

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Campaign for communism  
during WTO summit

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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## Rightists, union tops peddle anti-China campaign

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

"U.S. reaches an accord to open China economy as worldwide market," trumpeted the front page of the *New York Times* November 16. The previous day, the Chinese government agreed to a number of trade concessions in return for Washington's support for China's application to join the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Among the first voices raised in opposition to the deal were those of rightist Patrick Buchanan and AFL-CIO officials, who pledged to campaign to build opposition to the pact in the U.S. Congress. Buchanan called the pact a "cave-in" to Beijing. AFL-CIO President John Sweeney said the agreement "deals away our democratic principles and most cherished values, and we will fight it." Washington, he said, is "prostrating itself in pursuit of a trade deal with a rogue nation that decorates itself with human rights abuses."

The U.S. rulers hope to eventually reimpose capitalist domination in the world's most populous country, where it was overturned 50 years ago in the Chinese revolution. They frame their trade and military policy with that in mind. At the same time U.S. capitalists want to reap profits today by exploiting the human and natural resources in China. Beijing, for its part, is pushing to join the World Trade Organization in order to expand trade relations and attract investment.

The agreement, if implemented, would open significant areas of China's economy to

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## Buchanan courts labor officials with his 'America First' politics

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

Ultrarightist presidential candidate Patrick Buchanan has aggressively jumped into the debate around the upcoming meeting of the World Trade Organization with his America First politics. He assailed the Clinton administration for the November 15 pact with China agreeing to its entry into the WTO. He called on his supporters to join him in the protectionist protests that will take place in Seattle during the meeting, which opens November 30.

The trade negotiations have been marked by the sharpening political tensions between Washington and Beijing. The U.S. capitalist rulers seek to extract trade concessions from China, while developing nuclear missile systems and other military moves aimed at the workers state there.

Buchanan has taken advantage of the anti-China propaganda that dominates the big-business debate over this issue to push his American nationalist demagoguery.

"This is the latest administration capitulation to Beijing at the expense of working

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## Join actions to demand U.S. Navy leave Vieques

The U.S. military should get out of the island of Vieques and all of Puerto Rico. Not in five years, but now. As Vieques fishermen and others demand: "Not one more bomb, not one more shot!"

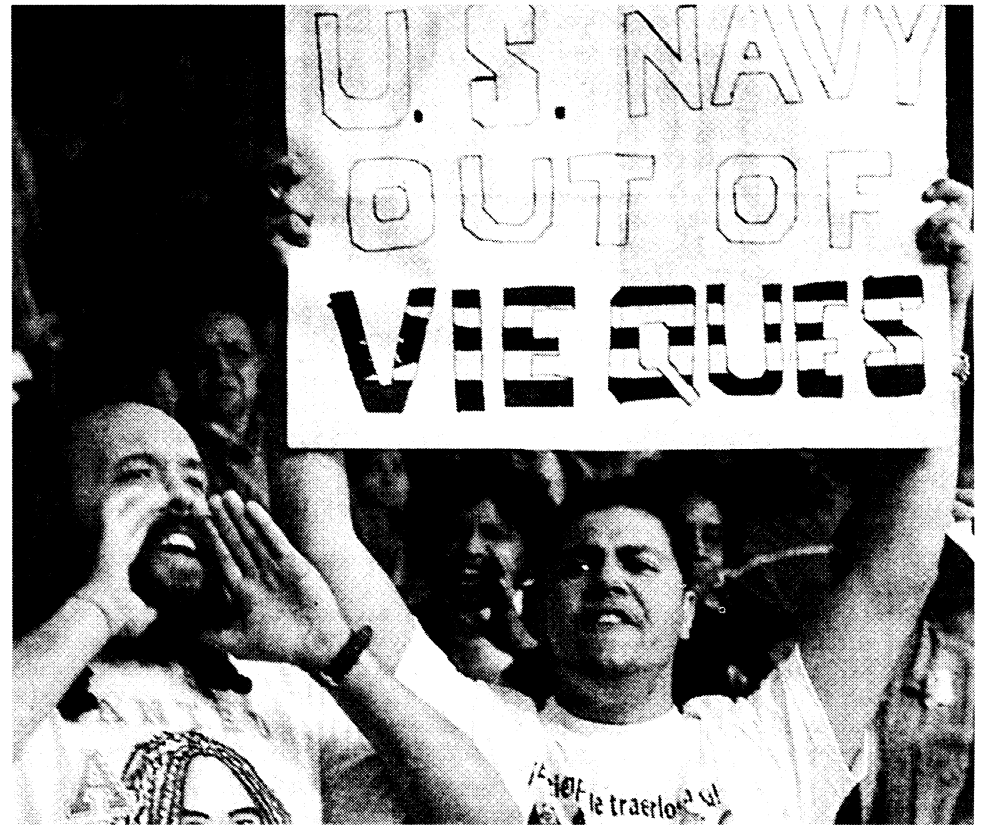
The recent decision by the Clinton administration to resume bombing practice in Vieques underscores the fact that Puerto Rico is a U.S. colony. Although the over-

### EDITORIAL

whelming majority of Puerto Ricans want the Navy out of their eastern island, all the vital decisions affecting their lives are made in Washington, not in San Juan.

Vieques, like all of Puerto Rico, has historically served as a springboard for U.S. aggression abroad — most recently for the U.S.-led bombing assault on the people of Yugoslavia. Pentagon officials complain that they need Vieques to train U.S. troops for future military deployments. But if they can't find an alternate site, that's *their* problem. Forcing the U.S. Navy out of Vieques will deal a blow to Washington's war machine. This illustrates how a successful fight

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October protest in Philadelphia opposes U.S. military training on Vieques

## Puerto Ricans protest plans to resume bombing

BY NAOMI CRAINE

The Committee for the Rescue and Development of Vieques is calling on all of its supporters to strengthen protest camps on the Puerto Rican island of Vieques beginning November 19. Actions are planned in Puerto Rico and in several U.S. cities that day to demand the U.S. Navy leave Vieques for good.

After being forced to suspend bombing in the area for the last seven months, the Clinton administration is preparing to resume military exercises on Vieques. The aircraft carrier

*USS Eisenhower* and its battle group is scheduled to head for the island at the beginning of December.

Since World War II, Washington has occupied two-thirds of this small island off the eastern coast of Puerto Rico, using the land and surrounding waters for bombing and live-ammunition training. For six decades, fishermen and other residents have protested the Navy's presence and the environmental destruction it causes.

Since April, when a U.S. warplane dropped

two 500-pound bombs that killed Vieques resident David Sanes, protesters have set up several camps in the Navy-controlled zones in order to deter a resumption of the bombing practice.

The Pentagon says they need to carry out a practice amphibious landing backed by live ship-to-shore artillery before being deployed to the Persian Gulf in February.

"We have to reinforce those camps because the process is reaching its final stage,"

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## Overnite truckers stand up to company, cops, and courts in strike for a union

BY MIKE ITALIE

ATLANTA — Striking Teamsters continue to put the pressure on Overnite Transportation in their four-week-old walkout against the largest nonunion trucking company in the United States. By maintaining spirited picket lines and gaining the support of other workers, the strikers have held the line against company and court union-busting, and have struck further blows to advance the fight for a union at Overnite.

The strike was initiated in Memphis, Tennessee, on October 24, where pickets report the fight for a union is linked to winning back the jobs of five workers who were recently fired.

Memphis is one of Overnite's larger terminals, with 400 to 500 workers, and was one of the six targets in a week-long strike by Teamsters in July 1999.

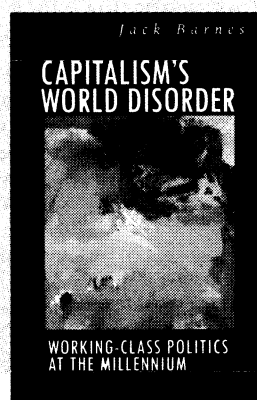
The fight to organize the 8,200 drivers and dock workers at Overnite has gone on for more than 20 years, and the union has been voted in at 37 worksites, representing 45 percent of the workforce, since 1995. According to Teamsters officials, about 2,000 workers have joined the strike na-

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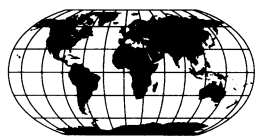


**JACK BARNES**

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or from Pathfinder at 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014

**'We signed up for the union' at Avondale shipyard — page 11**



## Israeli settlements increase

As representatives of the Palestinian Authority (PA) and the Israeli government entered a new round of talks November 11, the construction of Israeli settlements on Palestinian land continued apace. PA president Yassir Arafat noted a week earlier that Israeli settlers have continued to take over areas of the West Bank and the government has not dismantled those built over the past year. The number of illegal settlers stands at 171,000, not including those in East Jerusalem.

The government of Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak organized a high-profile eviction of a small group of settlers on West Bank land on November 10. On the same day, Barak's cabinet agreed to a 5 percent pull out of the West Bank territories. Less than 5 percent of the West Bank is under full Palestinian control. Another 30-35 percent, spread out in disconnected patches, is controlled militarily and economically by Tel Aviv. U.S. President William Clinton, who traveled to the Middle East to press for a settlement in mid-November, refused to criticize Israel's construction of further settlements.

## British Army accused of collusion

In the first week of November cops in Northern Ireland reported they found secret documents of the British Army in an office of the Protestant Orange Order. The Orangemen support continued British rule of Northern Ireland. The documents listed detailed information about 300 individuals who take a republican stance and oppose British rule. The cops were looking for information on groups that have been linked to bomb attacks on republican households. Sinn Fein, the leading republican political organization, said there was clear "collusion [between] loyalist death squads" and the army.

## Mexican union raises safety alert

The Flight Attendants Union of Mexico has accused the country's third-largest airline of deceptive and dangerous maintenance practices. The airline, Transportes Aereos Ejecutivos S.A. (Taesa), has called the charges "irresponsible." Union leader

## Workers protest job cuts in Japan



Unionists protest outside headquarters of Nissan Motor Corp. in Tokyo in October after the auto giant announced plans to lay off 21,000 workers. Over the following weeks, Mitsubishi Motors Corp. said it would slash 10,000 jobs over next five years and the Nippon phone company plans to lay off 20,000.

Alejandra Barrales Magdaleno alleged November 12 that Taesa management keeps two sets of maintenance records, one of which accurately records problems. The company gives the other, sanitized version to federal aviation authorities during periodic inspections. The union's claims followed by only two days the crash of a Taesa commuter jet, which killed all 18 people on board. The 300 flight attendants who work at the airline are covered by a different, progovernment union, and a number are fighting for affiliation with the Flight Attendants Union.

## Pakistani, Indian forces clash

Fighting broke out again between Pakistani and Indian forces along the Kashmir border between the two countries. Officials from Pakistan said November 10 that 15 Indian soldiers were killed; their counter-

parts from India said 17 Pakistani troops died. The clash came four weeks after the chief of Pakistan's army, General Pervaiz Musharraf, deposed the government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

The coup occurred in the aftermath of heavy fighting in Kashmir involving Indian and Pakistani forces. Both countries have developed nuclear weapons and came close to using them in 1990. On November 11 the military government charged ex-Prime Minister Sharif and officials from his government with treason, a crime punishable by execution. Washington has given tacit support to the new regime.

## Basque prisoners protest

Twenty Basque political prisoners started an indefinite hunger strike November 1. Held in French and Spanish jails, the prisoners demand the release of all Basque political prisoners. As well, they called for the transfer of Basque prisoners to the Basque country, an area that straddles the Spanish-French border. The Spanish government has reneged on a September promise to transfer 105 prisoners, shifting only 27.

The Basque country is the scene of a long-standing independence fight. The national liberation organization ETA (Basque Homeland and Freedom) announced a cease-fire in September 1998 and entered negotiations with the Spanish government. ETA canceled a round of talks scheduled for August, explaining that Madrid was demanding further concessions. In October French police arrested a member of the ETA negotiating team, Belén

González Penalba and another supporter of Basque self-determination.

## Bangkok evicts Burmese workers

The Thai government decided in early November to deport up to 600,000 undocumented workers from Burma, and from industrial towns on the border between the two countries where migrant laborers have congregated. The measure will affect potentially up to one-fifth of the Thai clothing industry. Bangkok claims that it is acting to provide jobs for Thai nationals.

Workers from crisis-ridden Burma cross the border to find work, despite the fact that Thailand remains in recession. The military government in Burma closed the border in October after Burmese dissidents staged a protest in Bangkok. Thai police make workers wade across unguarded stretches of the border river back to Burma.

## ANC joins Socialist International

South Africa's governing political party, the African National Congress, joined the Socialist International, which held its congress November 8-10 in Paris. Jacob Zuma, deputy president of both the ANC and South Africa, headed the delegation. The Socialist International is made up of social-democratic and labor parties from many countries, including the Socialist Party of France, and the UK Labour Party.

## U.S. Senate ups minimum wage

The U.S. Senate voted to raise the hourly minimum wage in the United States by \$1, to \$6.15. The Republican-controlled body decided to phase in the increase over 28 months, and appended tax breaks supposedly to offset the cost to employers. A Democratic alternative, which would have somewhat reduced the implementation period and the tax cuts, suffered defeat. The increase faces obstacles in the Senate before being considered by the House of Representatives. Eleven million workers in the United States earn the minimum wage, which applies in 40 states and stands today at \$5.15. In the last 30 years its buying power has declined by about 20 percent at 1999 values.

## New York mayor hits homeless

New York mayor Rudolph Giuliani's administration announced on October 25 that by next year it will force "able-bodied" homeless people to work as a condition for sleeping in city shelters. The measure extends the administration's policy introduced in 1997 which requires welfare recipients to accept work or face a cutoff in benefits. Under this program 40,000 people work at jobs for the city. Many have replaced union-organized workers. More than 80,000 people use the shelters in a given year, and 21,000 shelter beds are occupied every night. Workers who receive wages higher than welfare levels may be forced to hand over the difference for the right to use the shelters.

— PATRICK O'NEILL

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# Referendum vote rejects republic model, reflects deepening divisions in Australia

BY RON POULSEN  
AND BOB AIKEN

SYDNEY, Australia — A proposal to establish an Australian republic, with a president selected by the prime minister and ratified by a two-thirds majority of the federal House of Representatives, was defeated in a national constitutional referendum November 6. The queen of the United Kingdom and the governor-general appointed by the Australian prime minister will continue to serve as head of state. Around 55 percent voted against the proposal to replace them with an appointed president.

The nationalist debate that preceded the poll cut across party lines. It was not about "republicanism" versus "monarchism" nor about a spurious need for Australian "independence."

The new need for "an Australian head of state" is part of the rulers' evolving discussion about how to advance "Australia's place" in capitalism's crisis-ridden global disorder. The poll took place as Australian forces led a military occupation of East Timor, with the backing of all the capitalist parties, the labor officialdom, and most middle-class radical groups.

The "yes" campaign was marked by the nationalist theme of the need for an Australian head of state. Using the symbol of an "Aussie" president "who is one of us" and "above the political fray," the rulers aim to induce workers to identify more with "our" capitalist exploiters. Supporters of the status quo counter that the governor-general, always an Australian since 1965, is "effectively" the head of state.

## Vote didn't show support for queen

Opinion polls leading up to the compulsory vote indicated that a majority of "no" voters supported a republic in principle, putting total republican sentiment just under 75 percent. Another poll found less than 10 percent said their choice was based mainly on support for the queen.

"It was not a vote against the republic, it was a vote against the setup," declared Peter Seaton, a boilermaker from Tregear.

Jason Tasic, a sheetmetal worker, said he deliberately abstained from voting over the lack of choice. "I'd rather cop a fine than vote for a kind of republic I didn't want. It's the first time I've ever not voted."

Two Turkish-born operators at a wrecking yard, Mehmetali Sozer and Ahmet Inou, said they voted yes, although they both supported a popularly elected president.

Supporters of the constitutional monarchy combined forces with republicans who support a directly elected president to defeat the referendum proposal, in a campaign that ironically helped to further undermine support for the monarchy. This official "no" campaign used the nationalist image of Australia as the most stable country in the world, with the theme, "If it ain't broke, why fix it?" But another central slogan was, "If you want to vote for the President ... Vote No to the Politicians' Republic."

The biggest "no" vote came in working-class and rural electorates. Most press commentators concluded that those in the bottom half of the economic heap had given the republican proposal "their kiss of death." Writing on the eve of the vote, the *Australian's* international editor, Paul Kelly, wrote, the "support for the no case reveals ... distrust of the system, hostility towards politicians, alienation from decision-making, resentment at the rapid pace of ... 1990s top-down reforms."

Reflecting widespread capitalist support for a moderate republican shift, the editorial opinion of the major dailies across the country was solidly for a yes vote. The *West Australian* was of the few that called for a no vote, but did so in favor of a directly elected president, while the *Australian Financial Review* criticized the referendum proposal as a "sham."

Since the vote Prime Minister John Howard — who campaigned for maintaining the status quo — has tried to gag a discussion that has divided his cabinet. His main leadership rivals in the Liberal Party have adopted varying republican positions. Treasurer Peter Costello supported the call for a "modernized" head of state "able to unite society." Employment Minister Peter Reith, the leading government union-



Dock workers celebrate victory over union-busting attempt by Patrick Stevedores and Australian government, April 1998. Government of Prime Minister John Howard faces continued labor resistance and new protests in countryside.

buster, campaigned for a no vote, declaring that he saw a republic with a directly elected president as "an antidote to the sense of alienation many people have with our political process."

Reith played a central role in an attempt in early 1998 to break the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) at a major national stevedoring company, Patrick. In the biggest union battle in Australia for many years, widespread solidarity with the MUA forced the government and Patrick to back down. Today, in addition to continued opposition to the Howard government's attacks on unions, a deepening farm crisis is sparking new protests in the countryside.

## Debate continues in ruling circles

Meanwhile, ensuring that the republican debate continues, Australian Labor Party (ALP) leader Kim Beazley has pledged a future Labor government to carry out a process of plebiscites on a republic. During the campaign Beazley scored the royal family's role as ambassadors for British trade "providing aid and comfort to our opponents in trade." The ALP leadership is itself divided over the powers and means of electing the head of state in a republic. New South Wales

Labor premier Robert Carr has denounced the direct-election model supported by other ALP leaders as setting up a "two-headed government in Canberra."

The outcome of the ballot had left the country "stranded in a constitutional wasteland, embracing neither monarchy nor republic with any firmness," Geoffrey Barker complained in the *Australian Financial Review* November 8, while the *Sydney Morning Herald* declared that the referendum "debacle" had "settled nothing."

Denouncing Howard for "a failure of leadership," in refusing to recognize the "inevitability of a republic ... and its potential as a unifying force," the *Herald* editorialized that instead of "heading into the next century confident, proud, and united ... we had yet another vote that reflects the divisions in our country."

A second referendum question, on a proposed constitutional preamble largely drafted by Howard, was defeated by a larger margin, with more than 60 percent against. A big majority of indigenous leaders opposed the wording referring to Aboriginal "kinship with," rather than the stronger "custodianship of," the land. At the same time, the National Party upped its racist scare

campaign, claiming the changes would mean more native title rights over farm land.

The recent republican debate was initiated by then Labor prime minister Paul Keating in the early 1990s. Keating appointed Malcolm Turnbull, a prominent merchant banker, to head an official Republican Advisory Committee. Turnbull became the head of the Australian Republican Movement, which championed the "model" just voted on.

While in opposition at that time, the leadership of the conservative Liberal Party tried to blunt the push for a republic — and the debate within its own ranks — by backing a constitutional convention and referendum. A majority of the January 1998 convention — half of whose delegates were appointed by the Howard government and half elected — supported republican positions but were divided over minimal change or shifting to a directly elected president. Howard opposed both alternatives. The majority for the "minimalist" republic showed a growing shift within the ruling class over the last decade.

## Workers have no stake in flag-waving

The Australian capitalist class gained control of their state and waged wars to protect their own emerging imperialist interests in the region and the world, in a gradual process of separation from Britain. This spanned a century up to World War II. In 1926, London and the Commonwealth governments decided that governors-general would in the future follow only the instructions of their respective prime ministers, not the British Crown. In 1975, the Australian ruling class used the governor-general's powers as de facto head of state to dismiss the Labor government of Gough Whitlam after alerting their allies in Washington and London.

A statement issued by the Communist League pointed out that "working people have no stake in either side of [this] nationalist debate." It said, "workers, farmers, and youth have no common interests with the bosses and their government, including on the need for 'new,' revamped forms of governing, the better to rule over us as 'Australians.'"

The CL called on workers and farmers to chart a course independent of the rulers' flag-waving, whether republican or monarchist.

# Protesters in Iowa: 'Free Abu-Jamal!'

BY JAVIER ARAVENA  
AND JENNIFER PONCE

IOWA CITY, Iowa — Supporters of Mumia Abu-Jamal's fight for freedom rallied at the old state capitol here November 6. Abu-Jamal, a journalist and Black rights activist, is facing execution in the state of Pennsylvania. He was railroaded to death row in 1982, accused of killing a Philadelphia police officer.

After hearing some speakers, the 50 rally participants fanned out across the corners of Clinton Street and Iowa Avenue holding colorful signs and passed out leaflets explaining the case to people walking by and motorists stopped at the lights. They then marched around the campus of the University of Iowa chanting and passing out more leaflets.

Many of the participants in the rally were students from Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa, and Grinnell College in Grinnell, Iowa. There were also several students from high schools in Des Moines and a grocery store worker visiting from Wisconsin. Residents in Iowa City and some workers from Des Moines also joined the action.

James Kosloske, 19, a grocery store worker and member of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) in Silver Lake, Wisconsin, was visiting some friends in Des Moines when he heard about the rally. "This is my first rally and I feel pretty good about helping out a good cause," Kosloske said. "The lack of evidence against him is there, but they still don't want to give him a retrial."

The Grinnell Coalition in Defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal, an ad hoc committee in Des Moines, and some people from Iowa City organized the rally. Marianne MacKelbergh,

a 22-year-old restaurant worker in Iowa City, was part of this effort. "Since I have lived here there have been several rallies, and this one is the biggest one I have seen yet," she commented.

Several speakers were featured at the rally, including Paul Ford of the Grinnell Coalition in Defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal, Jennifer Ponce of the Young Socialists in Des Moines, Sean Parson from Drake University, and Drew Chebuhar from Iowa City.

The ad hoc committee in Des Moines was formed following the signing of a death warrant for Abu-Jamal by Pennsylvania governor Thomas Ridge. The group has been meeting at Drake University. The first meeting took place October 20, with more than 40

people attending. University and high school students along with community activists and workers are planning a future action in Des Moines. Paul Ford announced at the rally that regional demonstrations have been called for Chicago, San Francisco, and Philadelphia on December 11.

The evening before, some rally participants attended a panel discussion titled "Free Mumia Abu-Jamal and end the death penalty" at the Militant Labor Forum in Des Moines.

Javier Aravena is a member of UFCW Local 1149 in Perry, Iowa. Jennifer Ponce is a member United Auto Workers Local 1672 in Des Moines.

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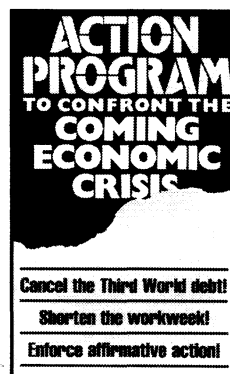
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# 'I want to be exposed to new ideas,' says student at socialist conference in California

This column is written and edited by the Young Socialists (YS), an international organization of young workers, students, and other youth fighting for socialism. For more information about the YS write to: Young Socialists, 3284 23rd St., San Francisco, California, 94110. Tel: (415) 824-1429.

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BY APRIL HOLLAND

SANTA CRUZ, California — The Young Socialists chapter at the University of California campus here hosted a successful socialist educational conference over the weekend of November 6-7. More than 25 people took part in the event, including Young Socialists from Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle, and Vancouver; members of the Socialist Workers Party; and youth who wanted to learn more about the YS.

The conference was entitled "Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium," after the most recent publication from Pathfinder Press. The classes and discussions captured several key political questions that the book explains in depth — the "cultural war" being waged by ultrarightist Patrick Buchanan, the fight for women's liberation, and living examples today of the sea change in working-class politics as demonstrated by three Teamster strikers from Basic Vegetable who came to share their experiences.

The first class was titled the "Stakes for Workers and Farmers in Resisting Patrick Buchanan's Cultural War," presented by Norton Sandler, a member of the Socialist Workers Party in San Francisco. He explained Buchanan's cultural war and how it scapegoats immigrants, women, homosexuals, and the "corrupt elite" as the causes for the social and economic crises in the United States.

Sandler described how while Buchanan has one foot in bourgeois politics to gain a hearing through the Reform Party, he has the other in the streets. As *Capitalism's World Disorder* states on page 232, the fascist movement that Buchanan is assembling the initial cadres of "will use whatever force and violence is necessary to deny enough democratic rights to the majority of working people, eventually, to preserve the privileges of the upper middle class and maintain capitalist rule."

Sandler also discussed Minnesota Gov. Jesse Ventura as a Bonapartist figure in bourgeois politics today. Ventura is pretending to rise above class conflicts and promises to cut through the "red tape" by being a "spokesman" for the people.

Samantha Kern, the national organizer of the Young Socialists and California State YS organizer, gave a class on "The Origins of Women's Oppression and the Working-class Road to Women's Liberation Today." She referred to *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* by Frederick

Engels, which explains that the vast majority of human existence was in stages known as savagery and barbarism where men and women lived as equals, the means of production were owned collectively, and there were no institutions such as the family, private property, or the state.

Kern explained that the oppression of women came with the rise of class society. She gave an overview of the women's liberation movement in the late 1960s and early '70s and the gains it conquered, especially the right to choose abortion, which gave women increasing confidence.

This movement had its roots in the increasing involvement of women in the workforce, and was reinforced as more women entered industry, breaking into jobs that were previously limited to men, such as the coal mines and other basic industries. In conclusion, she explained that as men and women fight alongside each other, it strengthens the working-class as a whole.

For several youth at the meeting, this was their first socialist educational conference. After the Saturday sessions Claudia, a student at the University of Santa Cruz, said she found the conference "very interesting. I wanted to be exposed to new ideas and listen to a different perspective. It makes sense to me, and I would like more information."

On Sunday morning, Santa Cruz Young Socialists and invited guests discussed perspectives for the YS in the next few months. The main reports included how the YS is participating in the national campaign to sell and place *Capitalism's World Disorder* in bookstores and libraries.

There was also discussion on how the YS was going to meet its goal in this last week of the National Young Socialists fund drive. Further discussion was centered on the importance of participation in the Guadalajara Book Fair. YS members will help staff the Pathfinder booth there and strengthen the international character of the Young Socialists.

That afternoon, Irlinda Villasenor, Humberto Capiz, and Eustolia Valdez, three Teamsters who are on strike at Basic Vegetable, addressed the conference. They came especially to build the solidarity rally taking place in King City November 14 (see article on page 11), and invited all those present to come and give their support.

Some 750 workers have been on strike at the large onion and garlic dehydration plant since last July. They are fighting two-tier wages, permanent replacements, and attacks by the company on health insurance and pensions. Capiz, a forklift driver and mechanic, said that the company "would like to take away our health benefits that we have fought for... If we lose this strike, you all will lose as well."

The company has been downsizing despite an increase in production. Valdez, a crew leader, explained how working twice as fast under pressure from the company jeopardizes the safety of all workers.

The strikers described in detail the company's counter-campaign and the role of the police, who side with the company. "The police treat all of us like we have criminal records," stated Capiz. They said that when the replacement workers or company make complaints of alleged misconduct by the strikers, the police are immediately on the scene. But when strikers are victims of thuggery and other attacks, the police respond slowly or not at all.

By the close of the conference, most participants were making plans to get to the strike rally in King City. These fighting workers made an impression on fighting youth who were attending this conference. Degan, a student from Yugoslavia, said the



Demonstration of students in New York City, October 28, against racist remarks of CUNY trustee chairman Herman Badillo.

meeting "gave me an inside and personal look at workers' struggles in the United States today... The Teamsters workers' struggle made me feel the energy and the incredible effort that these workers are putting into this fight. That's really worth our admiration, respect, and most of all, unconditional support."

## N.Y. students protest racism by university trustee

BY ELENA TATE

NEW YORK — About 100 people gathered in midtown Manhattan October 28 to demand the removal of Herman Badillo from the Board of Trustees of the City University of New York (CUNY). Badillo, the chairman of the appointed board, has been at the center of protests in recent days after making racist comments against Mexican and Dominican immigrants at a Center for Educational Innovation luncheon September 22.

On that occasion Badillo, who was the first Puerto Rican congressman in the United States, said, "If you go to El Barrio in East Harlem... this is supposed to be a Puerto Rican area, it's all Mexicans. The problem is that in Mexico and Central America, there has never been a history of education... They're pure Indians, Incas and Mayans, who are about, you know, five feet tall, with straight hair... We have to have a sense of urgency about this continuing migration of Mexicans and Dominicans because I assure you it's not going to stop"

Luz Schreiber of Hunter College addressed the rally: "What Badillo said was a manifestation of his racist policies of dismantling open admissions and remediation."

Mariana Zubok of Queens College told participants, "If we look farther than Badillo's speech of September 22, we will see his record of betraying all people, CUNY students and the working class. Since becoming chairman, he has fought to end open admissions and remediation programs at CUNY. Even back when he was a congressman, he supported instituting a tuition at CUNY, which used to be free!"

Signs included 'We refuse to let a bigot be the chairman of our university,' and popular chants were: "Education is a right. Keep up the fight!" and "Badillo, get out!" in both English and Spanish. Dominican and Puerto

Rican flags were proudly displayed by participants.

Julian Rosado, Student Council president of Bronx Community College, addressed the crowd. "Badillo does not deserve to represent my Puerto Rican flag anymore. He is trying to manipulate us into thinking that because he's Latino we should support him."

Sultana Ocasio, a student at Baruch College and a member of the Muslim Students Association told the *Militant*, "I'm here to represent CUNY students to show Badillo that his behavior is unacceptable."

The group that planned the action, the CUNY Action Network, is a coalition of students representing many of the 12 CUNY campuses that was formed in response to Badillo's comments and has as its aim the removal of Badillo from the Board. Non-student groups were represented at the protest as well, including the Congress for Puerto Rican Rights, Dominican 2000, and the Mexican-American Workers Association. One speaker who received sustained applause was Iris Báez, an activist against police brutality whose son, Anthony Báez, was killed by New York police.

Many passers-by stopped to see what the protest was about and to show support. One such person, a postal worker whose son goes to John Jay College of CUNY, told the *Militant* that he was glad to see people out protesting Badillo. "We've protested our management out here before and it helped us to win a better contract."

Two days after making his racist comments, Badillo issued an apology, in response to an outpouring of anger and calls to resign. But for many students, faculty, and community groups, an apology isn't enough.

The protest of October 28 was just one action in a series of anti-Badillo activities. Planning meetings of the CUNY Action Network are ongoing, with the aim of continuing until the chairman resigns or is removed.

Since Badillo made the comments, he has been followed by a group of students to virtually all of his public engagements who loudly call on him to either resign or be removed during his presentations. According to the *Hunter Envoy*, a student newspaper at Hunter College of CUNY, a program at the New School that featured Badillo on September 29 turned into an anti-Badillo rally, with 150 demonstrators.

Elena Tate is a student at Hunter College.

## Young Socialists \$9,000 Fund Drive

CITY	GOAL	COLLECTED	
Newark	700	1,077	154%
Des Moines	130	150	115%
Los Angeles	500	550	110%
New York	700	743	106%
Philadelphia	475	483	102%
Chicago	1,200	1,218	102%
Seattle	400	400	100%
Birmingham	550	456	83%
San Francisco	800	652	82%
Detroit	350	274	78%
Santa Cruz	650	472	73%
Minneapolis	500	348	70%
Atlanta	250	150	60%
Pittsburgh	200	0	0%
Miami		85	
OTHER		183	
Total	7,405	7,241	91%
Should be	8,000	8,000	100%

\*Some moneys sent in have not arrived. A final chart will appear in next week's issue.

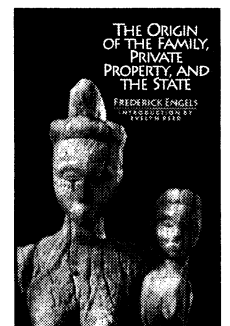
## FROM PATHFINDER

### The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State

Frederick Engels

How the emergence of class-divided society gave rise to repressive state bodies and family structures that protect the property of the ruling layers and enable them to pass along wealth and privilege. Engels discusses the consequences for working people of these class institutions — from their original forms to those of modern times. \$16.95

See page 12 for list of distributors.





# 'I plan to read this myself,' says librarian

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

Deborah Liatos, a United Steelworkers of America member in San Francisco, reported to the *Militant* this week how a fellow unionist bought a copy of *Capitalism's World Disorder*. "He is a locked-out worker at Kaiser Aluminum," she said, "We often see Kaiser workers at picket lines in the city. There's no Kaiser plant here, but workers come to picket the company headquarters and speak at different union locals.

"When we showed him the book, he said he had been thinking about getting one for a long time. He looked at the photos and read the back cover. We discussed how the speeches in the book give an optimistic perspective of the road forward for those in struggle. Finally, he decided to buy it," said Liatos.

Socialist workers and young political fighters are campaigning to get out *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium* far and wide. They are waging the campaign jointly with co-workers, working farmers and others, to place the book on the shelves of libraries and shops. That way the

book reaches a potentially much larger audience of working people.

Supporters of the campaign are also taking it with them to picket lines and to political events. The book will be the main armament of a team that will intervene in the anti-WTO events in Seattle at the beginning of December. The book describes and looks forward to a labor movement that organizes along the lines of international solidarity.

"The King City march and rally on November 14 was an ideal place to sell *Capitalism's World Disorder*," wrote Larry Lane, a member of the International Association of Machinists in San Francisco. He was referring to the action in support of Teamsters on strike at Basic Vegetable. "Many of the workers and youth there were open discussing politics and were trying to figure out what it would take to change their situation in the world."

Eight participants in the action bought copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder*, and a similar number decided to subscribe to the *Militant* or *Perspectiva Mundial*. Lane sold two copies of the book.

"The first was to Jane, a clerical worker for the city of Santa Cruz," he wrote. "She is a member of the Service Employees International Union, and mentioned that she was curious why so many right-wing ideas and groups are growing now. She pointed to the attacks on bilingual education and environmental laws.

"The second CWD was sold to a co-worker who came to the rally with his daughter on a Teamster-organized bus from San Francisco. He works in the same area of the United Airlines jet turbine shop that I do and has bought other Pathfinder titles before. He found the rally and march very exciting and inspiring. He wanted to know what else he can do to help the Basic Vegetable workers win their strike."

Below are some of the other reports that came in this week.

## Campus libraries stock Pathfinder in L.A.

LOS ANGELES — Pathfinder supporters

Juan Villagómez and Mark Friedman spent a few hours visiting the bookstore and several of the many libraries at a major campus here, where struggles around affirmative action and defending immigrant rights and bilingual education have been sizable.

The bookstore has carried Pathfinder titles in the past. The buyer was pleased to see us, since he was almost out of stock. He was especially keen on *Capitalism's World Disorder*. He ordered three after we discussed the sections explaining the importance of affirmative action programs, and the rise of the incipient fascist, Patrick Buchanan.

He stocked up on the Pathfinder titles that had sold out by Malcolm X, Nelson Mandela, Evelyn Reed, and Che Guevara, and ordered new books, including Trotsky's *History of the Russian Revolution*, *Revolution Betrayed*, and *Art and Revolution*. "I know these books will sell," he said, citing the "increased student interest in these topics."

Many larger campuses have libraries connected with various departments. The Center for African American Studies carries Pathfinder titles, primarily those written by Black authors, from W.E.B. Du Bois to Maurice Bishop. The librarian ordered *Capitalism's World Disorder* for the library, but added that "I plan to read this myself as soon as it comes in."

The librarian at the Chicano studies department also bought a copy of the book, along with a dozen other titles.

The university's main research library also decided to order *Capitalism's World Disorder*. Several teams a week are being sent out in L.A., often combining campus literature tables with visits to campus bookstores, libraries, and bookstores suggested by co-workers.

Mark Friedman

## In the Ohio coalfields

CLEVELAND, Ohio — Mark Chicwak and his brother Larry, both Steelworkers in an Ohio town, met with three socialist workers who visited the area to place copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder* in bookstores and libraries.

Before Mark bought a copy, the discussion went from the ongoing struggles of steelworkers in the Midwest, to the fight for jobs and the importance of rejecting the trade union tops' protectionist campaign against steel imports and the World Trade Organization.

Larry asked how workers and farmers can defend the environment when two local coal companies had just laid off more than 300 miners, blaming the restrictions on burning high-sulfur Ohio coal. We discussed how working people should demand that the utility companies take advantage of the existing technology to burn coal cleanly.

Mark had suggested we call the state library regional office before visiting. The mobile service run by the office serves working people and youth throughout this coal mining region.

The meeting with the acquisitions director the next day, while yielding no guarantees, was very promising. She said she was glad to receive the Pathfinder catalog, and to discuss the contents of *Capitalism's World Disorder*. She also said she appreciated the chronologies, glossaries, indexes, photo signatures, maps and other resources that many Pathfinder books contain.

Mike Fitzsimmons

# Pathfinder Fund raises \$136,924, on time and way over the goal!

BY LUIS MADRID

Pathfinder Fund supporters around the world raised \$136,924, handily surpassing the original goal by nearly 10 percent. The international fund-raising campaign was accomplished by the November 15 deadline to boot.

This collective effort—from New Zealand, to France, to Belgium, and cities across the United States—puts the revolutionary publisher in a solid position to continue producing the political tools workers, farmers, and youth need today as we seek to understand the horrors capitalism offers, organize to combat them, and set out to chart a road forward for humanity.

As volunteers were receiving the final con-

tributions, the editorial work on *Making History: Interviews with Four Generals of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces* was also being completed (see special offer on page 9). Fund-raising and editorial tasks together ensured this new title will be featured in the Pathfinder booth at the Guadalajara International Book Fair in Mexico the last week of November.

In addition, work remains on schedule for the publication early in 2000 of the Spanish- and French-language editions of *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium* by Jack Barnes. *Che Guevara Talks to Young People* will appear as well in English and Spanish, in time for the Havana Book Fair in February.

The nearly 900 contributions ranged from a couple of dollars up to \$1,000, with many giving for the first time to such an effort, responding to fellow trade unionists on the job to fund-raising events in their local areas, to mailings appealing for funds, and a variety of other initiatives.

## Toronto supporters go over the top

BY JOHN STEELE

TORONTO—Pathfinder supporters—including unionists, high school and university students—tucked into a delicious turkey dinner and listened to a panel of fighters at a fund-raising celebration for the international Pathfinder Fund here November 13. When all the funds were accounted, including donations, door receipts, and raffle tickets sold, those attending cheered the grand total of Can\$4,091. The original local goal had been Can\$3,600 (Can\$1=US\$0.68). Thirty-eight people joined in the celebration.

Under a banner reading "Translate, read, discuss and sell *Capitalism's World Disorder*," Mario De Santis explained the importance of the book to him. A member of the Canadian Auto Workers Local 707 at Ford assembly plant in Oakville, De Santis has been building support for a strike of woodworkers in Durham, Ontario.

"Reading this book has helped me to realize that it is the working class that holds the world on its shoulders," explained the auto worker. "And this makes me proud to be part of this class." Referring to page 60 of the book, which describes the growing crisis of the world capitalist economy, De Santis said, "The bosses' downsizing and line speedups are signs of desperation. This should be our inspiration to fight."

Oshawa high school student and Young Socialists member Dimitris Farfalis told participants about a discussion he had with a GM Oshawa

PATHFINDER FUND RAISE \$125,000 TO HELP PRODUCE THE BOOKS WORKERS AND FARMERS NEED NOW			
Area	Goal	Paid	Percent
<b>Canada</b>	<b>3,650</b>	<b>5,235</b>	<b>143%</b>
<b>Sweden</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>929</b>	<b>133%</b>
<b>France</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>108%</b>
<b>New Zealand</b>	<b>2,550</b>	<b>2,729</b>	<b>107%</b>
<b>United Kingdom</b>	<b>1,200</b>	<b>1,273</b>	<b>106%</b>
<b>United States</b>			
<b>Boston</b>	<b>4,100</b>	<b>4,615</b>	<b>113%</b>
<b>Miami</b>	<b>3,500</b>	<b>3,890</b>	<b>111%</b>
<b>Des Moines</b>	<b>1,800</b>	<b>1,948</b>	<b>108%</b>
<b>Detroit</b>	<b>4,500</b>	<b>4,865</b>	<b>108%</b>
<b>Atlanta</b>	<b>3,500</b>	<b>3,781</b>	<b>108%</b>
<b>Houston</b>	<b>6,500</b>	<b>6,950</b>	<b>107%</b>
<b>Newark</b>	<b>9,000</b>	<b>9,568</b>	<b>106%</b>
<b>San Francisco</b>	<b>12,500</b>	<b>13,258</b>	<b>106%</b>
<b>Washington, D.C.</b>	<b>6,000</b>	<b>6,346</b>	<b>106%</b>
<b>Seattle</b>	<b>11,000</b>	<b>11,610</b>	<b>106%</b>
<b>Pittsburgh</b>	<b>4,500</b>	<b>4,697</b>	<b>104%</b>
<b>New York</b>	<b>13,000</b>	<b>13,534</b>	<b>104%</b>
<b>St. Louis</b>	<b>1,300</b>	<b>1,339</b>	<b>103%</b>
<b>Chicago</b>	<b>8,000</b>	<b>8,198</b>	<b>102%</b>
<b>Los Angeles</b>	<b>8,000</b>	<b>8,185</b>	<b>102%</b>
<b>Birmingham</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>3,032</b>	<b>101%</b>
<b>Chippewa Falls</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>403</b>	<b>101%</b>
<b>Philadelphia</b>	<b>4,000</b>	<b>4,018</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Cape Girardeau</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Ft. Collins</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100%</b>
Cleveland	4,000	3,685	92%
Twin Cities	10,000	8,384	84%
Other U.S.		1,712	
<b>U.S. Total</b>	<b>\$119,350</b>	<b>\$124,768</b>	<b>105%</b>
<b>Australia</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Belgium</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$128,900</b>	<b>\$136,924</b>	<b>110%</b>
<b>Should be</b>	<b>\$125,000</b>	<b>\$125,000</b>	<b>100%</b>

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR Upcoming Labor and Farm Actions

Sat. November 20th, 12 Noon  
Mansfield, Ohio

**Join the Rally against  
Armco/AK Steel's  
Paramilitary Occupation  
of Mansfield, Ohio**

Mansfield Town Square

For more information, call (419)  
522-9375 or (419) 522-9385.

# Socialists oppose initiative that would hurt small fishermen

BY SCOTT BREEN

SEATTLE — Initiative 696 was roundly defeated in a statewide vote here November 2. The measure would have destroyed the livelihoods of hundreds of independent, small fisherman with one or two boats by banning most commercial net, troll, and trawl fishing in state waters, including Puget Sound and three miles out into the Pacific Ocean. The initiative was rejected in 34 of the 39 counties, with 60 percent voting against it statewide.

Supporters of I-696 had campaigned for it on the basis that it would protect the salmon, some species of which are endangered. A group of small fisherman formed "Fish for All" to campaign against I-696. Their literature noted that "I-696 targets fishing families and communities and will result in thousands of lost jobs." They also pointed out that small commercial fishermen are not the reason for declining fish runs and concludes, "Let's work together to restore our streams and rivers."

A "No on I-696" group, supported largely by commercial-fishing industry, also campaigned against the initiative.

Chris Rayson, the Socialist Workers candidate for the Port of Seattle Commission, called for a "no" vote on I-696. The proposal, Rayson said, "tries to make independent fishermen the scapegoats for the decline in some salmon runs."

The socialist candidate also explained that it was a mistake to accuse Native Americans as benefiting from passage of the initiative, as some of the literature against I-696 indicated. Native Americans, whose fishing rights are protected by treaty, would have been exempted from the restrictions. "Native Americans are as concerned with salmon conservation as any other group," Rayson explained, and "playing up Native Americans as the beneficiaries of I-696 passage could only be seen as trying to win votes on a racist appeal."

Another ballot measure, Initiative I-695, was approved. I-695 abolished the state's 2.2 percent annual car tax and replaced it with

a flat \$30 fee — substantially lower in most cases — for all vehicles beginning January 1. I-695 also required future vehicle tax or fee increases to have voter approval.

Rayson's campaign took no stand on I-695, since there was no way to help clarify and defend the road forward for working people within the framework of the vote. He instead stressed the Socialist Workers opposition to all taxes except a steeply graduated income tax, and called for no taxes on working people.

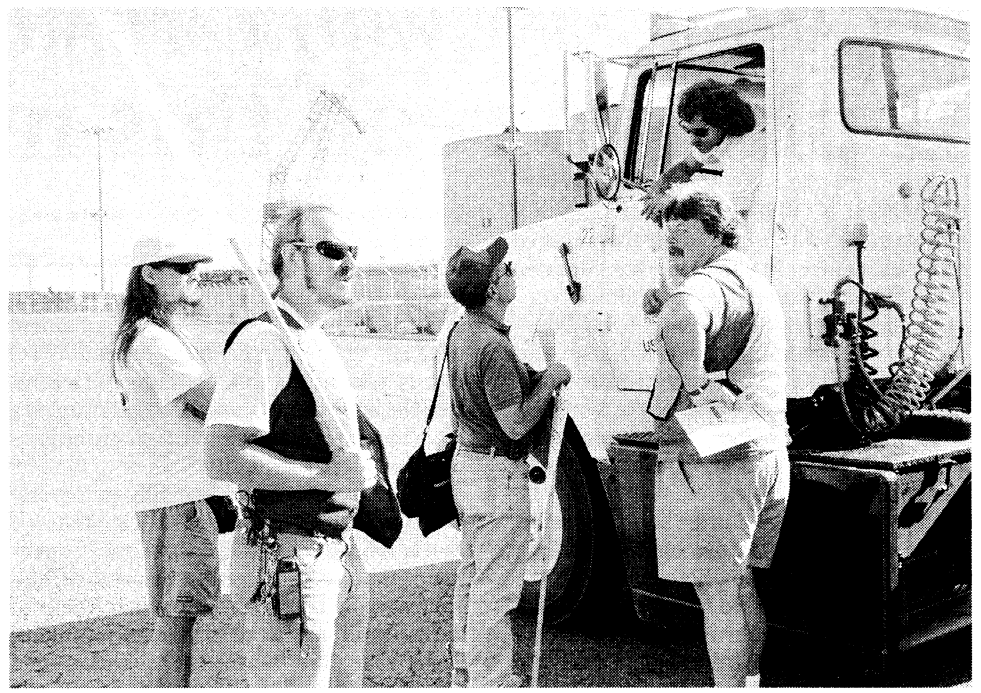
Rayson, a switchman on the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad and member of the United Transportation Union, was the only candidate running against the incumbent, Clare Nordquist, a self-described "venture capitalist." Rayson received 99,627 votes, or nearly 37 percent of the vote for this King County post.

The Post Commission oversees the running of the Port of Seattle and Seattle-Tacoma International Airport. As such, it influences billions of dollars in transportation, trade, and fishing businesses, and impacts heavily on labor issues, as well.

During the campaign, hundreds of port truck drivers went on strike demanding an hourly wage and a union contract. Rayson's campaign actively supported their fight, joining their picket lines and rallies, and widely distributing a statement supporting their struggle. Rayson spoke out in their defense at candidate meetings and in interviews with the press. His campaign won some support among these truckers. Kevin Merriott, one of the owner-operators who joined in these actions, said he voted for Rayson because he "was for us on our truck campaign. He had strong views on changing the port so I thought he was the best candidate."

In the weeks leading up to the election, the socialist's political positions got a wide hearing, as they were included in the official Washington State voters guide, the *Seattle Times* voter's guide, and in the daily *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*.

The *Post-Intelligencer* prominently ran a statement from Rayson in its Op-Ed page the week before the election, which it titled,



Militant/Lisa Ahlberg

**Supporters and striking port truckers at Seattle's waterfront August 23. SWP candidate for port commissioner Chris Rayson championed the drivers' unionization drive.**

"Port should back working-class struggles against U.S. bosses." In it Rayson explained the imperialist nature of the World Trade Organization (WTO), which "is a vehicle used by Washington, as the dominant imperialist nation, to organize trading policy in a world of capitalist disorder, with intensified competition and rising tensions." He also explained why the Socialist Workers campaign would not participate in the protests being organized by labor officials and middle-class reformers against the WTO meeting here at the end of November. The "fair trade" advocated by these forces is really "economic nationalism," Rayson wrote. "Whether it is the Teamsters officials trying to lock out Mexican truckers or USWA or IAM officials joining the anti-China slander campaign against imports, the effect is to put cooperation with U.S. bosses above unity with working people abroad. Instead, labor needs to mobilize the broadest solidarity around today's strikes and protests against U.S. bosses."

Rayson warned that the main beneficiaries of these anti-WTO protests would be the presidential campaign of Patrick Buchanan, "the chief organizing center today of incipient American fascism." The anti-WTO protests, which Buchanan says he will participate in, "provides him an opportunity to get a broader hearing within the working class," the candidate wrote.

While Rayson's large vote reflected an anti-

establishment protest and not a pro-socialist consciousness, many of his co-workers said that they voted for him, knowing his socialist views. This reflects the growing interest by workers in seriously considering a working-class alternative in the elections. "Josh Sjöholm, a BNSF switchman, said he voted for Rayson because 'he took the time to write something. Plus I wanted to mix it up. I don't want to have one mind frame around the port.'"

In the week prior to the election the Socialist Workers 1999 campaign also won an exemption from publicly disclosing the names, addresses, and occupations of its contributors and its vendors. On October 28 the Washington Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) voted unanimously to approve a renewal of the campaign's exemption it had granted last year. Several campaign supporters, including workers from Boeing and Alaska Airlines, and two students from a nearby college attended the hearing in Olympia.

The campaign fought unsuccessfully to remove an audit provision added to its exemption last year, and again objected to its inclusion. The exemption only lasts through the end of 1999 and Socialist Workers candidates must reapply for an exemption every year.

*Scott Breen is a member of the International Association of Machinists and was the campaign director for the Socialist Workers 1999 Campaign in Washington State.*

## Cranberry growers suffer from sharp price drop

BY TED LEONARD

CARVER, Massachusetts — The wet-harvest of cranberries is one of the most beautiful sights on earth. Crimson berries floating on flooded bogs are corralled by workers with wooden booms and drawn from the water by pumps or conveyors onto the bed of a waiting truck. However, for cranberry growers this year's harvest is far from idyllic.

By Thanksgiving the price for a barrel (100 pounds) of cranberries is expected to fall to around \$32. The break-even price needed by the grower to cover the cost of producing the fruit is around \$35.

For most of the last decade berries sold for about \$60 a barrel. Two years ago the fruit peaked at \$80 a barrel. Prices plunged last year to \$35-40 a barrel — the lowest return since the early 1980s.

Prices are expected to continue falling this year, perhaps to as low as \$25, because the industry enters the harvest season with 2.8 million barrels of berries in storage from last fall. Adding an anticipated harvest of 6.4 million barrels to the surplus, there will be an inventory of 9.2 million barrels in the United States. The expected demand for cranberries over the next year is 5.5 million barrels.

Not everybody breaks even at \$35. According to the *New Bedford Standard-Times*, the Andersen family invested in 26 acres of bogs in 1992, when prices for berries were high. They break even at \$50 a barrel. They now supplement their income by logging pine trees from their land and by "working around the clock."

With about 500 growers and 14,200 acres of cranberry bogs, Massachusetts produced 34 percent of the cranberries grown in the United States in 1998. Wisconsin, the largest U.S. producer, accounted for 47 percent, and New Jersey growers were third with 10 percent of the harvest.

Bogs in this area range from a dozen acres to more than 300 owned by the large growers. Usually a grower will have four acres of open land for each acre of bogs. According to a recent article in the *Standard-Times* the Makepeace family, who were among of the founders of Ocean Spray Cranberries Inc. in 1930, owns 10,000 acres of open land.

It takes about 35 acres to produce a living income for a family. Owners of the larger bogs hire workers beyond the family year round. At harvest time all the family members help out and extra workers are hired.

"If the crop's down [in price], people may be getting laid off, as opposed to having a year-round job," said Don DeGowin, a mechanic who has been working in the cranberry industry for 30 years. *Militant* reporters talked to him while he was taking a break from a wet cranberry harvest exhibition at the recent Massachusetts Cranberry Harvest Festival in South Carver.

On top of the falling prices, the summer drought in southeastern Massachusetts produced a smaller berry this season.

Massachusetts's growers face additional pressure from real estate developers. Federal laws protect wetlands, where cranberry bogs are located. Under these laws no development can take place on the wetlands. For the wealthy escaping the city, lots around bogs are attractive, because they know there will be no new developments next to them. One acre of land can now sell for \$50,000 to \$75,000 in southeastern Massachusetts and Cape Cod, the cranberry-growing area of the state.

The development of homes next to the bogs has added to the grower's problems. Many growers contract helicopters to spray fertilizers and pesticides to reduce the damage caused by driving equipment on the bog. Family dwellings next to the bogs

place new restrictions on when helicopters can spray, raising the growers' costs for the service.

Another effect of the Wetland Protection Law is that bogs that are "abandoned," that is not worked, for five years cannot be put back into production. So growers do not have the option of not working their land for a few years while the prices are low.

There are a handful of companies the growers can sell their berries to in the area. Ocean Spray, headquartered in Middleboro, Massachusetts, is one of them. Ocean Spray dominates the cranberry industry and sold about \$1.4 billion of cranberry drinks and other products last year.

Ocean Spray is a "grower-owned" cooperative. Like all capitalist agricultural enterprises, the cooperative serves the interest of the wealthy growers. "Grower-members" own their bogs, raise their own crops, and market them through the cooperative. Growers pay to become members, then get multi-year contracts from Ocean Spray to buy their berries. The actual price received by the growers and when they receive payment depends on Ocean Spray's profits. It can be up to 18 months before growers learn the price they will be paid for their berries and receive the money.

This relationship particularly hurt some growers this spring who had begun spending for this year's crop anticipating a certain amount of income from last year's harvest. When the checks were less than anticipated, growers had to scramble to manage their cash flow. Planned expenses to repair or replace equipment had to stop.

The combination of sharply reduced prices paid to growers by Ocean Spray as a response to the large number of cranberries in storage, increased competition, and the straight jacket of the contracts dictated by

Ocean Spray has made the company increasingly unpopular.

Among growers drinking coffee and talking at Dandy Donuts in Carver, Massachusetts, before they start work, Ocean Spray is a hot topic. "I'm glad I got out when I did," declared Bob Mellville, who owns and works about 100 acres of cranberry bogs in the area. "I used to be on the advisory board [at Ocean Spray], but they never listened to us. The corporate board made all the decisions."

*Ted Leonard is a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees. Sarah Ullman, a member of the United Transportation Union, contributed to this article.*

### CORRECTIONS

The editorial "Support the Teamsters on strike at Overnite" in the November 15 *Militant* incorrectly stated that miners at General Chemical Soda Ash Partners were on strike. The soda ash miners rejected a contract, but did not strike.

A calendar item in the same issue gave the wrong day of the week for the Sunday, November 14, rally by Teamsters on strike at Basic Vegetable in King City, California.

The caption on photograph of the Basic Vegetable strikers on page 10 of that issue wrongly implied that Kaiser Aluminum workers were in the photo. They were on the picket line, but not in that photo. And the name of the photographer, Ove Aspoy, was misspelled.



# Vieques protests: 'Navy out!'

Continued from front page

said Ismael Guadalupe, a leader of the Committee for the Rescue and Development of Vieques. Protesters "cannot wait for an eviction order to move onto the Navy-occupied lands." He called for massive civil disobedience on the island beginning November 19.

The committee is working with All Puerto Rico with Vieques to provide logistical support for the increased number of protesters at the camps. All Puerto Rico with Vieques is the coalition that organized the July 4 march of 50,000 people in front of the U.S. Navy's Roosevelt Roads base in Ceiba, Puerto Rico, to call on the military to leave Vieques.

The protesters insist they will not leave the camps, and many people have already volunteered to take their place if U.S. officials arrest them.

Some 1,350 students at the University of Puerto Rico's Rio Piedras campus took part in an assembly November 10 where they voted to launch student strikes and protests if the Navy resumes its bombing in Vieques. The students are seeking to publicize their fight internationally by working with student groups in the United States and around the world.

In one reflection of the breadth of sentiment against the U.S. military presence in

Vieques, the Disabled American Veterans of Puerto Rico organized several of its members to be interviewed in the November 11 issue of the San Juan daily *El Nuevo Día* calling for an end to U.S. bombing there.

Under the pressure of the popular protests, Pedro Rosselló, the pro-statehood governor of Puerto Rico, had adopted a stance that the Navy should leave Vieques. When it became clear Washington intended to resume its bombing, Rosselló reportedly consulted with U.S. president William Clinton by phone November 13.

Following those talks, the governor floated the idea of holding a yes-or-no vote among the residents of Vieques on a plan Clinton would propose to allow the resumption of the military training there. This might include the proposal to carry out the exercises without live ammunition, and for fewer days out of the year. Rosselló noted that Clinton had no obligation to consider the results of such a referendum, but insisted that the U.S. president "told me he is sensitive to the position of the Vieques residents."

The reaction in Puerto Rico was of almost universal scorn, particularly since it had been announced that Clinton had already decided to restart the bombing practice. "This is the second time that a referendum has been proposed," said Guadalupe, of the Committee for the Rescue and De-

velopment of Vieques, at a November 16 press conference. "The people of Vieques have already spoken, so the referendum should be deep-sixed."

Rosselló quickly retreated, acknowledging that Clinton would issue a directive, not a proposal, on resuming the military exercises, so a vote was unnecessary.

Meanwhile, the *Hartford Courant*, the big-business daily in Hartford, Connecticut, launched a "terrorist" smear campaign against Puerto Rican independence supporters and against the Cuban revolution.

An eight-part series signed by staff writer Edmund Mahony recycles the slanders and lies that were used by the FBI in the 1980s to frame up the Hartford 15 — independence advocates who accused of involvement in the robbery of a Wells Fargo depot — and asserts a "Cuban connection." The paper's editors had campaigned against the Clinton administration's release of 11 other Puerto Rican political prisoners earlier this year.

Ron Richards in San Juan, Puerto Rico, contributed to this article.

Protesters, right, in Vieques, wave U.S. flag with skulls for stars November 3, against Washington's plan to restart bombings.



## San Francisco election reflects deeper crisis of capitalist system

BY JIM GOTESKY

SAN FRANCISCO — "The write-in votes for Tom Ammiano in the San Francisco mayoral elections, which forced a runoff contest between Ammiano and incumbent Willie Brown, demonstrate the growing crisis of the capitalist system," argued Osborne Hart at the Militant Labor Forum held here November 12. Hart, a rail worker and member of the United Transportation Union, was the Socialist Workers candidate for San Francisco mayor.

Ammiano, president of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, launched his write-in mayoral campaign October 15, three weeks before election day. His election efforts were spearheaded by the Harvey Milk Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Transgender Democratic Club and tenants rights activists. Union leaders among city health-care unions also backed his campaign. He received nearly 46,000 votes — 25 percent of the total.

Ammiano outpolled Clint Reilly, a political consultant, and Frank Jordan, former Republican San Francisco mayor. Brown garnered 72,657 votes, or 39 percent.

"Until a few days before election day the mayoral campaign followed the standard pattern of mudslinging exchanges between capitalist office holders and their challengers. Many of my campaign supporters were surprised, too, by the vote for Ammiano, but we shouldn't have been," said Hart.

### Ammiano taps discontent

"Instability more and more characterizes capitalist politics today as the capitalist system marches steadily toward fascism and war," the socialist worker continued. "The U.S. economic upturn has not eased the grinding attacks on wages, working conditions, and living standards of workers and exploited farmers."

"A substantial portion of the middle classes also face ruin from small business failure, corporate downsizing, skyrocketing rents and home prices. The hard-pressed middle classes look for politicians who will protect them from being thrown down into the working class. This is why figures like the 'strongman' Reform Party governor of Minnesota, Jesse Ventura, get a hearing. This crisis is also breeding incipient fascist politicians such as Patrick Buchanan."

Ammiano is not a rightist like Buchanan or Ventura, but rather a liberal Democrat. His appeal to young and working-class voters included the fact that he initiated "Living Wage" legislation in May 1999 that would require all nonprofit agencies and businesses with city contracts to pay their employees at least \$11 an hour plus health benefits. The measure affects more than 13,000 workers.

Hart said, "This bill should be supported by working people. But for the Bay Area, this much needed wage increase is modest," he said, pointing to the astronomical rents and other high living costs in the area.

"While Brown also supports the living wage bill, his administration is more closely aligned with the banks, real estate companies, and landlords that are making San Francisco unlivable for working people," stated Hart.

Declining support for Brown contributed to the voter turnout for Ammiano. "In fact, voter turnout for the mayoral contest was lower than in 1995. Only 20 percent of eligible voters voted."

Brown's callous disregard for human dignity was captured weeks before the election when he ordered city police to confiscate shopping carts from the homeless. Brown quickly halted the effort after the story gained media attention.

### No alternative to working-class struggle

Many liberal and radical groups are hailing the Ammiano vote, while the main leaders of the Democratic and Republican parties are rallying to insure a victory for Brown

in the December 14 runoff.

"Whoever wins, little will change in San Francisco," said Hart. "The choice is, in fact, between two liberal Democrats. There is no working-class alternative in this run off."

Hart pointed to the need to build a new working class movement "uniting workers — both union and nonunion — with exploited farmers and others among the rural poor. We will have to look to and make alliances with workers internationally as our allies in these fights."

He pointed to the strike for union recognition at Overnite Transportation and fight against union-busting at Basic Vegetable in King City, California, as well as struggles by working farmers to hold onto their land as the initial stages of this movement.

Hart outlined a program of action that can unite working people, including "a fight for a shorter workweek with no cut in pay — 30 hours work for 40 hours pay — in

tandem with a campaign for massive federally funded public works programs that would build hospitals, schools, day-care centers, and infrastructure. Millions of new jobs could be created through this program."

He called for an immediate restriction of rents to 10 percent of a person's income and full implementation of affirmative action in employment and education. "Implementation of affirmative action would include an immediate, massive increase in the minimum wage," he said.

"The struggle to defend workers rights and living standards will not be settled in elections on a local, state or national level," Hart concluded. "This fight will require a new government, a workers and farmers government, that replaces the capitalist government in Washington. A government that will step-by-step replace capitalism with socialism, a system based on human needs not profits."

## Washington, Beijing reach trade deal

Continued from front page

more direct and larger-scale penetration by U.S. capital. Its provisions include a reduction in the tariffs China levies on imported goods from 22.1 percent to 17 percent. Tariffs on U.S. farm products would be cut sharply to 15 percent or less. The tariff for automobiles would go from 100 percent to 25 percent over six years.

Other footholds for foreign firms include the ability of companies to set up their own product distribution, repair, and maintenance systems in China. U.S. banks will be permitted to offer services to Chinese customers two years after Beijing joins the WTO. Foreign investors can purchase 49 percent of Chinese telephone service providers, increasing to 50 percent in two years.

At the same time Washington will be allowed to enforce protectionist measures against the alleged "dumping" of goods by China for 12 more years. These terms follow closely those proposed by Beijing and rejected by Washington in April talks between Prime Minister Zhu Rongji and U.S. president William Clinton in Washington.

In a number of rounds of negotiations over the last 13 years the U.S. rulers have withheld their approval of China's application for membership in the WTO and its predecessor, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, seeking to squeeze more concessions from the Chinese government. Recent talks between the European Union and Beijing have had the same thrust.

The agreement takes Beijing a step closer to membership of the WTO. Several major hurdles remain. Among the major imperialist powers, the governments of Japan and the United States have said they support Chinese entry, but those of the European Union and Canada have yet to do so. The

agreement will also face a de facto review by the U.S. House of Representatives, when that body debates and votes on the "concession," according to the *New York Times*, of "granting permanent trading rights to China rather than reviewing those rights annually." This yearly review of the country's trading status has provided a stage for capitalist politicians to vent hostility towards Beijing and the Chinese revolution.

Given these remaining obstacles to its membership in the WTO, China's representatives at the trade body's ministerial meeting in Seattle from November 30 to December 3 will probably be seated as observers.

The capitalists in the United States have to date indicated broad-based support for the agreement. The rulers have long been concerned about the growing U.S. trade deficit with China. Many hope to cash in on economic growth in that country of more than a billion people. A smaller layer of capitalists in sectors such as textile oppose the agreement, which will put more competitive pressure on their industries.

Some among the U.S. rulers hope they can greatly extend the foothold of capitalist property relations in China. The changes "could be profound" editorialized the *New York Times*, if they strengthen the "market advocates" in the Chinese regime.

Charlene Barshefsky, the chief U.S. representative at the Beijing talks, cautioned that "What you have accomplished is opening a market.... It could have a spillover effect—but it may not." Those hoping to restore capitalism in the Eastern European workers states through investment have been sorely disappointed over the last decade.

Working people in China will bear the brunt of layoffs that will follow any major new influx of capital. A worker at the Beijing

Light Truck Company told a reporter, "Our factory is already in bad shape. Most workers are on leave and are called back only when there is work to do. This will open China up to better and cheaper U.S. trucks. I don't believe we will survive."

The Stalinist rulers in China fear the resistance that workers and peasants will mount to the mass layoffs that foreign investors will demand in their quest for profits. While hailing the opportunities for the "financial giants" of the "West," a report in the *International Herald Tribune* lamented the fact that "good money has been thrown after bad out of fear that bankrupt state companies would breed social unrest."

Washington is holding out less and less hope that peaceful "reforms" will accomplish their goals of overturning the nationalized economy of the workers state and reimposing imperialist rule. It is beefing up its military forces, including a new generation of missiles designed to give the Pentagon a first-strike nuclear capacity, to prepare for military confrontations with Beijing that it sees coming down the road.

The leadership of the AFL-CIO national union federation pledged to campaign against the agreement. "It's an outrage that a country with China's record on labor rights is allowed into the WTO without any attempt to improve its record," said Mark Levinson of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees.

These officials echo the positions of rightist figures like Buchanan and conservative politicians like Republican presidential contender Malcolm Forbes, who also opposes China's entry into the WTO. Under cover of concern over human rights violations, they advocate more protections against foreign competition for U.S. capitalists.

# 'Health system in Cuba is based on solidarity'

BY MARTIN BOYERS

BOSTON — "The health-care system in Cuba is internationalist in its core concept. It is based on solidarity with our own people and with other communities in the world," said Dr. Alfredo Portero Urquiza, speaking at Roxbury Community College (RCC) here November 4. Portero is the director of the International Medical Cooperation Unit in the Ministry of Public Health in Cuba.

In a two-week tour of the Boston area, Portero addressed more than 600 people on seven campuses and spoke before seven community organizations and health agencies.

In Boston he spoke at Harvard University, Tufts University, Boston University Medical Center, and the University of Massachusetts. He also spoke at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut, and Trinity College in Hartford. The tour was organized by the Student-Faculty Cuban Medical Doctor Tour Committee.

At the RCC event, attended by 60 people, Portero was joined at the podium by Dr. Jorge Pérez, the director of Cuba's Instituto Pedro Kouri. Pérez presented a slide show that explained Cuba's program for the treatment of people with AIDS.

Dr. Paul Farmer of the Harvard Medical School also spoke. Farmer is the director of Partners in Health, an agency based in Cambridge, Massachusetts, that organizes health-care projects in Haiti and Roxbury, a mostly

Black community in Boston. Pérez was in the United States through an invitation by Farmer.

Portero described Cuba's medical care system and its international medical brigades. "Cuba maintains one medical care system," he said. It is accessible to all Cubans regardless of sex, religion, or political belief and it is free of charge, "whether you need an aspirin or open heart surgery."

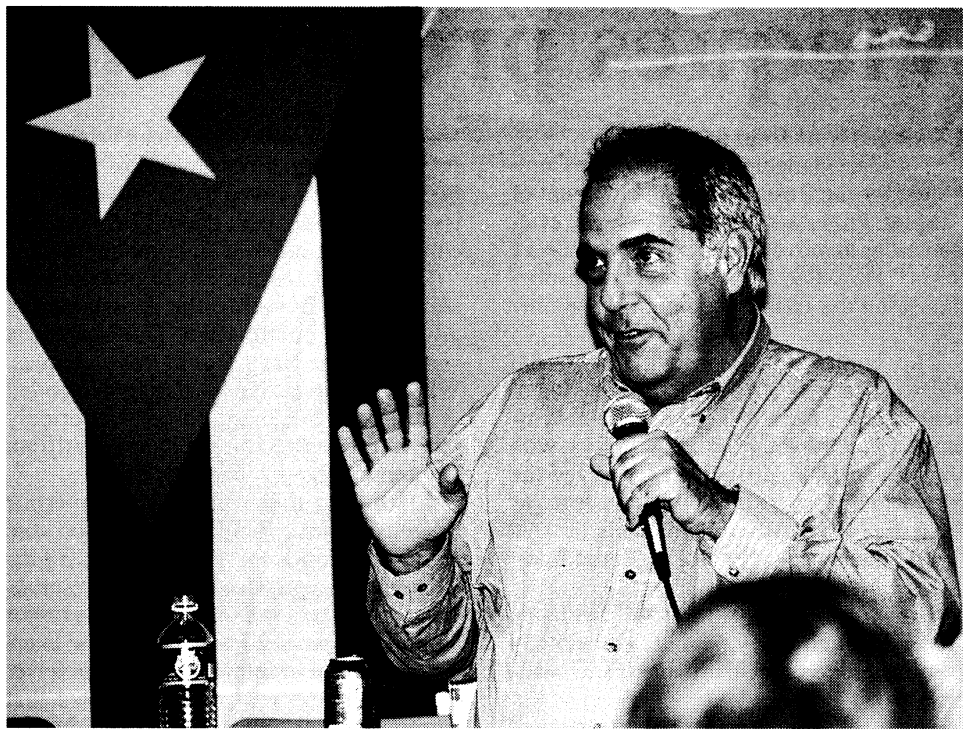
## Gains of Cuban revolution

Cuba's prerevolutionary health system treated the wealthy and well-connected, while leaving the vast majority with little or no attention. After workers and farmers took power in Cuba in 1959, ousting the U.S.-backed dictatorship there and opening the first socialist revolution in the Americas, half of the country's 6,000 doctors left.

New generations of youth, motivated by a social system that puts human needs ahead of private profits, responded to the need for replacements. Today Cuba has 66,000 physicians and a total of 350,000 health-care workers.

Cuba's infant mortality rate, which was officially 60 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1959, stands at 7.1 per 1,000 today. That figure is slightly higher than the national average in the United States, but lower than in many large cities and rural areas here.

Cuba has one family doctor per 180 people, and maintains a medical school in each province of the country. Diseases resulting from



Militant/Margrethe Siem

Cuban doctor Alfredo Portero at Roxbury Community College in Boston November 4

malnutrition, poor public sanitation, and unhealthy water sources, which are major causes of death in other underdeveloped countries, are unknown in Cuba. The leading causes of death in Cuba are cancer, heart attacks, and high blood pressure, Portero said.

This has been accomplished despite the economic embargo maintained on the island by the United States for close to 40 years. Portero estimated the trade ban, which denies Cuba medicines and equipment that contain any U.S.-manufactured or patented component, has cost more than \$60 billion in medical costs alone.

"No international medical collaboration [by Cuban doctors] took place before 1959," Portero noted. The revolutionary government's medical aid abroad began with an emergency response to a 1960 earthquake in Chile. The first regular internationalist assistance pro-

gram was established in Algeria in 1963.

Since then, 39,780 volunteers have worked in 80 different nations in the Caribbean, Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Today, 2,652 serve in 56 nations, Portero said.

## Internationalist medical aid

He described the "Integral Medical Aid Plan," initiated by Cuba following Hurricanes Mitch and Georges that devastated parts of the Caribbean and Central America last year. More than 30,000 people died in those hurricanes and their aftermath. Portero said, "The media talked a lot about the destruction of Mitch, but they are silent about the chronic hurricane of malnutrition and diseases that take as many lives every year."

To fight this "chronic hurricane," Cuban volunteer doctors are going to the most remote areas of the countries affected to provide medical relief. At the same time young people from those countries are receiving training in Cuba to become doctors who can eventually replace the Cuban doctors.

Currently there are 429 Cuban doctors in Haiti as part of this program, and the number will be increased to 800 by the end of this year. The host countries provide housing, food, and no more than \$100 per month "pocket money" to the medical workers.

Portero noted that Cuba has few material resources to use on these projects. The Cuban government has challenged governments with far more resources to provide medicine and equipment to supplement Cuba's contribution of volunteer medical workers.

He described how the Nicaraguan government at first rejected Cuba's offer of aid following the hurricanes, claiming that poor Cuban doctors just wanted to eat Nicaragua's food. A flood of protests by needy Nicaraguans forced Managua to reverse its stand. "And this time, we sent food as well as doctors," Portero pointed out.

To train doctors from other Latin America countries and the Caribbean, Cuba has established the Latin American School of Medical Science in Havana. Currently it has nearly 2,000 students. Portero stressed that these students are selected by their own governments. The education is completely free, including room and board. The only cost to the student is travel to and from Cuba.

Cuba has expanded the Integral Medical Aid Plan to parts of Africa and recently opened the first medical school in the history of the African nation of Gambia, Portero reported.

During Portero's visit, the Haitian Consulate in Boston held a reception and press conference for the Cuban doctor. Consul Andrine Constant thanked Portero for the medical aid Cuba is giving Haiti.

A highlight of the tour was a meeting of 20 people at the public library in Lawrence, Massachusetts. This meeting, conducted in Spanish, was organized, chaired, and publicized by textile workers at Malden Mills.

Alberto Guerrero Lara, a member of Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees Local 311, explained after the program why he helped organize the meeting. "It is a show of solidarity with the Cuban people and it clarifies many lies about the revolution," said Guerrero. "I believe this type of activity should happen more often."

Martin Boyers is a member of the United Auto Workers. Sarah Ullman, a member of the United Transportation Union, contributed to this article.

# Miami press conference condemns U.S. effort to disrupt summit in Cuba

BY ROLLANDE GIRARD AND MICHAEL MARTÍNEZ

MIAMI — "Once again the United States did the unspeakable against Cuba, in this case to prevent the Ninth [Ibero-American] Summit from taking place on the island," Andrés Gómez said at a press conference here on November 11. "But once again it failed, in spite of extraordinary threats and pressures made by the U.S. government on the other governments participating in order to sabotage and obstruct the summit."

Gómez is the head of the Antonio Maceo Brigade, a Cuban-American group that supports the Cuban revolution. The press con-

ference was sponsored by the Brigade, the Alliance of Workers in the Cuban Community (ATC), Afro-Cuban Cultural Rescue, and the Miami Coalition to End the U.S. Embargo of Cuba. The Ibero-American summit was held in Cuba November 15-17.

Sixteen heads of state took part in the meeting. The presidents of five other countries that have participated in the annual meetings did not attend. The heads of state of Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Costa Rica said they were boycotting the meeting because of a "lack of democratic reform" in Cuba.

The sponsors of the press conference stated these governments "are trapped in a dishonorable neocolonial relationship with the United States."

They sent a letter to the ambassadors of the Ibero-American governments attending the summit, which read, "Despite the different ideologies between your government and the revolutionary government of Cuba, it is essential to show the world, and above all the government of the United States, the firm support of the Ibero-American countries to the principle of nonintervention in the internal affairs of other countries, especially in the case of Cuba, which during the last 40 years has been the last bastion of social justice and sovereignty among our peoples."

The first Ibero-American summit, held in Mexico in 1990, was the first time top officials from Latin America, Spain, and Portugal met together to discuss cultural, political, and economic issues without the direct involvement of Washington, which dominates other international forums in the Americas.

The declaration issued by the organizers of the press conference noted that from the beginning, "enemies of Cuba revolution, especially the United States, have sought to exclude Cuba" from the Ibero-American summit meetings. For nearly 40 years, since workers and farmers in Cuba took power, the U.S. rulers have sought to isolate the revolutionary government in Cuba politically, diplomatically, and economically by every means possible.

This year's conference, the first of the

summits to be held in Havana, has been accompanied by a flurry of attacks and slanders against Cuba in the big-business press, including prominent coverage of meetings by some of the summit participants with opponents of the government in Cuba.

In responding to the boycott by the Costa Rican, Salvadoran, and Nicaraguan governments, Gómez mentioned the November 9 vote of the United Nations General Assembly on the U.S. embargo of Cuba. Governments of 155 countries voted for a Cuban-sponsored resolution calling for an end to the embargo. Only two, those of the United States and Israel, voted against the resolution.

Gómez also pointed to the trial that was about to open in San Juan, Puerto Rico, of seven men accused of attempting to assassinate Cuban president Fidel Castro at the seventh Ibero-American summit on the island of Margarita, Venezuela.

Four of the Cuban-American rightists attempted to sneak onto the island using the boat of a fifth defendant, who is a leader of the Cuban American National Foundation. They were armed with 50-caliber sniper rifles. One reportedly confessed that he planned to shoot at Castro's plane as it landed.

"We demand that they receive the maximum sentence established by law," said Gómez.

The presidents of Argentina and Chile also did not attend the Havana summit, saying they were protesting a Spanish court's attempt to try former Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet and several former members of the military juntas that ruled Argentina in 1976-83.

At the press conference here, Gómez objected to this violation of Chile's national sovereignty by Madrid. "We all know that Pinochet is a murderer but he has to be judged in Chile and not in Spain," explained Gómez. "Why haven't they brought the Francoists to justice, who killed thousands" during the 40-year rule of Francisco Franco in Spain.

Rollande Girard is a member of the International Association of Machinists in Miami. Michael Martínez is a high school student.

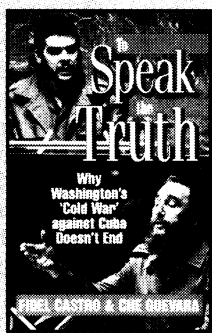
## From Pathfinder

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# Overnite strikers advance fight for union

Continued from front page  
tionwide.

In many places the picket lines are regularly staffed not only by striking Overnite workers, but other Teamsters and union members who are committed to helping them win a union.

## Strikers face court injunctions

Overnite bosses have resisted the union drive every step of the way. They are receiving help from the cops and courts. Judges have granted Overnite's requests for injunctions against the strikers at 11 sites as of November 16, and violence-baiting against the strikers by the company and big-business press has increased.

In the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, Anoka County judge James Gibbs issued an injunction against the Teamsters strikers November 12. The order prohibits strikers from having more than two pickets at the gate of the Overnite terminal or speaking to the replacement workers. The injunction even prohibits the two pickets from being closer than 15 feet to each other.

The judge also ordered strikers not to follow Overnite trucks. Picketing the scab trucks as they make their deliveries has been a key means of increasing the visibility of the strike, especially in face of a near-total news blackout.

The morale of the Minnesota strikers is high, however, and they are confident they can find ways to affect the company. Strikers and their supporters continue to gather on the shoulder of the road near the terminal.

Here in Georgia, a Fulton County judge came to the company's aid in the second week of the strike, with a 30-day restraining order that prohibits pickets from getting within 50 feet of Overnite trucks, among other restrictions. But strikers are meeting the challenge.

Freddie Cowden, with 16 years at Overnite, and David Gilliland with 9 years, are among the 5 to 10 strikers who go out every day in Atlanta to picket the scab trucks as they



Militant/Doug Jenness

**Overnite striker pickets scab-driven truck in Minnesota November 8. New injunction imposed on Teamsters there bars drivers from following and picketing the trucks.**

make their deliveries around town. Cowden noted that there's been no let up in this "ambulatory picketing" and that "some of the customers run the trucks right out of there" once they see the pickets outside their business.

He added that one reason for the nervousness of these business owners is that union drivers, like one from UPS that day, "refuse to cross the picket line," bypassing the business until some time later.

Gilliland noted that Overnite has called in the Atlanta city and the Dekalb county police, the Department of Transportation tried to claim the picket shack was blocking the sidewalk, and the Fire Department was called in to shut down the strikers' fire barrel. But the firefighter said, "I'm in a

union, too, so I'm leaving the barrel alone," he related.

The Teamsters campaign at Overnite has lifted the lid on some of the company's anti-union tactics of intimidating and firing union supporters. On November 10 the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) affirmed an administrative law judge's decision to award union bargaining rights at terminals in Norfolk, Virginia; Bridgeton, Missouri; Louisville, Kentucky; and North Atlanta, Georgia.

The union had lost representation elections at these locations after a majority of workers signed cards asking to join the union. The NLRB ruled that company officials had carried out such a level of intimidation that the election results should be reversed in favor of the union.

Also in the past week the Teamsters strike fund has received a \$100,000 contribution from the AFL-CIO, and Teamster president James Hoffa announced that strikers will receive \$100 per week in strike benefits from the union.

The Teamster battle against Overnite comes at a time of increased determination among workers to fight for dignity and better working conditions. A historic victory was won in June 1999, when 5,000 textile workers voted in the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE) at Fieldcrest Cannon (now Pillowtex) in Kannapolis, North Carolina. Last week the final question mark on the election, the result of a 25-year fight, was pushed aside when the company announced it was withdrawing its challenge to the union victory.

Striking Teamster Dexter Molden, 31, has now been part of two union organizing drives, and for a while both at the same time. He was working his full-time job at Wilen Manufacturing in Atlanta five years ago when he started part-time at Overnite on the dock.

Workers at Wilen, a mop manufacturer, defeated a vicious antiunion employer and voted to join UNITE in 1994, winning a contract the following year. "All companies do their dirt, and both Wilen and Overnite are dirty," Molden said. While money was an important issue at Wilen, at both companies "my main thing was getting a contract," he added.

"Favoritism, goes on all the time. Certain people get the new, air-conditioned trucks with the power steering that's needed for city driving; others get dumped with the bad trucks, sometimes with bad brakes," Molden noted. "Racism plays into it, too, when it comes to getting good runs or bad runs. And I've learned the union can't make the company do anything unless you're willing to strike."

Mike Italie is a member of UNITE. Dick Geyer in Birmingham, Alabama, and Tom Fiske in Minneapolis contributed to this article.

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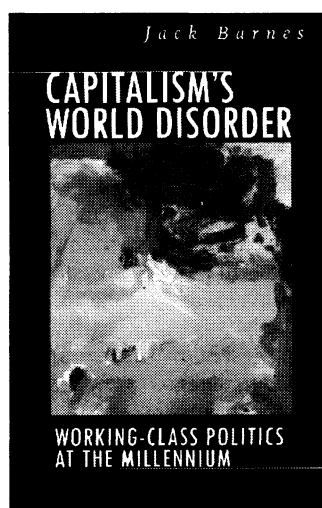
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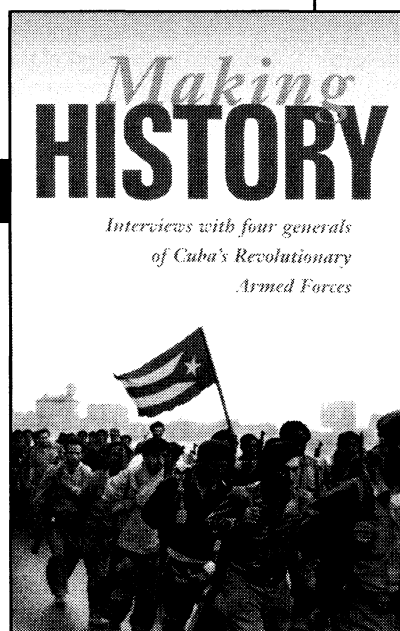
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## Teamster Rebellion

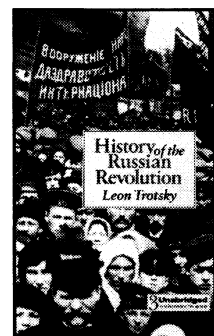
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# Woodworkers rally strike support, face lockout in Ontario

BY SYLVIE CHARBIN

DURHAM, Ontario — About 150 unionists and supporters attended a November 4 rally to show their solidarity with 380 members of Industrial Wood and Allied Workers (IWA) Local 500, who have been on strike against Interforest for five months.

The rally, organized by the Grey-Bruce Labor Council, was held across the street from the plant. In addition to strikers, participants included members of the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW), Service Employees International Union, United Steelworkers of America, Power Workers Union, and several other unions.

A theme of the rally was opposition to sweeping antiunion amendments to the Ontario Labor Relations Act adopted by the Conservative provincial government of Premier Michael Harris. The labor code now allows companies to use scabs, and the IWA strike against Interforest has become a test case.

Over the course of the strike, Interforest has bussed in scabs, and obtained several injunctions limiting picketing and obstruction of vehicles at plant gates, in front of management homes, and at parking lots where specially marked company buses pick up scabs.

A number of the scabs hired have been forced to cross the line under the Ontario government's new "workfare" program, under which workers on welfare who refuse to be retrained or to take any work offered to them risk losing their income.

## Challenge to antiunion laws

Throughout the strike, workers at this specialty wood veneer plant — part of an international chain — have fought back. For the first four months of the strike, less than a half dozen union members crossed the picket line.

On October 18 the union was forced to vote on a memorandum of settlement, essentially the same offer that they had rejected prior to the strike. The company took advantage of the new legislation, which gives scabs — now defined as part of a "bargaining unit" — the right to vote on contract offers, whether or not they are union members. At the time of the Labor Board-supervised vote, the company had registered 172 scabs.

Despite this attack on union rights, the memorandum was rejected by a vote of 263-218. The next day, the company fired 35 strikers, including the local's union negotiating committee. Some termination notices were delivered to strikers' homes by company security guards equipped with video cameras. The fired workers' pink slips indicated "on strike" as a reason for termination.

Company officials later stated that these workers had "acted against the law" and that it would not take them back. Interforest then imposed an October 26 deadline, after which it said it would withdraw its latest offer. The bosses proceeded to carry out an aggressive telephone campaign aimed at getting workers to cross the picket line.

## Birmingham teachers force board to halt superintendent's pay hike

BY VED DOOKHUN

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama — Angered by the local school board's recent decision to give School Superintendent Johnny Brown a \$30,000 pay raise, teachers, custodians, school bus drivers, and lunchroom workers began a sick-out Friday, November 12. More than a quarter of the teachers stayed home that day. They turned the job action into a strike the following Monday, with 1,264 of the system's 2,100 teachers staying out along with 400 of the 2,000 school staff workers, effectively bringing the schools to a standstill. More than 30,000 students out of 38,000 stayed home.

While the school board agreed to substantial increases for Brown and other senior administrators, teachers and other school workers got raises of 1-1.5 percent. The first pickets went out Tuesday morn-

At a union meeting called that weekend, the names of the fired workers were read out loud. Despite the pressure bearing down on the strike, union members vowed to continue the strike until everyone was rehired. "It was the best meeting we've had since we went on strike. The only thing to do is to keep on fighting," said Jane Osborne, one of the fired workers.

In the following two days, 20 members of the Power Workers union and 80 members of the Canadian Auto Workers attending the CAW training school in nearby Port Elgin brought their support to the picket line.

On October 28 two busloads of Interforest strikers, including most of the fired workers, traveled 150 miles from the picket line to Toronto. They marched in front of Queen's Park, the Ontario legislature, carrying signs saying, "Workfare = Scabfare" and "Revoke the Scab Labor Laws."

Beth Pietz, one of the fired workers, and self-described "rookie" hired last January, told the *Militant*, "I'm a single mother with two kids to support. I've never worked in a place and been treated so badly. I've never worked in a union place before. I've learned a lot about what unions are. I support the union." Another fired worker, Chrystelle Ayerhart said, "Being fired is a badge of honor. You get admired for that."

## Union officials back down

A few hours after the strikers returned in high spirits from the rally in Toronto they attended a union meeting previously called for that evening.

Top IWA officials there cast a serious doubt on the meaning of the October 18 contract rejection by claiming that the memorandum of settlement would have been accepted by the union membership had it not been for the scab vote.

"I disagreed," said striker Ryan McCubbin. "Most of the people I talked to said there was no way they could accept that offer, but with



Militant/John Steele

**Woodworkers and supporters rally outside provincial legislature in Toronto to protest use of antiunion laws against their strike. When they voted to go back to work a few days later, the company responded with a lockout. They're now back on the picket line.**

the scabs' votes mixed in with ours, there was no way to tell for sure where union members stood. And this caused a lot of confusion."

The IWA officials then called for another vote, in order to avert what they claimed would be a massive and uncontrolled crossing of picket lines. At that point, only about 20 union members had crossed the line. They also cited another clause in the labor code that opens the door for employers to refuse to take back workers when the duration of a strike exceeds six months.

They said that the fight to get the fired workers reinstated would have to go through arbitration, and accepting the last offer and going back to work now was the only way to save their jobs and the union.

On October 31, faced with the unwillingness of the union officialdom to continue to lead the fight, workers voted 250-32 to end the strike and return to work. Votes of 32 of the fired workers were kept in a separate enve-

lope and not counted.

The next morning when about 300 workers gathered at the picket trailer across from the plant to prepare to return to work as a group, they were informed by the company that since the offer had been withdrawn, it did not recognize the latest contract vote. In addition, the company has filed charges against the union for "bargaining in bad faith." Workers' reaction to this lockout was to immediately get the picket lines back up.

Both the union and company are now awaiting a Labor Board ruling on the validity of the latest union vote and the company lockout, as well as the legality of the firings.

*Sylvie Charbin is member of International Association of Machinists Local Lodge 2113. Ryan McCubbin and Chrystelle Ayerhart, fired IWA Local 500 strikers, contributed to this article.*

## Imprisoned immigrants seek asylum, begin hunger strike in New Zealand

BY FELICITY COGGAN

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — Eighteen asylum seekers began a hunger strike in Mt. Eden prison here October 28 to protest their imprisonment by the New Zealand Immigration Service. They are being held under a new law that allows asylum seekers to be imprisoned while their cases are being investigated.

The law was rushed through parliament in June amid hysterical media reports that a boatload of "illegal" immigrants from China was heading for New Zealand. Immigration Minister Tuariki Delamere said at the time that the urgent legislation was worthwhile

because if the "boat people" had come to New Zealand under the old legislation and claimed refugee status, "it could have taken years to get rid of them." Although the boat never arrived, the legislation was implemented, along with other measures to tighten "security" in the lead-up to the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum held in Auckland September 10-13.

Regular demonstrations, the largest numbering 70 people, have been held outside the prison by supporters of the hunger strikers. Forty people also picketed outside the office of the Immigration Service in downtown Auckland November 12.

Two of the asylum seekers, both Sikhs from India, have now been deported. Of the 16 remaining, 12 are Sikh, three are from Pakistan, and one is from Iran. A woman from Ghana, not on hunger strike, is also being detained under the same law.

A South Auckland Sikh leader, Manpreet Singh, told the *New Zealand Herald* that the Sikh men all came from the Punjab, where Sikhs are campaigning to establish their own homeland. Several had escaped from torture in Indian police cells.

Manpreet Singh, who has himself been jailed and tortured by Indian authorities, has avoided deportation from New Zealand for eight years after attaining refugee status, but has been denied permanent residency by the government because of unsubstantiated claims by the Security Intelligence Service that he is linked to "terrorism."

In another attack on immigrant rights, the government announced November 9 that starting in July next year anyone wanting to enter New Zealand for more than two years will have to pass an HIV-AIDS test. Aggressively dismissing criticism of the move, Immigration Minister Delamere told the October 20 *New Zealand Herald*, "If that's a

breach of our Bill of Rights we might as well can Immigration and let every bugger in here. Immigration is about discrimination."

Terry Coggan, the Communist League candidate for Auckland Central in parliamentary elections November 27, issued a press statement November 11. Coggan, who has attended several of the protest pickets, called for the immediate release of the 16 asylum seekers on hunger strike.

"Seeking asylum is not a crime — it is a right that should be available to all who seek it, free of all restrictions," he said. "The detention of these refugees dates back to before the APEC conference in September. It is part of a number of measures targeting the democratic rights of all working people that were introduced under cover of that event, from increased powers for immigration authorities and the police, to harassment of political activists and restrictions on the right to political protest."

"I also oppose the mandatory AIDS testing of all immigrants, including those seeking asylum, announced this week," Coggan continued. "Such a measure has nothing to do with improving public health, as a number of health specialists have explained. It has everything to do with discriminating against immigrant workers and blaming them for the social ills produced by capitalism, thereby dividing and weakening working people as a whole."

At the time of writing, the hunger strikers had been without food for 17 days. According to the group Justice for Asylum Seekers, the men have reported increasing weakness and dizziness, with one coughing up blood and three others reporting blood in their urine.

*Felicity Coggan is a member of the National Distribution Union.*



# California strikers march for union rights

BY JASON ALESSIO  
AND ELLEN BERMAN

KING CITY, California — "If we don't win, other companies are going to try to do the same thing," said striker Guillermo Hernández. "The wineries are just waiting to see the results of this strike. The workers in the community really have been supporting us. The cabbage and lettuce workers have been sending food supplies. We are more together than ever before. We know who our brothers and sisters are and who they are not. We are learning that without a union we are nothing inside this place."

The sentiment expressed by Hernández, a Teamsters member, was shared by more than 1,000 strikers and their supporters who marched through the streets here to the main gate of the Basic Vegetable plant November 14, waving flags, carrying banners, and chanting all the way.

Some 750 members of Teamsters Local 890 have been on strike at Basic Vegetable since July 7.

Striker Humberto Capiz described some of the basic issues of the strike to the *Militant*. "The main issue in the strike is the preservation of the union. The last offer of Basic Vegetable included a wage freeze, contracting out of work, cutting insurance and the pension plan, and starting new workers at a much lower wage than we get paid now. What they really want to do is replace us permanently with the scabs."

According to the *Californian*, nearly one in 10 of the 11,000 residents of King City work at Basic Vegetable. It is the state's largest producer of dehydrated onions and garlic and one of Monterey County's larger agricultural employers.

The march and rally on November 14 was called to show that the strikers are still solid and continue to win solidarity for their strike, in spite of an ongoing campaign of violence-baiting conducted by the company and echoed in the local media. Less than 5 percent of the Basic workers have crossed the line.

The company has accused the strikers of more than 168 acts of violence and has offered a reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of strikers for engaging in or directing the alleged violence.

The strikers describe incidents of violence



Militant/Osborne Hart

March in support of Basic Vegetable strikers, November 14, King City, California.

directed against them by strikebreakers, however, as well as harassment by the cops. In August a group of strikers who were handing out leaflets against the strike were beaten up by strikebreakers in the town of Avenal.

William Padgett told the *Militant* that many of the 350 replacement workers now working inside the plant are being bused in from outside King City. "I was a scab at the beginning of the strike," he said. "I worked in there for three days before I came out and joined the strike. I'm 18 years old, I needed work. I had applied earlier, and when they called me in on the first day of the strike I went to work. They worked us 12 hours a day at \$8.00 per hour, with three people where I was trying to do what 12 had done before. It was unsafe and we didn't get any medical benefits. I try to get others I know in there to join the strike as well."

Workers came to support the strikers from different unions around the state. According

to Jesús Cervantes of the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees (HERE) Local 814, about 150 HERE members came to the rally on buses from San Francisco, Oakland, and Los Angeles.

Amy Collier, who joined her first union, the United Transportation Union, about a year ago, was attending her first labor rally ever. "We had a blast," she said as the march and rally drew to a close. "I came to show my support with other union members because what's happening is wrong.... Now I want to talk to my union brothers and sisters about doing a food drive or raising money to get my union involved."

Locked-out Kaiser Aluminum workers were very visible at the rally, with a large banner of their own. Kaiser worker Rick Valente spoke at the rally, saying, "Steelworkers are with Local 890 all the way."

Other unions represented included the United Farm Workers (UFW), Service Em-

ployees International Union, California Nurses Association, International Association of Machinists (IAM), and many other Teamsters locals from around the state.

Members of the United Farm Workers Student Committee and other students from the University of California-Santa Cruz also went down to King City to show support for the strikers. They spoke with strikers and invited them to speak on their campus the following week.

Farm worker Lupe Vásquez, commented, "The most important thing is that we all flow together in one canal. If we are united no one can overcome us."

Luz Hernández has worked at Basic Vegetable for 20 years, and before that she was a member of the UFW from 1970 to 1973 at Interharvest. "Ninety percent of the workers at Basic Vegetable worked as farm workers before they got hired at the plant," she said. "And many of us went through the experience of the big battles waged by the UFW and César Chávez in the Salinas Valley in the 1970s. We see this as a continuation of that fight."

"The mentality of the owners at Basic Vegetable is very much like the mentality of the growers back in those days," Hernández continued. "Back then children worked in the fields. I worked in the fields as a child. We didn't go to school—we worked. They can't do that anymore because there are unions now. Now one-third of the workers at Basic Vegetable have kids in college. This is what having a union means to us, because if they can break the union they can take us back to what it was like before."

The experience of the strike has had a profound affect on many of its participants. Adriana Granados, whose husband has been an electrician at Basic for 16 years, expressed it this way, "Lots of people who were shy and quiet are speaking up [during the strike]. Lots of leaders are coming out of this for the community. This is the first strike for all of us and it is a learning experience. We were in a protective bubble, but this was burst. Now we're considering other issues in the world. That's a good thing."

Ellen Berman is a member of IAM Local 1781.

## 'Everybody in my department signed up for the union' at Avondale shipyard

BY TONY DUTROW

BRIDGE CITY, Louisiana — It's afternoon shift change at the Avondale shipyard and hundreds of workers with staggered clock-out times are streaming down the steep river levee that partially hides the huge ships and cranes along the Mississippi River.

One worker after another, on foot or bicycle, heads for the gate and to their cars, shuttle vans, or buses. Many are wearing bright green union hats; most say they have signed union authorization papers in the last week or so.

On November 2 the newly merged company, now named Litton Avondale Industries, announced it had come to an agreement on neutrality towards the union-organizing campaign by the Metal Trades Council of New Orleans. The agreement gave the union the right to sign up workers. If a majority of the 4,000 eligible workers join, the company is supposed to immediately recognize the union and begin contract bargaining. The New Orleans *Times-Picayune* reported November 13 that the Metal Trades Council (AFL-CIO) submitted well over the majority required for certification.

Litton Avondale Industries is the state's biggest employer and the largest nonunion shipyard in the country. Workers there are at rock bottom in pay scales compared to other shipbuilders.

"Everybody in my department signed up," said Marie Davis, 36, who cleans the ships under construction. She has worked in the yard for 14 months and said she makes \$6.52 an hour in her labor grade.

Elated by the prospect of getting the union into the shipyard, Davis said her main concern is safety, although she could certainly use a raise.

"They've been sending us down places [inside the ship's hull] so unsafe that you

fear for your life. Then they get mad when you complain about safety, like untied scaffold boards," she said. "My safety is more important than money," Davis insisted.

Thirty-four workers have been killed at Avondale since 1974 according to the AFL-CIO. Conditions such as these have led to many attempts to organize a union over the last 50 years.

Reginald Jones, a 62-year-old fitter and tester, has worked at the shipyard on and off for decades. But the company has told him that for retirement purposes they will only honor the last 12 years, so he'll retire with a pension of less than \$400 a month.

Jones, who is proud of his Creole background, has been a supporter of the union for a long time. "I think this decision looks great for the younger workers out here," he told the *Militant*.

Meanwhile, workers got the news November 12 that the National Labor Relations Board ordered Avondale Industries to reinstate more than two dozen workers fired for union activity related to the 1993 union election. At that time a majority of workers voted to be represented by the Metal Trades Council of New Orleans.

Avondale Industries steadfastly refused to recognize the union and launched a vicious campaign against the workers. Last summer, a federal appeals court sided with the Avondale bosses and threw out the 1993 election. In light of the recent agreement between the union and the new management, that may be a pyrrhic victory.

"I didn't even know the names of every one of them, but lots of workers were fired or forced to quit," Jones said. "I guess I just got lucky," he added, smiling and pointing to his well-worn hard hat covered with fading "Union Yes" and "Justice for Avondale" stickers.

This important stage in the fight of these shipyard workers takes place in the context of a big shift in the mood of working people. Avondale workers got a boost from two major defeats handed to other shipyard owners this summer.

In June 6,800 workers at the Litton-owned Ingalls Shipyard in Pascagoula, Mississippi, won substantial pay increases, safety improvements, and other rights on the job. They did this by successfully uniting the 11 unions that made up the Metal Trades Council that represented the workers in the negotiations.

This was followed by the conclusion of the three-month battle at Newport News Shipbuilding in Virginia. The 9,000 shipyard workers there organized by United Steelworkers of America Local 8888 also won substantial gains and strengthened their union through the fight.

As is the case at Avondale, workers who are Black make up a big percentage of the work force at Ingalls and Newport News. From these ranks came new leaders, many with experience in the struggle for Black rights that enhanced the combativity and discipline of the strikes.

It is this mood and combativity that has emerged from the long battle for union recognition at Avondale that stares in the face of the new owners of Avondale.

Albert Bossier, Jr., the former company head of Avondale, had boasted to the workers that he would fight from his grave to keep the union out of the shipyard.

In 1998 a judge issued a cease-and-desist order against the company that included the unusual provision that Bossier either read it himself to an assembly of the shipyard workers or sit by as an NLRB agent read it aloud. The company appealed the order. The NLRB upheld the ruling days after Bossier retired November 1.

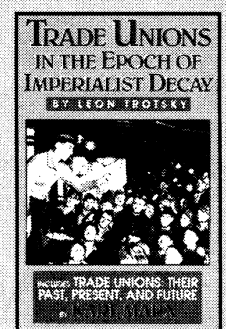
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# Ultrarightist Buchanan courts labor officials

Continued from front page

American families, and for the benefit of transnational corporations," he said in a November 15 campaign statement, referring to the U.S.-China agreement. "By bringing China into the WTO, America will surrender all the economic leverage we have over the Communist Chinese regime to a collection of global bureaucrats."

Earlier, at a November 4 meeting of his supporters at Philadelphia's City Tavern, the rightist politician announced he would take part in the anti-WTO protests in Seattle and urged his backers to do likewise.

## Praises Hoffa's protectionist campaign

Replying to a question from a supporter who identified himself as a member of the Teamsters, Buchanan endorsed the class-collaborationist campaign by the Teamsters officialdom to maintain restrictions on trucking from Mexico. The union bureaucrats are opposed to a provision of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) that will allow truckers from Mexico to drive into the United States beginning January 1.

Buchanan repeated the union officials' protectionist arguments. He evoked the specter of unsafe Mexican drivers and added, "Under NAFTA they can all come in and take the jobs of American truckers. And an American truck driver can't work at a buck an hour the way they have to work in Mexico."

Praising Teamsters president James Hoffa, the ultrarightist told his assembled Buchanan Brigades, "Jim Hoffa is a good man and he's a friend of mine. And I am going to Seattle.... I know he's going to go out there. We're all going to get our Teamsters jackets on and speak to some troops."

Supporters of Buchanan, who along with other presidential candidates had met with the Teamsters General Executive Board in July, have fed speculation that he is considering Hoffa as a running mate.

In late September Hoffa issued a statement that he was "not interested at this time" in such an offer. Hoffa however, played right into the hands of the fascist-minded demagogue. "Mr. Buchanan is a strong advocate of tough trade policies that would protect American workers and the middle class. The Teamsters union supports those basic policies, and as Teamsters General President I will continue to work with him and anyone else interested in stopping the flow of good jobs to cheap labor havens abroad," he said.

## Fulani named campaign co-chair

Buchanan, who formally broke with the Republican Party in late October, is running to become the Reform Party's presidential candidate. Unlike all the other capitalist politicians in the presidential race, he is not simply out for votes. Since at least the 1992 elections, Buchanan has been on a longer-term course of recruiting cadres to his incipient fascist movement — a popular, street-fighting movement that will act as a tool for big business in a time of social crisis.

Feeding on the growing insecurity about the future among millions in the United States, he seeks to scapegoat sections of the working class for the social problems caused by the capitalist system itself — from immigrants to Jews to workers relying on welfare.

Buchanan rails against the traditional capitalist parties and "Beltway elites" and poses as a champion of the "American worker." His rhetoric has become increasingly anticapitalist, anti-imperialist, and national socialist.

It was not surprising, then, when on November 11 the ultrarightist introduced his latest supporter, Lenora Fulani — "a socialist, an African-American woman," as he pointedly identified her later in a television talk show. He announced that Fulani will be one of his campaign co-chairs along with his sister Angela Buchanan and Reform Party figure Pat Choate.

"This moment opens a new page in this campaign and it sends a new message. And it is that this coalition is open to all," Buchanan said in welcoming Fulani's endorsement. "This campaign is going to be a voice for the voiceless, and its objective is to give power to the powerless in America."

Fulani declared in kind, "Pat Buchanan and the Reform Party offer the black community the opportunity to join in new alliances — in particular, in an alliance with white blue-collar Americans.... Pat Buchanan is not a racist or a fascist or a bigot. He is not a hater. He has a great passion for America and a great disgust for the institutions that oppress ordinary Americans."

She concluded, "We're going to integrate that peasant army of his. We're going to bring black folks and Latino folks and gay folks and liberal folks into that army."

"Welcome aboard. Your pitchfork has been assigned," responded Buchanan.

Fulani is a former leader of the New Alliance Party, a middle-class group that over the years developed fascist-like politics. The organization, which initially used Marxist rhetoric, turned increasingly to the right over the

years. It distinguished itself by legal moves to throw communists and other third-party candidates off the ballot. The grouping, which in 1973-74 briefly joined Lyndon LaRouche's fascist outfit, relies on conspiracy theories, anti-Semitism, and cop-baiting. In the early 1990s Fulani and other New Alliance cadres joined supporters of Ross Perot to form the Patriot Party. Today they function inside the Reform Party, founded by Perot.

## Rightist convergence

At their November 11 joint press conference, Buchanan and Fulani stated that they were subordinating their differences on issues such as abortion and gay rights in the name of breaking "the two-party monopoly on power in America," as Buchanan put it.

"Lenora," Buchanan said November 14 on Fox News Sunday, "is dead right that young, black Americans should be taught self-esteem, not that they're victims."

He added, "African Americans are the ones who are going to die in these imperial wars, as well as working-class white kids, and we both agree they ought not to go to these imperial wars."

The Reform Party presidential contender announced that in addition to Seattle "I will also go to Harlem" accompanied by Fulani.

Explaining his new alliances, Buchanan said that Vermont Congressman "Bernie Sanders is a Socialist, just like Lenora is. And Bernie and I worked together in harness, as

did [Minnesota senator] Paul Wellstone, to stop that miserable NAFTA deal, which was going to sell out the industrial independence of the country and the sovereignty, as well as the jobs of American workers."

Appearing together on Fox News Sunday, Buchanan let Fulani make the anti-Semitic statements while he posed as an opponent of bigotry. Asked about well-known remarks by Fulani mentor Fred Newman that "Jews are the storm troopers of decadent capitalism," Fulani finished the quote, "...and participated in oppressing groupings of people of color." She then declared, "What is anti-Semitic about that?"

Buchanan voiced disagreement. "I do not believe it's fair to say that Jewish Americans have oppressed people," he said. "There are bad people of all groups. And there are good people of all groups."

In a related development, the fascist-minded politician joined the debate over an exhibit at the Brooklyn Museum of Art. Taking advantage of the campaign by liberal New York mayor Rudolph Giuliani to censor the art showing and cut off public funding to the museum, Buchanan denounced it as the work of "decadent British artists" and argued that the mayor's response was not enough.

He explained what he would do if in the White House: "When we get control of that National Endowment for the Arts, you'll see how it ought to be done. You shut it down, fumigate the building, and put the IRS in there."

# Oppose 'Free Tibet' campaign

Continued from Page 14

policy of the U.S. rulers, which held off giving Beijing's application initial approval until it had extracted the maximum concessions it thought possible.

Now conservative and rightist forces are sharpening their tone in a chorus of opposition to the trade deal with Beijing, pledging to fight China's admission to the WTO, alongside many union bureaucrats. Meanwhile, Washington cranks up the military pressure on China.

For young people who want to fight capitalist injustice and stand alongside those defending national rights, there are plenty of struggles to join today that clearly target the bosses in this country and the brutal government in Washington that defends the prerogatives of the employers. The strike for union recognition by workers at Overnite is one case. The struggle by the people of Puerto Rico to end U.S. colonial rule of their nation, includ-

ing the bombing practice by the U.S. Navy in Vieques, is another.

Workers and peasants in China are already starting to find ways to resist the impact of market "reforms" and the abuses of the Stalinist bureaucracy. As these struggles grow in Tibet and elsewhere in China, they will lay the basis for a fight to build on the gains of the revolution, overthrow the stranglehold of bureaucratic rule, and replace it with the political rule of a government that represents the historic interests of the working class and its allies.

They will confront U.S. imperialism as their main enemy, and will reach out to working people across the world for solidarity. Along this road, the duty of class-conscious workers, youth, and all democratic-minded people in the United States and beyond is to oppose all imperialist attacks and pressures on China and reject the "Free Tibet" campaign as reactionary.

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Celebrate Release of Puerto Rican Political Prisoner Ricardo Jiménez! Week of celebrations from November 30 to December 4. Event on Fri., Dec. 3, 7 p.m. Concilio Hall, 7th and Fairmont (two blocks north of 7th and Girard), north Philadelphia. Sponsored by The National Committee of Puerto Rican Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners with other community organizations. Donation: \$10 includes Puerto Rican food and music. Pay at the door or mail check or money order to Centro Pedro Claver, 3565 N. 7th St., Philadelphia, PA 191140-4401.

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# How British Crown weakens under rising social movements

The following excerpt is taken from "So far from God, so close to Orange County: the deflationary drag of finance capital." It was presented at a regional socialist educational conference in Los Angeles over the 1994-95 New Year's weekend, and later adopted by the delegates to the Socialist Workers Party national convention in July 1995. The entire speech appears in *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium*. Copyright

from the pages of

## Capitalism's World Disorder

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BY JACK BARNES

As the pressures of a world capitalist depression build up, bourgeois governments and ruling parties find it more difficult than ever to contain the aspirations of oppressed nationalities, remnants of national groupings, or economically backward regions. Under such pressures, borders and institutions patched together by the propertied ruling classes decades or even centuries ago, and imposed on peoples against their will, begin coming unstuck.

That is why we have said in recent years that we should stop using the terms "England" or "Britain" when, in reality, we are referring to the "United Kingdom." The United Kingdom was established almost 200 years ago, in 1801, when, under the so-called Act of Union, the English Parliament and Crown abolished even the semblance of a separate parliament in Ireland. Wales had already been incorporated into England for hundreds of years through military conquest, and the English rulers had imposed an earlier Act of Union on Scotland in 1707. Scotland retained its own legal system and schools, as well as its own state church (Presbyterian), whose head is the Queen when she steps across the border into Scottish territory.

### UK is the form of the bourgeois state

So there is more to Her Majesty's realm than just pomp and symbol. The United Kingdom is the form of the bourgeois state — today, of the imperialist state power — with its seat in London. That is why the issue of "reforming" and "trimming" the monarchy and the House of Lords can and does emerge as an issue in bourgeois politics. It is not just a matter of pruning the state budget. The stakes are bigger.

In a capitalist state that takes the form of a constitutional monarchy, as economic and

social crises deepen, the crowned head of state remains important. It becomes one of the few institutions that can "speak for the entire nation." In a bourgeois republic without a monarchy, the president often assumes Bonapartist powers and authority under such conditions. But in a constitutional monarchy, remnants of feudalism preserved by the bourgeoisie with few intrinsic vested powers — the Crown, as well as an unelected House of Lords — grow rather than diminish in their importance for maintaining stability amid the increasing brutality of capitalist life and rule.

The Canadian bourgeoisie keeps trying and failing to write a constitution. Most major bourgeois politicians in Canada have not yet challenged Queen Elizabeth as head of state — although that will happen too (as it already has among bourgeois politicians in Australia).<sup>1</sup> But Canada's bourgeois rulers have tried twice over the past decade to write a new constitution and failed both times.

Canada never had a successful bourgeois revolution, so it never had a real bourgeois constitution. But it is too late in history now. No constitution can be drafted for Canada that will satisfy the demands of French-speaking workers, farmers, and youth in Quebec for their unconditional right to national self-determination. No constitution can be drafted that will satisfy the demands of oppressed Native peoples. Nor can a constitution even be drafted that will resolve conflicts among capitalist interests in Canada who have greater or lesser amounts of capital at stake in various regions and provinces of the country. It is too late in history for that.

Many of us in the United States do not even know there is still a monarchy in Sweden. But now we'll start finding out. With the demise in recent years of "the Swedish miracle," the economic and social conditions of working people there are beginning to undergo qualitative changes like nothing they have lived through since World War I. With less leeway to grant concessions, the officialdom of the Social Democratic Party and trade unions needs additional help in the effort to become more effective tools for the bourgeoisie in Sweden in maintaining capitalist stability. So, we will begin seeing prominent capitalists there, too, trying to use the Swedish monarchy "to speak for the nation."

Under the same kinds of pressures in the United Kingdom, the bourgeoisie has begun to divide. [Prime Minister Anthony] Blair is speaking on behalf of those who think they have to present some answer to growing nationalist agitation in Scotland, fueled by regional disparities and inequalities that have widened in the depression conditions gripping the United Kingdom. That is why, off and on, there is even pressure around the issue of devolution for



Residents protest against march by rightist Orange Order past Garvaghy Road in Portadown, in British-occupied Northern Ireland, December 1998. Irish national struggle is one of the strains pulling at the seams of the United Kingdom.

Wales, where the rapid decline of the capitalist coal industry has brought economic devastation and increased nationalist sentiment among tenant farmers and industrial workers....

The Irish battle against English tyranny, of course, is centuries old. In the modern class struggle it goes back to the earliest days of the rising English bourgeoisie. The seeds of the current conflict were sown by the forcible and bloody partition of Ireland in 1920. Today's Irish Republic had been established that year following a national-democratic revolution, but bourgeois forces in the Republican movement acquiesced in Britain's retention of the Six Counties of Northern Ireland.

Ever since, the Catholic population in the North has been kept in a caste-like oppression, ghettoized and facing official and unofficial brutalization at every turn. The ruling layers among the majority Protestant oppressor population retain a separate educational system, courts, and cops — the notorious Royal Ulster Constabulary. And they had a nominal parliament, too, the Stormont, until 1972, when London asserted direct rule in the wake of a new rise of Irish Republican resistance. British troops have occupied Northern Ireland for a quarter of a century, since 1969, carrying out martial-law repression against the rebellious Catholic population....

So, if you take Westminster's problems in Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, and then you add in the historic decline of the British pound and the state of world capitalism, you begin to see the strains pulling at the seams of the United Kingdom — seams that could begin to rip with a new rise in labor struggles and sustained social mobilizations, and the capitalists' inevitable need for tightened not loosened state centralization.

The historic forced retreat of the United Kingdom from acting as an effective world power continues.

<sup>1</sup> Former Australian Labor Party prime minister Paul Keating campaigned in the 1996 elections to abolish the constitutional monarchy and establish a republic. The Labor government was defeated at the polls by the Liberal Party, whose leader, John Howard, opposes the constitutional change. Faced with ongoing pressures around this issue, including among most leading members of his own government, Prime Minister Howard in early 1997 called for a delegated "people's convention" later in the year to debate the question. That convention, held in February 1998, voted overwhelmingly to hold a referendum on the republic, and in December 1998 the Howard government announced that the vote would be scheduled for late 1999.

## —25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

### THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

November 29, 1974

NEWYORK — Defying a United Parcel Service (UPS) threat to close down its New York area operations, 3,000 striking members of Teamsters Local 804 voted overwhelmingly at a Nov. 17 meeting to reject UPS's "final offer."

The workers were militant and angry. Some tore up copies of the proposed contract and threw them into the air. Others stood on chairs and cursed the company.

The strike by 4,500 Teamster members began Aug. 28 and has had an increasing impact, especially with the approach of the Christmas mailing season.

The key issue is UPS's demand to replace full-time workers with low-paid part-timers. Before the Nov. 17 meeting, driver Louis Bernard told reporters, "We can't give in. Right now they are talking about part-time for inside workers only. Next time it will be drivers."

The strike has come under growing attack from local industry, the capitalist media, the U.S. Postal Service, and the government. On Nov. 15 the Postal Service placed full-page ads in the New York newspapers that in effect backed UPS against the strikers.

Postal workers, on the other hand, are in solidarity with the UPS strikers. A delegation from the Metro Area Postal Union joined with Local 804 strikers and representatives of other Teamster locals — 2,000 strong in all — for a Nov. 14 demonstration outside the main UPS depot in Manhattan.

The New York strike has national significance as the only challenge to UPS's drive to replace full-time workers with part-timers. A victory for the New York strikers would also be victory for all 65,000 UPS workers in 200 Teamster locals across the country.

### THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

November 28, 1949

In the last few years, naked dictatorships have been imposed on a whole number of Latin American countries. Invariably and with indecent haste the State Department has recognized each of these new governments. We have now two more instances of "democracy" at work in the Western Hemisphere and of how the State Department stands guard over it. One is Panama; the other, Colombia.

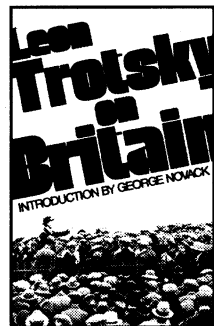
The President of Panama demanded the resignation of three to top officials of the Panamanian police force, the only armed force in this little country. Instead of resigning they deposed him. The State Department promptly recognized as "constitutional" this literal dictatorship by policemen.

What is going on in Colombia differs in form but is identical in substance. This country has been deemed as a prize example of democracy. It was chosen as the seat for the Pan-American Conference which was so rudely disrupted by the Bogota uprising of April 1948.

After that uprising, the Liberals rushed to save the regime by entering a coalition government. They are now getting repaid for their past services. Knowing themselves to be a tiny minority, the reactionaries have unleashed a reign of terror on the eve of the presidential elections.

Meanwhile, of course, the Nov. 27 "elections" will take place and Laureano Gomez, the unopposed Conservative candidate, who fled to Franco Spain after the Bogota uprising, will be duly declared elected.

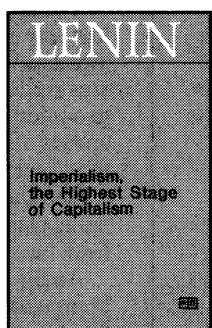
There has not been so much as a whisper from the State Department about the Colombian outrages.



### for further reading

#### Leon Trotsky on Britain

The displacement of British industry, trade, finance, and diplomacy by its U.S. rival following World War I opened a period of social crisis and class battles across Britain, discussed in these articles by Trotsky. Includes an analysis of the 1926 general strike, betrayed by the labor officialdom. \$23.95



#### Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism

V.I. Lenin

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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.

# Campaign for communism

The events in Seattle organized to protest the ministerial meeting of the World Trade Organization (WTO) present socialist workers and youth with an opportunity to campaign for communism and recruit to the Young Socialists, the Socialist Workers Party in the United States, and sister organizations in Canada and elsewhere.

A swirl of political protests and forums whose program and character smacks of economic nationalism and America Firstism surround the WTO conference, which Washington is using to campaign for rationalizing aggressive postures and missile buildups — aimed primarily against China and other workers states.

In the midst of all this, socialists in the Northwest are being joined by YS and SWP members and contacts from across the United States for an aggressive propaganda campaign in the Seattle region. A number of Young Socialists leaders will go to Seattle between Thanksgiving and December 5. The YS National Committee has also called on other members and contacts to join the socialist propaganda teams leading up to and during the WTO meeting.

These teams will present a communist view of the trade body, the protests against it, and the big political shifts occurring in the world. They will also explain the need to build a revolutionary youth organization and a proletarian party that can lead the working class and its allies to take power out of the hands of the wealthy minority of industrialists, bankers, and landlords, establish a workers and farmers government, and join the worldwide fight to build a socialist society that puts human needs above profits.

The socialists will centralize their work by campaigning to sell dozens of copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium* on the job, at plant gates, door-to-door and at street corners in working-class communities, at picket lines, on campus, and at a number of the WTO-related events. They will also place the book in a wide range of bookstores, libraries, and shops of various kinds where workers and youth obtain literature. And they will confidently speak on the views presented in the book not only at Militant Labor Forums and Young Socialists classes but at a range of WTO-related forums and street rallies.

What is the communist stance towards the WTO? The imperialist powers, and above all Washington, constructed this body to serve their interests. Communists call for its abolition as part of opposing the policies of Washington and its imperialist allies. At the same time they explain that Washington, not the “ultra-national” WTO bureaucracy, is the chief enemy of working people in the United States and of humanity.

The political demands and explanations put forward by the liberals, trade union bureaucrats, and other activists who are involved in organizing the anti-WTO protests in Seattle take a completely different tack. The WTO, they say, violates “our” national sovereignty.

Following the U.S.-China trade pact last week, many of the protest leaders have started to concentrate their fire on China. AFL-CIO president John Sweeney AFL-CIO vowed forcefully to fight against approval of the deal by the U.S. congress, which means the labor tops will organize a larger mobilization in Seattle. Sweeney cited the jail-

ing of labor activists in China.

This stance provides cover and rationale for Washington's warlike policy towards China and dovetails with the anticommunism and the America First program of the ultraright. Fundamentally, the U.S. rulers are not cultivating long-term closer ties with Beijing. Rather they are preparing militarily, especially on the nuclear front, for more confrontations. They recognize that the “hidden fist” described by *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman — the U.S. navy, army, and air force — is their only sure road to overturning the gains of the Chinese revolution.

Instead of promoting trade and other sanctions against Beijing, the labor movement needs to expose and oppose Washington's war preparations. It must stand in unconditional solidarity with the workers state against these threats, in spite of the bureaucratic, Stalinist character of its leadership.

What of “labor rights” in China and the Third World? The labor movement needs to organize solidarity with the struggles organized by the farmers and workers of countries oppressed by imperialism — taking care to sharply differentiate its policy from the self-serving, crocodile tears of the powers that be in Washington and other imperialist citadels. It needs to support demands by many working people in those countries for the cancellation of the Third World debt.

But this is not the approach of the union bureaucracy. At best, they bewail the “White Man's Burden,” looking on these toilers as victims needing the civilizing hand of the imperialist powers to protect them from local despots. They extol the virtues of imperialist democracy.

At worst — and this is much more fundamental to their policy — the AFL-CIO officials depict workers in the Third World as rivals for the jobs that they claim belong to “American” workers. The Teamsters union is conducting a campaign against the NAFTA-provided entry of more truck drivers from Mexico into this country. This is blatant chauvinism! It drives working-people away from the international solidarity they need. At the same time, it opens the workers movement to the conscious enemies of the labor movement like Patrick Buchanan. In recent remarks, the ultrarightist politician praised Teamsters president James Hoffa. The latter, for his part, said Buchanan's “tough trade policies... would protect American workers.”

Buchanan said he's joining “his friend” Hoffa in Seattle, urging his supporters to sport Teamsters jackets and accompany him to “speak to some troops.” The Buchanan brigades are attracting cadre for what will become fascist, antilabor street gangs.

These are the kinds of political questions the socialist propaganda teams will address in Seattle in the next two weeks. As the socialists raise the banner of international solidarity and revolutionary struggle, they will find individuals and groups of young people — especially those being politicized by experiences along the natural lines of resistance of the working class — who have strayed into these actions, who have been sucked toward this nationalist campaign looking for an answer to the evils of capitalism. The YS and SWP members will work to peel off these individuals from the morass of America Firstism and into joining the communist movement.

# No more bombs in Vieques

**Continued from front page**  
for Puerto Rico's sovereignty and independence from U.S. control is in the interests of working people in the United States and all the world.

The White House suggestion that the Navy will relocate within five years if it finds a suitable alternative to Vieques is a response to the upsurge of protests in Puerto Rico and among Puerto Ricans in the United States. It's also a delaying tactic. Washington will never voluntarily comply with the will of the majority. It will take a huge fight to force out the U.S. warmakers.

The big-business media talks about a “consensus” in Puerto Rico against the U.S. Navy in Vieques. In reality, there is a class-divided response. Workers and fishermen have been at the forefront of the growing anticolonial upsurge on the island.

The colonial government and its two parties, which represent the wealthy classes, have jumped on the Vieques bandwagon only to avoid being discredited. But they are terrified at the prospect of cutting the umbilical cord to their masters in Washington. That's why they are maneuvering to under-

cut any independent mass mobilizations against the U.S. government.

Today, under the impact of these deep-going developments, there is a rising ferment of political activity among Puerto Rican youth in the United States. They are organizing campus forums, debates, and protest actions — from New York to Boston, Chicago, and San Francisco. Meanwhile, fishermen, student organizations and others on the island are reaching out for support in the United States.

There have never been better conditions for working people and youth in the United States to forge ties with fellow fighters in Puerto Rico and join in struggle against our common enemy — the U.S. government and the billionaire families it represents.

Politically active youth, drawn to the power of the working class, will welcome the opportunity to meet working-class fighters such as the Teamsters who are on strike to organize a union at Overnite Transport and the coal miners battling to defend lifetime health benefits. Likewise, fighting unionists should be urged to join the new round of “U.S. Navy out of Vieques” protests that will be launched in many cities starting November 19.

# ‘Free Tibet’ campaign fits Washington's war moves vs. China

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

In a letter to the editor this week, Jan Lyden objects to the “negative reference to the Free Tibet Movement” in the article “Anti-WTO protests are opposite of labor solidarity,” which was published in the November 15 *Militant*. “There are a lot of students around the country who have been involved in ‘Free Tibet,’ and I've never met anyone who was an anticommunist or who wanted to ‘bring back feudalism’,” Lyden writes.

The article in question reported that the Tibetan Rights Campaign is “demanding that China not be allowed to join the WTO,” and commented that this “position

dovetails with Washington's drive to weaken and militarily surround the Chinese workers state.”

The U.S. rulers are increasingly assuming a belli-

cose stance toward China. U.S. president William Clinton has given the green light to the development, and possible deployment before he is out of office, of a missile system that in theory can shoot enemy rockets out of the sky, giving Washington a nuclear first-strike capacity.

The campaign to deploy such a Theater Missile Defense system on the soil of U.S. allies surrounding China shows that this drive for nuclear superiority is very much aimed at Beijing. The discussion on the U.S.-China trade deal signed in Beijing November 15 provides a glimpse of the imperialists' drive to force a “transition to an open, market economy” in China, as the November 16 *New York Times* put it. (See front-page article and editorial on this page)

Washington's “China policy” has been framed by hostility to the Chinese revolution since the triumph of the Peoples Liberation Army over the imperialist-backed forces of Chiang Kai-shek in 1949. In the 1950s the revolution made deeper and deeper inroads into capitalist property relations and domination by the “great powers” of western Europe and North America.

By the mid-1950s the main means of production had been nationalized and a state monopoly on foreign trade and planned economy had been established — the foundations of a workers state. Humanity had taken an enormous step forward.

Millions of peasants and workers in the world's most populous country had seized the prize that Washington thought it had won when it crushed Japanese imperialism. In the years that followed, the U.S. rulers debated “Who lost China?,” as Socialist Workers Party national secretary Jack Barnes put it in one of the speeches in *Capitalism's World Disorder* (see front-page ad). “But it was the wrong question. No one lost China. The Chinese took it — that was the real answer.”

Washington has used the “Free Tibet” campaign as a tool against that revolution for the last 50 years. In 1949, the victorious revolutionary troops occupied Tibet — historically a separate nation but ruled by Chinese emperors for several centuries — and confronted a backward, feudal regime.

The aristocracy in Tibet was organized around Buddhist monasteries. Monks formed the armies that fought out internecine wars over hundreds of years. The system was not wanting in feudal brutality towards the impoverished and rightless peasantry. One monastery near the capital Lhasa owned estates with some 25,000 serfs.

From at least 1953, the CIA organized a covert program backing Tibetan troops against the Peoples Liberation Army. The defeat of these rebellions in Tibet represented a setback for imperialism and the backward forces in Tibet and a victory for the Chinese revolution.

These progressive steps were distorted, and their moral authority marred, by the Stalinist character and anti-working-class course of the Chinese Communist Party. The brutal methods employed by Beijing in Tibet and across China have given the imperialists a handle for their propaganda campaigns against the revolution, and their completely fraudulent concern for “human rights” and the rights of national groupings.

Capitalist politicians in Europe, Japan, and North America lionize the Dalai Lama, the head of the best-known Tibetan Buddhist sect, when it suits their propaganda thrusts against Beijing. The remnants of the feudal aristocracy who the Dalai Lama personifies have allied themselves with the imperialist powers in their propaganda, economic, and military campaigns against China.

Washington and the other imperialist powers do not seek to “bring back feudalism,” however. The *Militant* article I wrote gave the wrong impression on that score, stating that the “‘free Tibet’ advocated by liberal forces will be a return to that oppressed [feudal] condition.”

The U.S. rulers and their counterparts aim to restore, not feudalism, but capitalist social relations and imperialist domination throughout China, Tibet included. That would mean overturning the gains of the revolution and subjugating China to the interests of foreign capital. Their vision is not a “Free Tibet,” but a “free” — that is, capitalist — market, and a political system that allows free imperialist super-exploitation.

## ‘Free Tibet’ actions serve as bludgeon for U.S. imperialism

What of the campaign that Jan Lyden and others like her are involved in? Many are drawn into an essentially reactionary enterprise in spite of whatever progressive intentions they may have. The material produced by Students for a Free Tibet is typical. In one article they criticize “foreign governments, under pressure from corporations” for placing “decreased value on the treatment of human life in China, Tibet, as well as the other countries that China illegally occupies.”

The article goes on: “The question becomes, do you want to support a regime that imports AK-47s to US gangs, forcibly sterilizes Tibetan women, tortures monks and nuns, sells nuclear weapons technologies to terrorist countries, massacres student activists, allows no freedom of press and engages in the systematic genocide of Tibetans and Tibetan culture?” Mixed in with references to real crimes of the Stalinist regime are charges that even some capitalist opponents of the Chinese revolution might find a little too implausible to express.

The Dalai Lama also accuses Beijing of “cultural genocide,” a typically emotional claim that in fact refers to the settlement of areas in Tibet with many people from the rest of China.

As the *Militant* has explained, trade union officials and groups on the petty-bourgeois left organizing the anti-WTO protests, including the “Tibetan Rights Campaign,” provide ammunition to the trade and foreign policy of U.S. imperialism and make working people more susceptible to the demagoguery of incipient fascist forces. The Tibet protests take aim at a workers state under deepening economic and military pressure from Washington.

Calling for China to be excluded from the WTO, for example, simply echoes the

Continued on Page 12



# Train drivers in Sweden resist bosses' cutbacks

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

We invite you to contribute short items to this column as a way for other fighting workers

conditions," one driver explained. "And if the contract is canceled by the company, we won't be under the no-strike clause. That means we can wage a different kind of fight."

It is illegal to strike in Sweden while a signed contract is in effect. Unions who break this "peace



Workers at Transport Canada celebrate winning back pay from equity fight that forced government of Canada to provide monetary compensation to women who were segregated into low-paying jobs.

## ON THE PICKET LINE

around the world to read about and learn from these important struggles. Jot down a few lines about what is happening in your union, at your workplace, or other workplaces in your area, including interesting political discussions.

STOCKHOLM, Sweden—Eighty train drivers called in sick October 27 and 28, cutting commuter train traffic by more than half in Stockholm and stopping most long distance trains to Gothenburg and Dalicurlia.

The commuter trains will be taken over by Citypendeln, a private company, January 6. As part of the takeover, the company is renegotiating all of the union contracts and demanding heavy concessions.

Workers interviewed on October 30 and November 10 explained why so many had called in sick. "Because we are security classified personnel we retire at 60 today. Citypendeln wants to raise our retirement age to 65. We will also lose money we have already paid, so our pensions will be lower," said one of the drivers getting off his shift in the evening. "They want to cut our vacation to the 25 days a year stipulated by law. Personally I would lose 10 days. Our contract now gives us extra days depending on how old we are. At 45 we reach the maximum of 35 days a year."

The weekly hours will also increase. Drivers say the current average week of 37.2 hours would rise to 38-40 hours. "All this, of course, for the same wages," the worker noted.

Since the sick-out, the present contract has been extended at least until March. Unless either the company or the unions cancel the contract it will remain valid. "This is all we want, we want our present

clause" can be heavily fined. That is why the drivers resorted to a sick-out in their fight against the proposed new contract, and why none of the drivers wanted to be quoted by name.

"When you consider how hard it is for us to meet and discuss, or go to union meetings, because we work different hours, it was a very effective protest," said one driver. "We drive 250,000 passengers on the commuter trains every day, so a lot of people now know about our situation."

In offering to take over trains and buses, private companies have competed to present the lowest bid, then demanded concessions from workers. Service is also affected.

Some 16,000 bus drivers waged a successful national nine-day strike earlier this year to take back some cuts they had suffered when the buses were privatized in 1993.

The train drivers also protest not being able to mix driving long distance and commuter trains as they do today.

"By January 5 we will have to decide which company to belong to, the state railroad company (SJ) or Citypendeln. Many drivers are considering staying with SJ. If we are laid off, it will be under the better conditions we have now," a driver explained. "They tried to make us decide earlier, but at that time we didn't even know what the new contract would be. So they had to postpone it until January 5, the day before Citypendeln takes over. Citypendeln won't know how many drivers they have until the very day their operations start."

### Boston nurses protest working conditions

BOSTON—Some 75 nurses and their supporters picketed the Massachusetts Board of Registration in

Nursing (BORN) November 10. Protesters carried signs that demanded, "BORN Must Reopen Charges Filed By Barry Adams" and "Nurse Administrators Have Responsibilities to Patients Too."

On November 11 BORN was to decide whether to pursue a complaint filed by Barry Adams against his former boss. In 1996 Adams was illegally fired for blowing the whistle on deplorable staffing conditions that led to a patient's death and harm to other patients at Youville Health Care of Cambridge.

He filed a complaint of unethical conduct, unprofessional conduct, and patient neglect against his nurse administrator. At that time BORN dismissed the complaint without investigating. In 1998 Adams refiled the complaint.

The picket line was organized by a committee in the Massachusetts Nursing Association (MNA).

"Maryland RNs for Barry Adams" read the sign carried by Gera Urick, a nurse from Union Memorial Hospital in Baltimore. Urick said she and a fellow nurse came to the demonstration because, "If you're isolated you can't make any headway, the company knows that." Nurses at Union Memorial Hospital are not organized in a union.

Members of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 285, which represents some of the health-care workers at Boston Medical Center (BMC), passed out a flyer at the protest asking for help from the nurses of the MNA.

The flyer read, "We are currently engaged in negotiations for a contract at BMC. The Harrison Ave. campus of BMC is experiencing some of the worst staffing in its history, and we are fighting to improve it." The flyer continued, if "we don't reach agreement our strike will commence on Monday, November 22. Please do not accept work at BMC Harrison Ave. during the strike."

Staffing is also an issue at nearby St. Vincent Hospital in Worcester, Massachusetts. Nurses there are trying to negotiate their first contract after winning union recognition in 1997, and have hailed recent protests.

Tina Gilinson, who has been a nurse for 30 years and is a shop steward in the MNA at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, knows the effect of understaffing first hand. She explained while she walked the picket line, "I'm work-

ing harder today than I ever have before."

During the protest BORN's attorneys met with Adams' attorneys and notified them that they are postponing action on the case until January 4. They also confirmed that they would consider Adams' entire complaint, not the watered down version altered by BORN's staff and rejected by BORN's complaint committee last September.

Commenting on the decision to postpone, Adams said it means patients "will continue to suffer while the government-appointed Board continues to protect the business interests controlling health care."

### Women in Canada win back pay in equity fight

TORONTO—An October 19 Federal Court decision on pay equity has ordered the government of Canada to pay up to Can\$3.6 billion (US\$2.4 billion) in back wages to 230,000 current and former federal government workers who are members of the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) union.

Tina Soares, who has worked at the government offices of Transport Canada for 27 years, announced to the press, "I'm ecstatic... We've been waiting for this money forever."

The fight to win pay-equity was launched by PSAC 16 years ago when it filed a complaint with the federal Human Rights Commission stating that workers in the mainly female clerical group were underpaid in comparison to male administration workers. PSAC charged that the federal government was violating the Canadian Human Rights Act, legislation adopted by the federal government in 1978 that makes it illegal to pay women less than men for work of equal value.

Womens' organizations and trade unions demanded the enactment of this legislation, saying that pay equity laws could reverse wage discrimination against women who are segregated into low-paying jobs that require the same amount of skill and responsibility as higher-paying "male jobs."

The PSAC workers who will receive back-pay checks of up to Can\$60,000 depending on their length of employment include secretaries, clerks, data processors, librarians, and educational and support staff. Judy Greeley, who has

worked for the federal government for 20 years, told the *Toronto Star* that she remembered men doing the same clerical job as her but being classified by the government as laborers so they earned more money.

The Liberal Party government in Ottawa has used all kinds of legal appeals and stalling tactics to avoid paying the back wages.

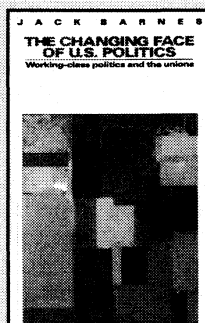
On July 29, 1998, the government was stunned by a Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT) ruling that declared the government owed 200,000 workers, mainly women, 13 years of back pay with interest that totaled Can\$5 billion. Ottawa appealed this decision in Federal Court and lost the appeal, which resulted in the final settlement of Can\$3.6 billion.

Opposed to pay equity laws, Preston Manning, leader of the right-wing populist Reform Party that is the official opposition in parliament in Ottawa, has called on the government to appeal the federal court decision. Manning has attempted to whip up resentment to the government paying the equity settlement by saying, "It's the good old taxpayer that gets stuck with the bill."

Canada's two national daily newspapers have also weighed into the debate in opposition to pay equity. The *National Post* ran an editorial headlined, "Repeal Canada's pay equity laws altogether." The *Globe and Mail* demanded, "Do away with the ludicrous concept of equal pay for work of equal value."

Meanwhile, members of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers union and the Canadian Telephone Employees' Association have just rejected a Can\$59 million pay equity settlement offered by Bell Canada to workers in mostly female jobs, including phone operators and clerical staff. The offer covers 20,000 current and former Bell employees. The union members are fighting for a higher settlement. Hearings before the CHRT to assess their case begin next January.

*Catharina Tirsén, a member of the Metalworkers union, and Anita Östling, a member of the Transportworkers union in Stockholm; Ted Leonard, a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees in Boston; and Rosemary Ray in Toronto contributed to this column.*



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## LETTERS

### Disagree on 'Free Tibet'

I was disappointed to see a negative reference to the "Free Tibet" movement in your November 15 issue (in the article about the WTO protests). There are a lot of students around the country who have been involved in "Free Tibet," and I've never met anyone who was an anti-communist or who wanted to "bring back feudalism," as your article insinuates.

We are simply opposed to the oppression that the Tibetans have suffered, and which is well documented, since the Chinese govern-

ment took over in 1959.

I just saw an article in the newspaper today about several Tibetan nuns having five years added onto their prison terms because they were singing religious songs in prison. (The fact that they were in prison in the first place is bad enough.) Your article said that the "Free Tibet" movement wants to "bring back oppression" to Tibet. Isn't their plenty of oppression under the Chinese government? I was surprised to see your newspaper take this position, because I thought socialists were on the side of free-

dom.

Jan Lyden  
Raleigh, North Carolina

### Nationalism of French CP

The article on France in the November 1, 1999, issue of the *Militant* ("France: '35-hour week,' joblessness spark actions by bosses and workers") contains an editorial error. The official name of the French Communist Party is "Parti communiste français" and its initials are PCF, not just PC. In English, this makes the party's name "French Communist Party" and its

initials would be "FCP." However, the *Militant* editors systematically leave off the word "French" and the "F" from its initials.

The French Communist Party and the leadership of the CGT trade union confederation which they control, no longer pretend to be revolutionary, to represent a "new workers power" in another part of the world. Occasionally members of the PCF will correct someone referring to their party as the "CP" or "Communist Party" by reminding them about the word "French" in its official title. There is a large

discussion in the PCF today about whether or not the party should abandon the reference "Communist." No one as yet has proposed that it abandon the word "French."  
Nat London  
Paris, France

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.

## Moscow intensifies war in Chechnya with tacit support from Washington

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

The Russian government has begun a de facto military occupation of Chechnya — deploying 100,000 troops in and around the republic, with plans to send in more.

Moscow is trying to quell unrest among the impoverished people in the entire Caucasus region with its onslaught against the 1.5 million Chechens.

"The ultimate goal is to send a message to all the North Caucasian republics," declared presidential press spokesman Dmitry Yakushkin. "We want to show that there must be some kind of central authority that can resolve the most complicated conflicts."

Russian soldiers are now occupying the northern third of Chechnya. Moscow has set up a blockade, banned foreign trade and suspended international flights to the region. The regime also forced Georgia to shut its northern border near Chechnya.

The Kremlin, which originally claimed it needed to create a "buffer zone" against "Islamic terrorists," is more openly stating that its aim is to retake the Chechen republic, which won a degree of autonomy after Chechen fighters humiliated the regime of Russian president Boris Yeltsin in the 1994-1996 war.

"The ring of our 'sanitary zone' is tightening up," said Russian general Gennadi Troshev, commander of the military operation. "The ring will be gradually tightened until the whole territory is under the full control of the federal forces."

On November 12 Russian officials announced the army had seized Gudermes, the second largest city in the republic. Moscow has floated plans to establish Gudermes as the new capital as the regime tightened its military ring around Grozny. The day it seized Gudermes, the Kremlin launched one of its heaviest bombardments yet, destroying oil refineries near Grozny, the capital, and leveling other villages. The next day Russian warplanes and helicopters flew a record 180 sorties against the Chechen rebel strongholds of Bamut and Samashki.

The Russian government has rained bombs and artillery fire on Chechnya since late September in an attempt to crush rebel fighters who Moscow claims conducted raids into neighboring Dagestan, to the east of Chechnya. Guerrilla forces fighting for the independence of Dagestan had captured six villages there in early September.

As part of justifying their bombardment of Chechnya, Russian government officials smeared Chechen rebels as "terrorists" who are responsible for the series of explosions in Moscow that killed more than 300 people. No one has claimed responsibility



Russian troops gather in western Chechnya near Baumut, a stronghold of Chechen rebels.

for the blasts.

### Struggle for self-determination

The Yeltsin regime is trying to stanch the rising resistance to Russian chauvinism among the oppressed nations in Caucasus and to crush their fight for self-determination. As the victory of workers and peasants in the October 1917 revolution in Russia gave impulse to uprisings throughout the old tsarist empire, the communist leadership of the Bolshevik Party began to forge a voluntary federation of workers and farmers republics.

The Bolshevik revolution broke the domination of capitalist social relations and led to the expropriation of capitalist property in industry, banking, and wholesale trade. State monopoly of foreign trade and a planned economy were also established — the foundations of a workers state.

In the early 1920s, however, a bureaucratic caste led by Joseph Stalin began to emerge in the Russian workers state and it pressed to reverse the Bolsheviks' policy on national self-determination and voluntary federation. This counterrevolutionary course was intensified and institutionalized in the 1930s and the "Union of Soviet Socialist Republics" became in fact another prison house of nations inherited from the old tsarist regime and imperialism.

The Stalinist apparatus in the Soviet Union and those imposed on the workers states in Eastern and Central Europe reinforced national oppression and divisions, while serving as a reliable instrument for the transmission of capitalist values. The bureaucratic oppression through the use of police repression and military force — which was a service for imperialism — began disintegrating in 1989.

The procapitalist Yeltsin administration is a remnant of this bureaucratic caste of opportunists and assassins, which has now shattered into competing factions. Popular explosions among broad layers of working people, middle class layers, and youth against the regime in Moscow are inevitable.

The political instability in the region has alarmed Washington and other imperialist powers. The U.S. rulers, whose ultimate aim is to reimpose capitalist property relations in Russia, have counted on the Yeltsin government to curtail social unrest in the region. That explains the statement in a November 15 *New York Times* news article that "Washington has said it under-

stands when the Russians insist that they are fighting to protect their sovereignty against terrorists."

### Claim to be fighting terrorism

"The antiterrorist campaign was forced upon us," Russian prime minister Vladimir Putin declared in a column printed in the *Times* the day before. He claimed U.S. spy agencies reported that "the world's most wanted terrorist," Osama bin Laden, "himself is helping to finance the guerrillas."

Putin asserted that Moscow's actions are similar to those of Washington, which accused bin Laden of organizing the Aug. 7, 1998, bombings of the U.S. embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Two weeks later U.S. warships stationed in the Red Sea and the Arabian Sea launched 79 cruise missiles on Afghanistan and Sudan. The White House claimed the missiles were fired in "self-defense" against an "international terrorism network" allegedly organized by bin Laden. Earlier this year, the *New York Times* admitted that "no known evidence implicates" the Saudi businessman.

While the Clinton administration has amplified its mild criticism of Moscow's onslaught slightly, the White House continues to give tacit support to the military operation against the Chechens, as it has in the past. Chechnya is a part of Russia, which "has a right to protect its territorial integrity," U.S. national security adviser Samuel Berger declared November 12.

More than 200,000 Chechens have fled the Russian military's constant rocketing and shelling. Most of them went to the neighboring republic of Ingushetia, where many people are living in tents or rail cars in freezing temperatures. Chechen officials estimate more than 4,000 civilians have been killed by the bombardment.

Moscow's anti-Muslim crusade has embittered the largely Islamic people of Chechnya. "They surround you and want to destroy every thing in sight," said Leche Ansarov, a Chechen resident who fled into Ingushetia but was returning to Grozny to retrieve his family. "What else can I do but take up arms?" he stated.

Russian officials "say they are fighting terrorists, but they are the only terrorists I've seen," Liza Nagalayeva, a schoolteacher from the Chechen town of Kulari, told the *Christian Science Monitor*. "We are a small people but we want our freedom."

Moscow is trying to avoid repeating the defeat of the previous Chechen war — when Russian ground troops took heavy losses from guerrilla attacks — by using long-range artillery, pilotless aircraft, and warplanes to bom-

bard Chechnya. Troops are sent into a village or town only after it has surrendered or is empty.

In 1994 the Yeltsin regime dispatched an invasion force of 30,000 Russian troops to crush the independence movement there. Some 80,000 people were killed, and the city of Grozny and dozens of villages were demolished.

Although Yeltsin was forced to sign accords in 1996 granting Chechnya de facto self-government, Moscow refuses to recognize the region's independence. "Our position is that Chechnya is Russian territory and nothing has changed," said Yeltsin spokesman Dmitry Yakushkin.

### 'Pushed to brink of civil war'

The conflict has heightened tensions among Russia's bureaucratic ruling factions. Russian generals have threatened to disobey any government decision that would deny what they see as an all-out military victory. Gen. Anatoly Kvashnin, chief of the Russian general staff, reportedly declared he would resign when Yeltsin administration officials floated proposals to talk with Chechen president Aslan Maskhadov, according to the newspaper *Moskovsky Komsomlets*.

While Defense Minister Igor Sergeyev hinted that negotiations to end Moscow's military campaign might be near, Gen. Vladimir Shamanov, Russian commander of the western front in Chechnya, told the *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* newspaper, "If the army is stopped, there would be a massive defection of all ranks from the armed forces, including the generals. Russia's officer corps will not stand for another slap in the face." Shamanov said if they could not score a decisive military victory, "the country would be pushed to the brink of civil war."

The ultrarightist provincial governor of Siberia, Alexander Lebed, a retired general who negotiated the agreement that ended the last Chechen war, has indicated his willingness to repeat that performance.

"The Russian armed forces have fulfilled their mission," declared Grigory Yavlinsky, a leader of one of the more openly procapitalist factions in parliament. He called for a halt to the bombing, arguing that the war on Chechnya has resulted in growing strains between the military and government officials and "leads to a serious political destabilization."

One of Yavlinsky's advisers, Andrei Piontkovsky, director of the Center for Strategic Studies, warned that a "creeping military coup" was developing in Russia, the *Financial Times* reported November 10.

Anxiety over the escalating strife in the region has increased among imperialist powers. "The stakes are high," asserted an article in the November 13 *Economist*. "They include not just the suffering of the Chechens but the instability of the Caucasus, and perhaps of Russia itself."

"Moscow has lost its way in this adventure in the north Caucasus," declared French foreign minister Hubert Vedrine. "There is a Chechen problem that goes far beyond the issue of terrorism."

Meanwhile, hostility to Great Russian chauvinism is smoldering in the restive republics in the North Caucasus, which include Dagestan, Chechnya, Ingushetia, North Ossetia, Karabardino-Balkaria, and Karachayevo-Cherkess.

"[Russian] soldiers come out to the road to beg for food and cigarettes from passing cars," said an Ingush policeman at a checkpoint. "But if we try to approach them, they crouch down and raise their guns. They're scared to death of us."

Moscow's attempts to subjugate the mostly Islamic peoples of the North Caucasus "means endless war and dissension," asserted Franz Sheregi, an official with the Institute of Social and National Issues in Moscow. "This is a colonial war, and it will end with the republics in the North Caucasus breaking free from Russia."

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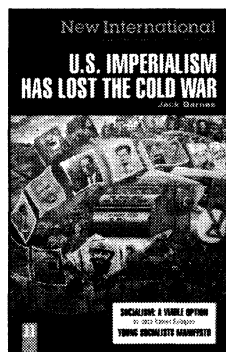
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