (416) 533-4324.

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The rise of Perot, Buchanan and the weakening of the two-party system in the U.S.

The excerpt below is from "So Far from God, So Close to Orange County: The Deflationary Drag of Finance Capital" by Socialist Workers Party national secretary Jack Barnes. This report is based on a talk and closing presentation Barnes gave to a regional socialist educational conference held in Los Angeles, California, over the 1994-95 New Year's weekend. The entire report is published in *Capitalism's World*

from the pages of Capitalism's World Disorder

Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium (see ad on front page). The book is copyright © Pathfinder Press. The excerpt is reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

BY JACK BARNES

How is the pattern of world politics we have been discussing reflected concretely in the class struggle in the United States today? What do workers and youth in this country confront, and what can we do about it?

Right after the 1992 presidential elections, a public meeting was organized in New York City in conjunction with a conference of the Socialist Workers Party's National Committee and communist leaders from several other countries. At that public meeting, we said that what was most important about the bourgeoisie's election campaign was the fact that it was not going to end with the counting of the ballots. "America First," the "culture war," building a wall along the border with Mexico — the themes of the ultrarightist Republican primary candidate Patrick Buchanan — continued to resound. The campaign of Ross Perot — who ended up getting 19 percent of the popular vote — and his demagogic appeal to an insecure middle class was not a fleeting phenomenon in bourgeois politics, irrespective of Perot himself. In the course of the 1992 campaign, Clinton had already begun speaking Perot's language, probing measures to erode the social wage won through the labor struggles of the 1930s and civil rights battles of the 1950s and 1960s. The Democratic nominee campaigned on the pledge to "end welfare as we know it."

Across the bourgeois political spectrum, this coarsening rhetoric — aimed at heightening resentment in the middle classes and undercutting social solidarity among working people — continued after the election, as we said it would. Two years into the Clinton presidency and two months after the election of a Republican majority in the U.S. Congress, an ideological battle still rages within the bourgeoisie, packaged in demagoguery directed to the broader population.

How should the capitalists operate politically in this new period of economic crisis and growing instability? Why are the employers still so far from accomplishing what they need to do, even after more than a decade of assaults on real wages, employment levels, job conditions, and working hours? How can they break through obstacles to take qualitatively more? How can the bourgeoisie start marshaling arguments that will enable them — even if ever so cautiously at first — to chip away more significantly at the assumptions underlying Social Security itself? These are among the questions at the center of bourgeois politics in the United States today.

Shift to right in bourgeois politics

The bipartisan framework of bourgeois politics continues to move to the right. What is the net result, for example, of a Democratic president coming into office and pledging to do something about national health care? Two years later, working people are further away from the socialization of medical coverage than before — *further away*. That is the reality. But the same direction is true across the board. There is a

bipartisan movement to the right — and in some important respects a convergence — in the economic and social legislative agendas of both bourgeois parties.

Advancing along this trajectory inevitably breeds rightist demagoguery, because the efforts by the Democratic and Republican politicians to rationalize their policies end up feeding reactionary biases, fears, and resentments. No matter how particular politicians try to package their anti-working-class moves, it is rightist views that are given the biggest impulse by the fact of these moves itself...

Capitalism over the past couple of decades has at least doubled the official jobless rate that is considered "natural" in the United States, Europe, and most other imperialist countries. The numbers of workers no longer even counted as part of the labor force still continues to grow. At the same time, the capitalists have reduced unemployment benefits, held down the minimum wage, diminished the buying power of take-home pay, denied government funding for child care, and allowed welfare benefits to fall further and further behind price increases. Working people are being driven out of affordable housing, and medical and retirement benefits are being cut.

This is what capitalism is imposing on growing numbers in the working class today. And then politicians from both parties start branding those forced to live under these conditions as outlaws. They start talking about putting the children of the "underclass" into orphanages. They start denying workers unemployment benefits or welfare unless we accept jobs at a minimum or subminimum wage. They draw immigrants across the border to exploit cheap labor and then begin organizing to deny them schooling, medical care, and social benefits...

The battle has opened up around all these questions in bourgeois politics in the United States. And it should come as no surprise that the right wing is firing the opening shots. The street battles will come later, after a fighting labor movement has begun to take shape and threaten capitalist rule. But the political initiative, to begin with, lies with the rightist and fascist forces that emerge out of the right wing of the bourgeois parties themselves, linking up over time with elements within the cops and officer corps of the armed forces.

Working-class currents, on the other hand, do not come out of the radicalization of a left wing of the bourgeois parties. They come out of a sharp and sustained rise in working-class struggles. And class battles on that scale will only begin later in the crisis; that is what the historical experience of our class has demonstrated. So it is the radical right that gets the first shot, and whose nuclei begin to grow earlier and faster.

That is why in the mass media today we already hear the voices of ultrarightists — a Patrick Buchanan, for example — but we do not hear communists...

Weakening of two-party setup

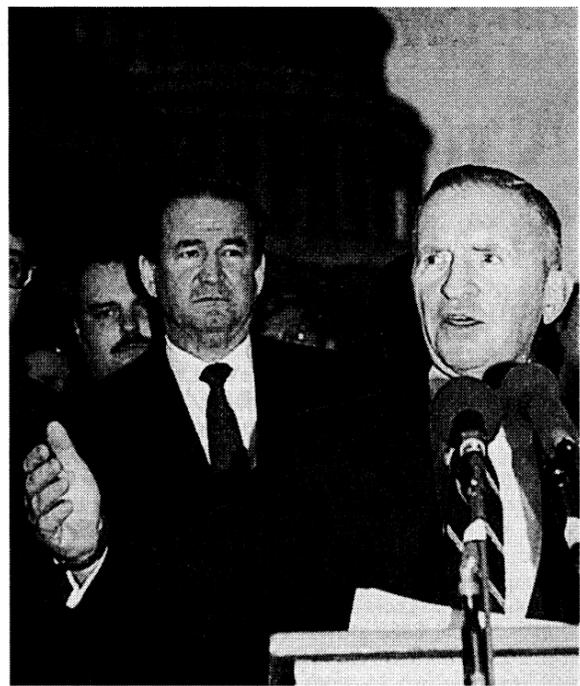
During the 1992 U.S. presidential campaign, the bourgeoisie's two-party setup already began to show its tendency to disintegrate around the edges under the pressures we have been describing. And this process will continue. The first manifestations will not necessarily be recognizably fascist. Perot, for instance, is a Bonapartist demagogue who presses a generally right-wing political agenda, but his movement does not have the incipient fascist thrust of what Buchanan is trying to put together.

Whether it is Perot, Buchanan, or other figures and currents that carve out a niche in bourgeois politics, their initial target will not be to take the labor movement head on, or to go after revolutionary-minded workers and communists. In fact, many will demagogically speak on behalf of "the ordinary working man." Right now the ultrarightists are largely going after the Clinton administration, as well as those in their own milieu soft on these "New Deal-influenced" "globalist elites." They rail against those who are selling out "America" and "American workers." They condemn the "corrupt and decadent pretenders" to leadership of the nation among the spokespeople of the existing bourgeois parties, government institutions, and federal bureaucracy.¹

This is how political radicalization begins,

as evidence of political weakness and moral bankruptcy mount in capitalist politics. And we should remember that forces coming from different directions in bourgeois politics can and do converge around radical demagoguery of this kind. Buchanan and Perot, for example, converge with those such as the so-called consumer advocate Ralph Nader and *Nation* columnist Alexander Cockburn to rail against the North American Free Trade Agreement — all of them speaking more or less openly in "America First" terms, while shedding crocodile tears over the conditions of Mexican workers and farmers.

Aspects of what incipient fascist forces say can sound like they are addressed to radicalizing workers and youth. Clinton has no respect for the ordinary working



Ultrarightist politician Patrick Buchanan (center) and Reform Party founder Ross Perot (right) in 1993.

person, they say, or for the little guy in the middle class. Social conditions in the country just get worse and worse. But we should never be fooled for even a minute. What they say and what communists say have nothing in common — nothing at all. Theirs are the voices of a current in bourgeois politics, a current alien to everything the line of march of the working class leads toward.

¹ In announcing his bid for the 1996 Republican presidential nomination in March 1995, Patrick Buchanan said: "This campaign is about an America that once again looks after its own people and our own country First. . . . Why are our people not realizing the fruits of their labor? Because we have a government that is frozen in the ice of its own indifference. A government that does not listen anymore to the forgotten men and women who work in the forges and factories and plants and businesses. We have instead a government that is too busy taking the phone calls from lobbyists for foreign countries and the corporate contributions of the Fortune 500."

This combination of American chauvinism and anticapitalist demagoguery was a growing theme of Buchanan's primary campaign. "For whose ben-

efit was that \$50 billion bailout of Mexico City?" he asked participants at an August 1995 conference sponsored by Ross Perot. "It wasn't the workers of Main Street, it was the bankers of Wall Street. Citibank, Chase Manhattan, J.P. Morgan, and Goldman Sachs all got off the hook, and they put us on." In a campaign speech in early 1996 he said: "When AT&T lops off 40,000 jobs, the executioner that does it, he's a big hero on the cover of one of those magazines, and AT&T stock soars."

"Watch the establishment," Buchanan jubilantly told supporters two days before winning the New Hampshire primary in February 1996. "All the knights and barons will be riding into the castle, pulling up the drawbridge, because they're coming. All the peasants are coming with pitchforks after them."

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

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October 4, 1974

The Boston school system ended its first full week of court-ordered desegregation, with racist violence increasing as the white school boycott continues. But many Black parents and students are determined to carry through the desegregation plan. One Black student summed up this mood saying, "Nobody's gonna stop me from getting my education."

Although the white boycott has been building strength here — school attendance Sept. 20 was 71 percent, down from a high point of 76 percent earlier this week — and attracting racist scum from other parts of the country, including Nazis and members of the Ku Klux Klan, a protest rally is slated for Sept. 26 to galvanize opposition to the racist offensive.

In predominantly white South Boston, several hundred whites gathered along the street to taunt and jeer the buses as they arrived carrying Blacks from nearby Roxbury to attend South Boston High School. The racists yelled: "Niggers go Home."

Inside the schools teachers did not greet Black students with the usual enthusiasm of opening school days. Instead, students were pushed and ordered around.

Then, as students boarded buses to go home, racists screamed, "Niggers aren't human," and "Niggers are animals," and heaved rocks at the buses.

Violence against Black students was not confined to South Boston, but spread to other parts of the city. Black students were injured and buses were stoned in Roslindale, Hyde Park, Matapan, and Dorchester.

Maceo Dixon, cochairman of the Socialist Workers 1974 National Campaign Committee, has been touring the area for the Massachusetts socialist campaign. He has urged support for the rally Sept. 26 to protest the racist offensive.

The socialist candidates urged the broadest support for the right of Black stu-

dents to attend any schools they choose. They hailed efforts by residents of the Columbia Point housing projects to halt the racist attacks on their community.

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

October 3, 1949

Truman's announcement that "an atomic explosion occurred in the USSR" has shattered the illusion that the next war would spill its frightfulness everywhere in the world but the United States. No longer can the scoundrels and madmen who rule this country offer the lure that American imperialism, through its monopoly of the atomic bomb, can destroy the Soviet Union and conquer the world through a "quick, cheap war."

Truman's announcement heralds not a greater hope for peace but an intensification of the atomic arms race: greater and greater stockpiling of instruments of mass slaughter; total militarization of American and Western Europe; an all-out witch-hunt against free speech and free thought; repression of organized labor. These are the realities being hatched under cover of the palaver about "international control of atomic energy through the UN."

And what a timely pretext Truman's "calm" announcement offers for further blows against organized labor. How quickly the Big Business press has picked up the cue. "To what degree can the development in Russia be expected to bring about a mood in industrial relations that will assure continuance of the peak functioning of our industrial machine?" asks Arthur Krock, N.Y. *Times* columnist. "Has not the baleful potential of great strikes been even clearer?" His colleague, business commentator C.F. Hughes, opines: "Public opinion is not likely to condone industrial bickering in the face of this new threat."

Thus Washington plans to use the Russian atomic bomb in order to blast the rights, liberties and standard of living of the American working class.

A new gain for unions in the South

The just-concluded strike battle by 1,450 members of the Steelworkers union in Charlotte, North Carolina, against Continental General Tire, shows the power of working-class action and solidarity. The workers beat back the company's drive to break the union and are now in a stronger position to assert their rights and dignity on the job.

The strike outcome at Continental adds to a few other accomplishments this year that mark a strengthening of the union of workers in the South. One was the Steelworkers Local 8888 strike in Newport News, Virginia, where 9,200 workers stood up to the shipbuilding bosses and Pentagon in a 15-week walkout. That struggle displayed features of the new proletarian movement emerging in the United States today in both city and country. It became interconnected with struggles in the region by farmers for their land. Many workers and farmers in the South looked to the Local 8888 battle and gained confidence from it.

In June textile workers in Kannapolis, North Carolina, scored an important union organizing victory at Fieldcrest Cannon—the product of two decades of struggle.

The big-business media noted with alarm that solidarity was firm throughout the year-long battle at Continental General and that only 15 union members crossed the picket line. The unionists organized daily 24-hour picketing and several rallies by hundreds outside the plant gate.

This was the fourth strike at the Charlotte plant in the past 22 years and the longest and most fiercely fought. The company hired 900 strikebreakers and insisted they would be permanent employees. In the end, the company agreed that all the strikers will return to work over the coming months. The workers also won raises in their pensions to the industry average.

Strikers who voted both for and against the contract strongly opposed the six-and-a-half-year term of the agreement and the 12-hour shifts that undermine overtime premiums. But workers return to work on a stronger footing to continue the struggle over such issues.

The capitalist media gloats over the fact that North Carolina ranks last among the 50 states in the percentage of unionized workers, at just 4.2 percent. And the other southern states are not far behind. But the unity and solidarity shown by the steelworkers at Continental General is no fluke. It's an example of how working people will increasingly respond as the bosses continue their relentless drive against our democratic rights, living standards, and dignity. It bodes well for the future of all those who toil for a living.

East Timor

Continued from front page

not in East Timor to save lives or defend the right of the Timorese people to their self-determination. Under UN camouflage, they have been sent to protect the interests of the billionaire families who rule the main capitalist powers in the world.

How can Washington claim it will protect the independence of East Timor when it maintains its own colonial boot on Puerto Rico?

The target of the occupiers, in fact, is the Timorese people themselves, whose unflagging struggle for independence from Portuguese, then Indonesian, rule has won the respect of working people and the oppressed worldwide. Their example is correctly viewed by the imperialist ruling families as a threat to their efforts to keep workers and farmers in check as they plunder the wealth and labor of that region.

From the beginning, Washington and other imperialist powers have acted in cahoots with the military-based Indonesian regime to suppress the people of East Timor. But the U.S.-backed Suharto dictatorship crumbled, and the new regime in Jakarta is less able to contain the emerging struggles — in both Indonesia and East Timor — for democratic, national, and union rights.

Officials in the labor movement and many organizations in the workers movement have parroted big-business calls for intervention by "their" own governments — from Australian union officials to the Communist Party USA. But they are supporting wolves in sheep's clothing.

All attempts to give the intervention a humanitarian facade, including sanctions against Indonesia and calls for a "war crimes tribunal" conducted by the imperialist powers, must be opposed because they only serve to give credence to the invaders. Only the workers and peasants of the archipelago themselves can call the Indonesian rulers to account — as they have proven capable of doing many times.

The most important aid working people around the world can give the Timorese people and their struggle for independence is to direct our fire at the capitalist governments in our countries and demand their troops get out of East Timor now.

Buchanan probes Reform Party

Continued from front page

October. Buchanan's move, one more sign of the coming decomposition of the two-party system in the United States, has become a major issue in an election campaign where the two leading contenders, Democrat Albert Gore and Republican George W. Bush, have raised no differences of substance on domestic or foreign policy issues so far. President William Clinton has set the tone for the campaign with his sending of U.S. troops to East Timor to bolster Washington's imperialist interests in Asia and the Pacific, which — with the exception of Buchanan — has won bipartisan support.

Reiterating his America First stance on a September 18 television talk show, Buchanan stated that his "central disagreements" with the Republican Party were what he termed "its appeasement of Communist China along with Clinton and Gore" as well as the two parties' "interventionist" foreign policy.

Two other major disagreements, the ultrarightist added, were his protectionist opposition to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and his argument that "illegal immigrant needs to be stopped cold."

Buchanan staked out these themes when he ran for the Republican nomination in the 1992 and 1996 presidential elections. His impending break with the Republican Party today registers the fact that this vehicle no longer serves his aims. Given the current level of the class struggle and political polarization, which is only in its initial stages, no significant section of the ruling class has thrown its support behind the rightist politician.

Incipient fascist movement

The current led by Buchanan is the main organizing center for incipient American fascism today. Feeding on middle-class insecurities bred by the growing capitalist disorder, Buchanan has kept one foot in traditional bourgeois politics while seeking to recruit cadres to build a movement in the streets that can eventually impose radical solutions to protect the interest of capital at a time of crisis.

Buchanan's "culture war" targets entire layers of the working class — immigrants, workers receiving social welfare payments, working women who raise children on their own, gays, and others — to be blamed for the capitalist social crisis. His radicalism pits human beings against each other and reinforces the most savage competitiveness and dog-eat-dog values of capitalist society.

Raising the banner of economic nationalism, Buchanan has increasingly resorted to anticapitalist and national socialist demagoguery. He rails against the "plutocrats" and "globalist elite" who he says are betraying the "American worker." On this basis he recently picked up the endorsement of officials of the Independent Steelworkers Union, which organizes workers at the Weirton Steel plant in economically devastated Weirton, West Virginia.

Buchanan has been promoting his new book on foreign policy, *A Republic, Not an Empire*. Erroneously described as "isolationist" by conservative and liberal opponents, the book reaffirms Buchanan's stance that Washington should avoid "imperial overstretch" in international conflicts and only go to war against its enemies once it's strong enough to win a decisive victory.

The book recently sparked a controversy over his views on World War II. Far from being isolationist as his critics allege, Buchanan argues in his books that London, Paris, and Washington should have let the Hitler-led German regime attack and weaken the Soviet Union, or overthrow it, before going to war against Berlin. Buchanan blames "the British empire" for supposedly dragging Washington into the war prematurely. This view is consistent with Buchanan's stance of opposing recent U.S. military intervention in the Gulf War and Yugoslavia on the basis that first "America must retrench, America must rearm." The ultrarightist argues that the "war at home" must be won first and that when the government sends forces abroad it must use overwhelming power to guarantee victory.

Bonapartist politicians

The Reform Party was put together following Ross Perot's 1992 election campaign, another new feature in U.S. politics. Perot, who won an unprecedented 19 percent of the vote in those elections, tapped into the conviction of millions that the established capitalist politicians are incapable of addressing the social crisis. As a Bonapartist political figure, he presented himself as a leader standing above classes and traditional parties who could "cut through the gridlock" and bring stability with an iron hand.

Perot's radical demagoguery appealed particularly to fearful middle-class layers and workers aspiring to be part of the middle class. He offered a reactionary social program, from scapegoating Mexican immigrants for unemployment to proposing to end the character of Social Security as a universal social right guaranteed to all.

In the 1996 campaign Perot's electoral prospects narrowed, and the coalition around him became more overtly ideological and right-wing. The election of Jesse Ventura as governor of Minnesota, however, has given the Reform Party a new boost and somewhat broader appeal. Ventura, like Perot, is a Bonapartist politician who promotes the image of a strongman-like figure not beholden to the corrupt "Establishment."

The rhetoric of Ventura, Perot, and their supporters shares with Buchanan the politics of middle-class resentment, anti-elite demagoguery, and economic nationalism. This makes the Reform Party a vehicle through which

Buchanan believes he can advance his longer-term efforts of recruiting cadres to his incipient fascist movement — the "Buchanan Brigades." His probe to capture the presidential nomination in the Reform Party is a concrete manifestation of the fact that Bonapartism greases the skids for fascism.

Debate in Reform Party

"Buchanan's economic views resonate in our party," declared Paul Truax, who directs the Reform Party's operations in eight southwestern states. "He does a wonderful job standing up for the American worker," said Daron Libby, Reform Party head in New Hampshire.

One of Buchanan's main boosters inside the Reform Party is Patrick Choate, a Perot ally and his 1996 running mate. Choate co-authored a book with Perot during the 1992 election campaign condemning NAFTA and wrote another protectionist book, an anti-Japanese tract called *Agents of Influence*. Days after his nomination on the Perot ticket in 1996, Choate was the guest on a TV talk show co-hosted by Dee Dee Myers, Clinton's former press secretary, and Bay Buchanan, the sister and campaign manager of Patrick Buchanan during his bid for the Republican presidential nomination, which the ultrarightist had by that time lost to Robert Dole. Bay Buchanan went out of her way to ask Choate friendly questions, especially about his chauvinist views on immigration and protectionism. Toward the end of the show, she presented Choate with a big "Go Pat, Go!" sign and offered him 10,000 copies left over from Buchanan's campaign. She held up for the TV camera one of those signs with "Buchanan" scratched out but readable and with "Choate" written in above it. Choate was honored to accept it.

Another new fan of Buchanan is Lenora Fulani, former leader of the New Alliance Party, a middle-class sect with fascist-like elements that years ago shed its "leftist" rhetoric and eventually entered the Reform Party. Fulani recently said on CNN that she could overlook differences she has with the ultrarightist politician on gay rights and the right to abortion because he "can play a role as a unifier." Buchanan, on the other hand, has made it clear he will not back down from his anti-choice and other culture war positions.

While some in the Ventura faction of the Reform Party have been hostile to Buchanan's bid, even John Gargan, who won the party's chairmanship with Ventura's backing, differed with the Minnesota governor. "Buchanan's position on all the 'America First' concepts certainly fit in nicely with Reform concepts," Gargan said. "We are for a balanced budget, keeping jobs in America, tightening up on immigration, elimination of the influence of lobbyists and special interests."

Ventura and Buchanan

Ventura, who has suggested he might run for president in 2004, has expressed the most adamant opposition to Buchanan competing for the political leadership of the Reform Party. Ventura is promoting real estate billionaire Donald Trump to run for the party's nomination against Buchanan.

Unlike Buchanan, who wages a clearly defined ideological campaign espousing rightist views as the basis for his nascent movement, Ventura's public positions are secondary to the essence of his political appeal—that of the Bonapartist savior who will take matters in hand and sweep out the Augean stables of government "for the people." As such, Ventura has taken diverse stands — from supporting a woman's right to choose abortion and legalization of prostitution and drugs — traditionally not positions of the political right — to cutting state-subsidized day care and replacing income tax with a national sales tax. But while Ventura's demagoguery is designed to draw support from a wide range of voters with contradictory political views and conflicting class interests, the thrust of his victory in Minnesota and the course of his administration has aided the employers' offensive against working people and given a boost to rightist forces.

For his part, Buchanan has avoided antagonistic remarks about Ventura, calling him a "very impressive man." Buchanan dismissed Trump saying, "We're becoming a plutocracy...and he's got billions of dollars."

In line with his demagoguery painting him as the defender of workers and the "little man," Buchanan's supporters have floated the possibility of Teamsters union president James Hoffa as his running mate. "Hoffa has not said no in advance," columnist Robert Novak reported in the September 16 Chicago *Sun-Times*.

Much of the commentary by liberal, conservative, and leftist critics of Buchanan has dismissed him as an inconsequential fringe element. Charles Lane of the liberal *New Republic* predicted that "his flameout should be quick and comical." Sam Tanenhaus wrote in the September 20 *Wall Street Journal*, "This election may not be Mr. Buchanan's last. But it may well be the last in which anyone pays him much attention. Mr. Buchanan has it backward. He has not rejected the Republican Party. It has rejected him."

The sarcasm is misplaced. The incipient fascist politician is not out to win bourgeois popularity polls, and there is no reason to think he will simply fade away. He aims to attract cadres to a reactionary popular movement that will continue to be fueled by the capitalist social crisis itself. Patrick Buchanan and his thuggish Buchanan Brigades are a deadly enemy of the working class and farmers, and will have to be defeated in struggle by the labor movement and its allies.

Hydro-Quebec workers strike over wages

BY GRANT HARGRAVE AND JOE YOUNG

MONTREAL — Around 1,300 workers have been on strike against Hydro-Quebec, the state owned electrical utility, since May 5. Because provincial antilabor legislation known as the "Essential Services Act" makes a general strike illegal, only about 10 percent of the nearly 16,000 workers organized by Canadian Union of Public Employees are on the picket lines.

The strike targets Hydro-Quebec power plants that produce electricity for export, and the billing activities of the company. Union members who are providing essential services are paying additional union dues to the strike fund.

Workers are demanding raises of 7 percent and 6 percent per year in a two-year contract. The company has offered 3 percent over two years, to cut contributions to the pension fund and a bonus tied to profits. Strikers at the Beauharnois power station near Montreal explain that what this really means is that Hydro-Quebec wants to pay the wage increase out of contributions already made by workers into the pension fund, instead of increasing benefits to retirees.

They also point out that they have not had a raise in 10 years and that in their last contract in 1995 they accepted a 4.5 percent cut in wages with the promise that the company

would create 1,000 new jobs. Since then up to 2,000 jobs have been cut.

During the first week of the strike, unionists used mass picketing at Beauharnois to face down cops and turn back five buses, supposedly containing management personnel, from entering the complex.

Three buses returned later the same day and cops were able to force an opening for them to cross the picket line. The union was then hit with an injunction limiting the number of picketers to 10 per entrance.

In the weeks that followed, strikers demonstrated in front of Hydro-Quebec's head office in downtown Montreal and joined with municipal blue collar workers on strike against the city of Verdun, a Montreal suburb. During the recent nurses' walkout in Quebec, strikers from Beauharnois joined the nurses' picket line at the hospital in nearby Valleyfield. In August they briefly blocked a freeway before the arrival of riot cops.

On the night of August 27 a pylon was dam-

14,000 casino workers wage three-day strike in Atlantic City



Some 14,000 hotel and restaurant workers in Atlantic City, New Jersey, walked off the job September 15 against the casino bosses' attempts to contract out jobs for nonunion workers. The strikers returned to work September 18 after officials of the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees union and the nine casino operators reached a five-year agreement that guarantees current jobs, increases in pensions, and maintains existing wages and benefits.

aged on a transmission line used to export power to the United States. Despite a total lack of proof, Hydro-Quebec immediately blamed strikers. Riot cops intervened to remove strikers from the area to permit subcontractors to repair the pylon. But shortly after their arrival on the site the subcontractor workers walked off the job in solidarity with the Hydro strikers.

The repairs were finally done using man-

agement personal brought in from around Quebec.

On September 9 up to 100 strikers demonstrated again in front of Hydro-Quebec's head office to mark the resumption of negotiations.

Grant Hargrave is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 1758, and Joe Young is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Union.

LETTERS

Since September 17, when the *Militant's* website went on line, we have received numerous letters from readers with reactions and proposals for improvements. We take some extra space in this week's column to print excerpts from a selection of these letters. We appreciate the suggestions and encourage all readers to help us improve the website.

— The editors

User-friendly for the blind

I am extremely pleased to have seen the new web site for the *Militant*. It was with great trepidation that I looked forward to its debut. I was concerned about the accessibility of the site. I found the gopher site to have been very user-friendly for the blind. Please accept my deep gratitude for including the text version on the new site. Although graphics make the paper more attractive to most readers, they make it more difficult for the blind reader. When I first looked at the site with Internet Explorer version 5.0 and Window-eyes, a screen access speech program, I had some initial difficulty. I then tried using Netscape along with an IBM program called Home Page reader which uses its own interface and speech output to access the Internet. With this I found much more success. Reading the paper on line make it possible for me to browse through and choose which articles I want to read and when.

I hope that the redesign of the *Militant's* web site will reach even more people with the truth about working-class struggles and issues. The *Militant* is still the only source that I know of to find out the truth about what is going on in the world and how to fight for change. I am sure that readers can look forward to being able to order Pathfinder books and publications on line. I believe I read somewhere that it might be possible to subscribe to the *Militant* on line. I would definitely be interested in doing so.

Again I offer thanks and congratulations for the new web site. I will continue to use it to keep well informed.

Maurice Scott Peret

Include all in News section

I am very glad to see the *Militant* as a web site. I do have some suggestions though. I think the "News articles" link should include ALL the news articles, including the ones labeled "Front-page articles" and "Features."

I have been doing many of the Militant Labor Forum leaflets in Boston and quite often a picture from the Militant is included. Currently, I scan the picture and use it with Microsoft Publisher to compose the leaflet. This sometimes works out well. An electronic copy (a file) would potentially make this much more successful.

I searched the web version of the *Militant* for pictures and only found one on the front page. There was no option of downloading the picture in a higher resolution. The resolution for web publishing is usually not the best for leaflet printing.

A common practice on a web site is to click on the picture with the left button of the mouse and a higher-resolution picture is displayed. You can then right-click on it and have the option of downloading it. A higher resolution would help in making more attractive leaflets. Keep up the good work and thanks.

Les Slater
Boston, Massachusetts

Easy to use

The new web site is great! Quite easy to use and printed-out articles look very nice.

Eva Braiman
Cleveland, Ohio

A good beginning

Congratulations on your web site. I like the layout and had some ideas. There has been a discussion in the *Militant* on whether or not to use frames to improve navigation and speed up download time. Frames have strengths and weaknesses you'll have to weigh. The argument that level 2 browsers don't support frames is not important now as less than 1 percent of the population uses level 2 browsers. The problem with using frames is it limits searchability with search

engines.

Search engines are a very small part of how people will come to your site, however. The URL should be included prominently in the paper, on subscription blanks, Militant Labor Form leaflets and posters you put up at plant gate, neighborhood, and campus sales as well as word of mouth. Frames' strengths are that you can have constant navigation that downloads one time, saving download time and making the site very easy to use. I don't know what Peter Link meant when he said in the September 13 *Militant* article that frames would not be used because the *Militant's* "priority [is] simplicity and ease of use." A constant nonscrolling invisible frame on the left used for navigation will make the site much easier to use and much more simple to understand. It will also be easy to update because you only need to change that one page and the change will show up on every page.

Because it only downloads once, you can make it more attractive with more imagery and not worry about slowing down the site with heavy pages. Currently the site has very poor navigation, especially on the inside pages. The user's only option is returning to the home page every time.

The first rule of good navigation is to limit the number of clicks by offering as many navigation options as you can on each page. If you choose not to use frames to do this, you can still have several choices on the bottom or top of each page for easier navigation, for example: Home | News Articles | Editorials | etc. You can make this a server side include so you can update it anytime without going into any pages for very easy maintenance.

The option "text only" is not relevant to most of your users because they won't be using text-only browsers and your site doesn't have images (except the masthead) on any page other than the home page. If you decide you want to include the text-only option it should only appear on the home page.

You should also repeat the front-page articles on the "News Articles" page, so people who clicked on the

news article link before they saw the other options don't miss these important articles.

One final suggestion. Avoid the use of italics. It is difficult to read on the Internet.

In general, the site is very good. I'm glad to see it up. But it should be looked at as a beginning. Changes and improvements can be made very quickly on the Internet. You should check out other sites and see what they have. Please contact me if I can be of any help. I am a professional web designer.

Pat Smith
Chicago, Illinois

A step forward

I'm thrilled to see the new website. It's a huge step forward from the old one. One question: where are the letters to the editor?

Carl Weinberg
New Haven, Connecticut

More links

I looked at the web site today, it's a great advance for us! Some comments: the photo for the lead article needs a caption. The page with the "how to contact us" info does not have a link back to the home page.

Also: on the list of local distributors, it would be helpful to have the e-mail addresses of the various local LINKED, not just written there. I think most visitors would expect that.

Shouldn't there be links to the Pathfinder Press gopher, the *PM* gopher, and perhaps others.

Ray Parsons
Des Moines, Iowa

Advance over gopher site

The *militant.com* is a big advance over the previous gopher site and a welcome tool. A couple of suggestions:

a) Build links to editorials from relevant news article (and vice versa). Also, later, list "related stories" at the end of articles, i.e. from previous issues.

b) In the news menu, include the stories from the front page, which are also news stories. See the NY Times web site and the way they divide their international and national news menus — all the front-

page stuff is also included here.

T.J. Figueroa
Johannesburg, South Africa

Use color photos on web

Just visited www.themilitant.com. This is a huge step forward. The home page is simple, but attractive. The big disappointment is the black and white photo.

Why black and white on the web? There are two possible reasons for black and white. The first and best reason is for a special effect. The photo in question doesn't qualify.

The second is because that's all that's available. Many times photos are picked up from the print media and that's what you get. The question of color on the web puts an even bigger premium on worker-correspondents' submissions, which, I believe, should be in color these days.

I raise this because I noticed that Martin Koppel's photos from the recent trip to Puerto Rico were black and white. With digital technology there is no advantage for us in using black and white, and the film and processing are more expensive. Color prints make for much better displays and for a better web presentation.

For worker-correspondents color scanners are cheap and even large files are now e-mailable through such free services as whalemail.com, which allow the transmission of attachments of 3 megabytes (MB) to 50 MB.

Next, *Perspectiva Mundial*

Finally! Your own web site! It will now be easier than ever to convince others to read the paper. Of course, *Perspectiva Mundial's* site will be the one for promotion here in Mexico.

Nevin Siders
Mexico City

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.

Prisoners' release remains at the center of Puerto Rican, U.S. politics

BY PATTIE THOMPSON

CHICAGO—The 11 Puerto Rican independence fighters recently freed from U.S. prisons were guests of honor at pro-independence events held September 23 both here and in Lares, Puerto Rico. The annual *Grito de Lares* (Battle Cry of Lares) celebration commemorates the 1868 insurrection against Spanish colonial rule over Puerto Rico. In Puerto Rico, the rally this year was dedicated to the fight to get the U.S. Navy out of the island of Vieques.

The Chicago meeting, scheduled to take place as the *Militant* went to press, was publicized as a celebration of the launching of a new bilingual monthly, *Boricua*, and the release of the 11 political prisoners. Two of the former prisoners now living in Chicago, Alejandrina Torres and Alberto Rodríguez, are to be "special guests."

Six other Puerto Rican *independentistas* remain behind bars, and supporters have vowed to take advantage of the initial victory to press the campaign for their release.

The newly released *independentistas* have been warmly received by many in the Puerto Rican community here. Luis Rosa, who stopped here briefly en route to Puerto Rico, went to a popular local club where he received a standing ovation from other patrons.

The First Congregational Church held a service September 19 to welcome Alejandrina Torres. She told the 100 people attending the service that she intended to continue to work for the independence of Puerto Rico.

The Spanish-language media in Chicago has carried interviews with the freed independence advocates. Alberto Rodríguez told the weekly *Exito*, "We wish to resolve the problem of Puerto Rico through a process of peace and reconciliation. But we must stop the violence on both sides. I am referring to the presence of the [U.S.] government in Vieques."

Michael Deutsch, one of the lawyers for the former political prisoners, told the press that the conditions announced by parole authorities in Chicago are harsher than those set for those now living in Puerto Rico. U.S. officials here have warned that participation by Alejandrina Torres and Alberto Rodríguez in political events, especially those relating to the fight for Puerto Rico's independence, would be scrutinized and subject to disapproval. "They must meet with their parole officers twice a week," Deutsch stated.

Bitterness in Washington

In Puerto Rico, the widespread support for the release of the *independentista* prisoners has created more space for them to speak out and take part in political activity.

Meanwhile, U.S. capitalist politicians and police officials have continued their strident



Puerto Rican patriot Alejandrina Torres (center) is welcomed in Chicago September 10 after release from prison. U.S. media complains about rise in nationalist sentiment.

propaganda campaign to tar the independence fighters as "terrorists" and denounce the Clinton administration's decision to release the 11.

Both the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives passed resolutions condemning President Clinton's move. Opponents of Clinton in both houses have clamored for the release of documents related to his decision to issue "pardons," objecting to the fact that he did not heed the opposition by the FBI and other cop agencies.

A House subcommittee held hearings on this matter September 21. In response to testimony that Clinton had freed the 11 Puerto Ricans on condition that they "renounce violence" and

accept severe parole terms, committee chairman Daniel Burton could barely contain his bitterness, and racist venom, toward the accomplished fact, declaring, "Is that any reason to let these vermin back on the streets?"

In his testimony, FBI assistant director Neil Gallagher stated, "Do I think they should be out on the street? I think these are criminals, and that they are terrorists, and they represent a threat to the United States."

That day FBI director Louis Freeh released a letter he had sent to Clinton as the president considered releasing the prisoners. Freeh warned the release of the nationalists would "psychologically and operationally enhance"

what he called "ongoing violent and criminal activities of Puerto Rican terrorist groups."

Burton's committee has demanded access to all documents related to Clinton's decision. The White House has so far refused the request, invoking executive privilege, offering instead to release 10,000 pages of related documents including thousands of letters asking the president to free the Puerto Rican political prisoners.

At the same time, the U.S. big-business media continues to express bewilderment at what it describes as a "nationalist frenzy" in Puerto Rico, referring to the rise in anticolonial sentiment that has marked politics there over the past year, most recently the outrage over the U.S. Navy's use of Vieques for bombing practice and the campaign to free the 17 political prisoners.

One expression of this sentiment was the massive celebration sparked by the triumph of Puerto Rican boxer Félix "Tito" Trinidad, who defeated Oscar de la Hoya in September 18 to win the welterweight title. The island came to a grinding halt and gave him a hero's welcome September 21, with thousands lining the streets of San Juan waving Puerto Rican flags. "At the grand festivities that paralyzed the country, an attempt was made to place a U.S. flag made of flowers on the stage where the boxer would be honored," New York's Spanish-language *El Diario/La Prensa* reported. "The thousands of people in the packed crowd prevented this with their boos and protests."

Also noted was the fact that as Trinidad climbed into the ring in Las Vegas, he held up a sign expressing solidarity with the fight to remove the U.S. Navy from Vieques.

Pattie Thompson is a member of the International Association of Machinists.

Irish activists fight U.S. deportations

BY DEBORAH LIATOS

SAN FRANCISCO — Nearly 40 people filled the Pathfinder Bookstore here September 10 to attend a Militant Labor Forum titled "Stop the Extradition and Deportation of Irish Political Prisoners." The program featured Irish activists Noel Cassidy and Malachy McAllister, who were touring the Bay Area to win support for their struggle against deportation by the U.S. government. They were introduced at the forum by John Fogarty, regional vice president of the Irish American Unity Conference.

Participants at the meeting joined with others throughout the world celebrating the release earlier that day of 11 Puerto Rican political prisoners from U.S. jails. Puerto Rican activist Willie Rivera, explained that nearly 100 people had gone earlier that day to the federal prison in nearby Dublin, California, to welcome four of the female prisoners released from jail.

Cassidy, McAllister, and the other panelists expressed their solidarity with the Puerto Rican patriots.

Like most Republicans in the North of Ireland, both McAllister and Cassidy lived with daily intimidation and abuse from the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), Northern Ireland's heavily armed police force, and from the British troops still occupying the six northern counties of Ireland. Under the United Kingdom's Prevention of Terrorism Act, both were detained numerous times, and frequently received serious beatings.

"I was raised as an Irish nationalist," Cassidy said. "I was first arrested when I was nine years old selling Easter lilies commemorating men who were killed in the 1917 Easter rebellion. In 1970 I joined the Irish Republican movement. I started counting the number of times I got arrested. When I got to 100 I stopped counting. Sometimes I was beaten and sometimes just interrogated."

McAllister said he is fighting for political asylum and against deportation by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS).

In 1983 Malachy was convicted in a jury-less "Diplock" court on frame-up charges,

based on an informers' testimony, of conspiracy to murder an RUC officer. Malachy served three and a half years in Long Kesh prison.

On Oct. 2, 1988, two masked loyalist gunmen fired 25 shots into the Malachy home. He and his wife were not there but his four children and mother in law narrowly missed being shot. No one was ever charged in the attack.

The RUC later notified the McAllisters that information on their family was in the hands of loyalist paramilitary organizations.

"We had no choice but to separate as a family for awhile," said Malachy. "We decided to keep the family together and left for Canada. We then left Canada for the United States before I got deported."

The INS denied the McAllisters' applications for asylum, stating there is no reason for them to fear harm should they return to Ireland.

"We're for the peace agreement, but it's clear that the loyalists aren't," said McAllister. "The revolution we've been having in Ireland against British occupation shows that the loyalists are not prepared to accept any kind of change whatsoever. I lost my first job in Belfast when I was 15 because I was a Catholic. Our situation is the same as what Puerto Ricans are facing. What Blacks and Latinos face in New York is the same as I faced growing up in Belfast."

Cassidy spent 13 months in Crumlin Road Jail in Belfast, without trial, after initially being arrested and charged with being an intelligence officer in the Irish Republican Army (IRA). After finally being tried and falsely convicted in a "Diplock" court on perjured testimony of a British army intelligence officer in March 1979, he spent the next 23 months in Long Kesh prison.

Cassidy said that because he demanded to wear his own clothes rather than the prison issued uniform, like many Republican prisoners, he was forced to live "on the blanket" his entire time at Long Kesh.

"I lived naked in a cell for 23 months," Cassidy said. "That whole time I could not wash, shave or brush my teeth. I went to mass

on Sundays. The only other time I was allowed out of the cell was one half hour visit per month. They [the guards] beat us every time we left our cell. We decided we couldn't take it anymore. In October 1980 seven men went on hunger strike in Long Kesh prison." They were joined in December of that year by three women at Armagh prison.

Cassidy is now married to a U.S. citizen and since the end of 1982 has been living in the United States. In December 1990 Cassidy was arrested at gun point at their home in Maryland and since then has faced deportation proceedings.

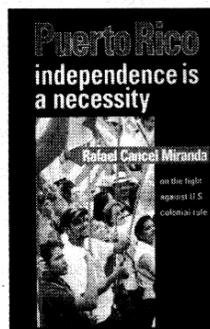
Larry Lane, representative of the Socialist Workers Party and a member of the International Association of Machinists also spoke on the panel. "For all of us this is an occasion of incomparable joy," he stated. "The release of the Puerto Rican political prisoners is a victory to celebrate. The fight for self-determination for Ireland, Puerto Rico, East Timor, Quebec, and other struggles of oppressed nationalities take place in the general framework of our entire epoch — the fight of workers and farmers for power. The struggle of nationalists for a free and united Ireland is more united, broader, and drawing in more youth. The loyalists are marked by disunity and disintegration into terror."

It's important, Lane said, "for those struggling for national liberation to link up with workers resisting the bosses belt-tightening demands today like the recent Newport News strike, the Teamsters workers who walked out at Basic Vegetable in King City, the San Francisco hotel workers, the locked-out Kaiser Aluminum workers, and USAirways machinists and flight attendants pushing for contracts. We find greater ease in winning our co-workers to support the struggle for national self-determination in Ireland and elsewhere and to support the concrete cases against deportation that the other panelists described."

Deborah Liatos is a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers.

From Pathfinder

Puerto Rico Independence Is a Necessity



Interviews with Rafael Cancel Miranda

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