

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Socialists launch 2000 election campaign fund

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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Thousands protest cop killing of Dorismond

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

NEW YORK—Thousands of working people and youth took to the streets of this city to express their growing anger over the killing by the cops of Patrick Dorismond and several other unarmed Black youth over the past few months.

Heeding the call of Dorismond's relatives, some 10,000 people joined a funeral procession through the streets of Brooklyn March 25 for Dorismond, a 26-year-old Black youth gunned down nine days earlier by a plainclothes city cop after he rebuffed the policeman's request to buy some marijuana from him.

Demonstrators waved a sea of Haitian flags and chanted in English and Creole "No justice, no peace" as they marched more than three miles along Flatbush Avenue. As the marchers approached Holy Cross church, where a mass was to be held, they were halted by metal police barricades set up in the middle of the street and a massive provocative presence of cops in the area. Scuffles ensued throughout the day in which 23 police officers were injured and 27 protesters arrested.

This protest is "a long overdue demonstration of force," stated Hubert Mompoint, a Haitian immigrant. "They have thousands of police officers," he continued, who were there "more to provoke."

The evening before, about 2,000 people packed a funeral home, overflowing onto the streets to pay their respects to Patrick Dorismond and demand that the cops involved in killing him be brought to justice.

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Sales drive begins at workers' actions

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Supporters of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* launched a drive to win new readers March 25, selling 12 *Militant* subscriptions and more than 100 papers to participants at the labor solidarity action in Mansfield, Ohio. "One person who bought a subscription was one of 20 workers from Steelworker locals in the Bay City, Michigan," said Chris Hoeppner, a meat packer in Detroit.

Hoeppner said he hopped on one of two buses from Detroit sponsored by the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) that brought unionists to support the locked-out workers at the AK Steel rolling mill. The USWA organized buses from Michigan, Illinois, and Indiana to bring unionists to the event.

Hoeppner is a partisan of the international campaign to sell 1,100 subscriptions to the *Militant*, 300 subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial*, and 450 copies of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist*. Supporters of the *Militant* in Detroit are off to a good start in the drive to win new readers to the socialist press, selling five subscriptions in the

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Rally of 4,000 backs steelworkers in Ohio



Militant/John Sarge

Locked-out AK Steel union fighters and their supporters, who came from several states, march through downtown Mansfield.

BY TONY PRINCE

MANSFIELD, Ohio—Steelworkers and their supporters in one of the largest solidarity actions in years organized an impressive show of strength here to back union members locked out by AK Steel Corp.

Some 4,000 people filled the town square

March 25 in a serious, upbeat, and determined action. Buses of unionists came to the rally from Michigan, Indiana, Chicago, and Missouri. Workers wearing steelworker jackets from cities all over Ohio and other midwestern states were present.

The lockout, now in its seventh month, is

taking a toll on both sides. AK Steel's profits were down by \$17 million in the fourth quarter of 1999 and another \$10 million to \$12 million in the first quarter of 2000. Its stock closed at \$21.12 on September 1, when the lockout began; in the first week

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Flight attendants stood strong in fight

BY REBECCA ARENSEN AND NANCY COLE

PHILADELPHIA—"The company underestimated us every step of the way. So many threats were put in our face, but we stood strong and called their bluff," said Philadelphia-based USAirways flight attendant Tom Sauers.

Forced into marathon negotiations by the resolve of 10,000 flight attendants at US Airways, a tentative agreement was announced at 3:30 a.m. on March 25, averting job actions promised by the Association of Flight Attendants (AFA) or a total airline shutdown threatened by the company.

While few details are yet available on the proposed contract—and flight attendants stress they will have to read and evaluate the agreement before voting to ratify—US Airways Chairman Stephen Wolf and CEO Rakesh Gangwal were forced to back off from their insistence that nothing short of complete acceptance of "parity plus 1 percent" with the company's four main competitors would fly. The flight attendants argued that the pay parity formula would lead to pay cuts, with estimates beginning at 4.9 percent.

The proposed contract terms reportedly include an 11 percent pay increase over five years of the pact, a 5 percent signing bonus, pension improvements, three paid holidays, and a commitment to apply federally-mandated family leave to flight attendants, which the company currently avoids by counting only flight hours in determining

whether workers are full-time.

In 30 cities across the country, the AFA organized actions on March 24 leading up to the expiration of the 30-day "cooling-off" period mandated by the Railway Labor Act.

The AFA said if no agreement had been struck, they would begin job actions named CHAOS, Create Havoc Around Our System. In response the bosses threatened to shut the

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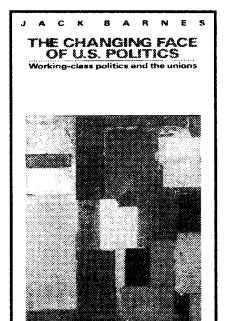
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Meeting celebrates life of Donald Peterson — page 6

Protesters in Britain say stop bombing Iraq

BY JASON TRAVIS

MANCHESTER, England—Around 85 workers and youth demonstrated at media institutions March 18, demanding an immediate end to the sanctions and bombing of Iraq. They also called on the British state broadcasting service, the BBC, to break the media campaign of lies and cover the war against the peoples of Iraq.

Protesters, including members of the National Union of Journalists, surrounded the BBC building and demanded to speak to a management representative and a union convenor. Despite a BBC worker going in to negotiate, management refused both requests point-blank and locked the doors. The BBC worker then came out and joined the rally and march.

The demonstration, called by Iraqi community groups and the Oldham division of the National Union of Teachers, was comprised mainly of local workers, including a few from the BBC and local newspapers. Young people present included a contingent of militant and vocal Iraqi women. The action was addressed by local Iraqis, representatives from the National Union of Journalists, the Fire Brigades Union, the National Union of Teachers, a Gulf War veteran, and Audrey Wise, Labour Member of Parliament for Preston and a member of the Campaign Group of MPs who have spoken out against the war policies of Prime Minister Anthony Blair.

Bob Pounder, the regional secretary of the Fire Brigades Union in Greater Manchester, explained that the union decided to support the sovereignty of the Iraqi people against the bombings and sanctions. He viewed this as an act of solidarity within the international working class. He also told how the Fire Brigades Union had recently defended through strike action fire workers' right to negotiate nationally rather than have pay and conditions decided in local agreements. "We were told by many that we would be fighting against the government and could not win," Pounder said. "But we didn't listen and we won!"

An Iraqi youth explained the importance of opposing all sanctions against Iraq and resisting attempts by the imperialists to divide the movement into those who only want to oppose some "nonmilitary" sanctions.

Also speaking was Ray Bristow, the first Gulf War veteran from the United Kingdom to be officially diagnosed as suffering from



A family goes through the ruins of their house in al-Jumhuriya, outside Basra, Jan. 25, 1999, after a U.S. missile hit a residential area killing civilians in Iraq.

depleted uranium poisoning and Gulf War Syndrome. More than 500 other veterans in the war from the UK have died since 1991 from "mysterious illnesses" or "unknown causes," he said. The government has repeat-

edly denied the Gulf War veterans' request for a public inquiry into the situation.

Bristow said in an interview that his experiences over the last 10 years "has completely transformed my political perspective

right across the whole spectrum. I now believe that the elected government has no real power but just dangles on the end of Big Business. The whole reason for going to war on Iraq in the first place was to protect the price of a barrel of oil. Yet they'll make up anything to prevent people from realizing it. We've had a lot of media interest in our cause, programs have been made, only to be pulled at the last minute because the Ministry of Defense has objected."

After one and a half hours outside the BBC, 50 people from the rally marched through the streets. Passersby stopped to listen, many shouted out support, and some joined the march. Drivers were asked to hoot their horns in support, which many did to general applause. The rally ended with a demonstration outside the offices of *The Guardian*, a UK paper that pretends to be left wing or liberal but supported the Gulf War and the bombing in the Balkans and rarely ever mentions the current war against Iraq.

All in all, the demonstration was militant and confident. More demonstrations and rallies are planned around the country with trade union support to culminate in a national action in London later this year.

Jason Travis is a school teacher in Oldham, Greater Manchester, England, and a member of the National Union of Teachers.

Illinois farmers decry factory hog production

BY CAPPY KIDD
AND CLAUDIA HOMMEL

STREATOR, Illinois—More than 100 participants, many of whom are working farmers, met here for a conference entitled, "The Farm Crisis. How it affects rural communities, food safety and you."

Organized by We the People, Inc., a farmer-based organization of LaSalle county, and the Illinois Stewardship Alliance, an advocacy group for rural communities, the March 18 conference focused on the crisis caused by factory-style livestock production known as Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs).

Speakers at the conference were working farmers and academicians who discussed the negative impact of CAFOs on family farmers, community health, food

safety, the environment, and society at large. Pam Hansen, a certified livestock manager and grassroots organizer of the Illinois Stewardship Alliance, moderated the lively discussion.

Jim Braun, a working hog farmer from Iowa, spoke of the economic ruin of family farms and the net job loss in the countryside. "Welcome to free market capitalism," he said. "We are being told that we have to get bigger to survive to take advantage of scale. Even if our farms grew to encompass the entire county, we would still have to deal with the same monopolies that drove our neighbors under."

Bill Weida, a professor, described how the mega-hog producers export the true costs of production and waste management onto the communities. Wastes produced by a 10,000-head hog farm is the equivalent of a town that size operating without a treated sewage system. "Then, after 10 or 12 years, they have to abandon the site because of disease and they move on, leaving the community with the mess," Weida said.

Grain farmer Karen Hudson, who is president of Families Against Rural Messes (F.A.R.M.), spoke about the hazards for the neighboring communities, and the fight to tell the truth about the impact of CAFOs on those "living downwind." They suffer from illnesses, including nausea, vomiting, and blackouts; erosion of property values; and contamination and depletion of local water sources.

"The Environmental Protection Agency

and the U.S. Department of Agriculture," she said, "have taken some steps to address water quality concerns, but they have failed to call for a moratorium on the construction of new factory farms or to make the corporations responsible for waste."

Kendall Thu, an anthropologist and author of *Pigs, Profits and Rural Communities*, referred to studies, including his own, that provide evidence showing that pathogens are migrating outside the lagoons that contain tons of pig manure. The contaminants hazardous to human health such as E coli, Enterococcus, Salmonella, and Cryptosporidium are entering the surrounding water tables.

The liquid environment of the lagoons is allowing the pathogens to survive, and because of the high level of antibiotics fed to the animals, there's been an emergence of "heartier" bacteria. "All is not well in large-scale pig land," he said.

John Ikerd, an agricultural economist from the University of Missouri in Columbia, said that his "number one concern is that large-scale, corporate hog operations are tomorrow's problem disguised as today's solution. They only make short-run economic sense for those investing in them, a few in the region who will profit, and those in town halls who welcome them. The future is in the people of these areas taking charge of the situation and determining what they want to do."

Cappy Kidd is a member of the United Auto Workers in Chicago.

THE MILITANT

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Behind U.S. rulers' anti-OPEC campaign

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The sharp rise in fuel prices over the past several months has sparked protest actions around the country by truckers demanding immediate relief from their skyrocketing fuel bills. It has also led to a stepped-up campaign by the wealthy U.S. rulers to scapegoat the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) for this crisis.

The U.S. rulers, who have a long-term aim of breaking up OPEC, have seized on the latest round of energy price explosions to mount a campaign of slanders and threats against this organization. The House of Representatives, in a 382-to-38 vote March 22, urged President William Clinton to cut U.S. economic and military aid to OPEC-member countries if they do not heed Washington's demand for increased oil production.

The Federal Trade Commission is reviewing court rulings to see if they can charge OPEC with violating U.S. antitrust laws. The House judiciary committee announced plans to hold hearings on this at the end of March.

Ultrarightist Patrick Buchanan, who is seeking the presidential nomination on the Reform Party ticket, blamed the 14 percent drop in the stock market this year on "a global conspiracy by the OPEC cartel to loot the American nation." He called for "smash[ing] the price-fixing conspiracy called OPEC."

U.S. oil giants

A closer look at the facts, however, shows that it's the giant U.S. oil monopolies, led by Exxon Mobil, Chevron, and Texaco, as well as British Petroleum Amoco and Royal Dutch/Shell, who use their monopoly of the vast majority of oil production, refining, and distribution to have the biggest impact on prices. In March 1998 the price of oil sunk to a 50-year low of \$10 a barrel because of a worldwide oil glut made worse by the collapse of the economies in 1997 of the so-called "Asian tigers" in Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, and south Korea.

In response, the 11-member nations of OPEC—Saudi Arabia, Iran, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Iraq, Libya, Algeria, Venezuela, Nigeria, and Indonesia—agreed to a series of production cuts adding up to about 5 million barrels a day in an effort to raise the rock-bottom oil prices. Mexico, the world's fifth-largest oil producer, agreed to cut its output as well. The country is not an OPEC member.

Initially the cuts, which were adopted at OPEC's semiannual meetings beginning in 1998, had virtually no impact as oil prices continued to slip further. Then in March 1999, Norway, a non-OPEC producer and the second-biggest oil exporter after Saudi Arabia, decided to also cut its production. Russia and Oman followed suit. This, combined with OPEC's decision that month to further trim output by 2.1 million barrels a day, led to a rapid rise in oil prices, reaching more than \$34 a barrel a year later." Oil producing nations, their solidarity in tatters as recently as 1997, have engineered a period of strategic harmony unseen since the Arab oil embargo of 1973," bemoaned an article in the February 21 *New York Times*.

Quoting an unnamed Saudi official, a feature article in the *Wall Street Journal* March 27 pointed out, "Only a year ago independent U.S. oil-production companies alleged that Saudi Arabia and other foreign producers were dumping cheap oil. 'Now the Americans want to penalize us for gouging,'" the official said.

Facts on price hike

Today, fuel prices are at a 20-year high, natural gas has risen by 30 percent, and home heating oil is up 133 percent over the first five weeks of the year. As an article in the *Christian Science Monitor* succinctly pointed out, "No one expected that a 5.5 percent [OPEC production] cut would spark a 300 percent price rise."

Some 44 percent of U.S. crude oil—about 6 million barrels a day—is domestically produced, and 56 percent is imported. Half of these imports are from countries that are not members of OPEC. Washington has been shifting more of its oil imports away from the Mideast and towards Latin America, where its close proximity and decades of economic domination have given the U.S. rulers more firm control over it.

As part of its 1995 "bailout" agreement of the Mexican peso, for example, Washington wrested an agreement from the gov-



Convoy of more than 200 truckers drove into Washington February 22 for a rally at the Capitol. Government officials are trying to blame OPEC for fuel price increase.

ernment there that all export revenue from the state-owned oil company, Pemex, would be deposited in an account at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York until 1997 when the country paid back to the U.S. Treasury a \$50 billion loan, along with \$580 million in interest.

From 1990 to 1997 oil imports from both Venezuela and Mexico nearly doubled to close to 500 million barrels a year from each country. This compares to 591 million barrels imported in 1997 from all the OPEC-member countries in the Arab-Persian Gulf.

Profit boon for U.S. companies

The soaring gas prices are a boon to the profit margins of these oil company giants—Exxon Mobil, Texaco, and Chevron—who run most refinery operations. "Don't blame this month's soaring gas prices on higher crude-oil costs," commented a March 25 article in the *Orange County Register* in California, where gas prices are among the highest in the nation. "Most of the extra money drivers paid at the pump went to oil refineries, state records show."

California-based refineries since early January have nearly tripled the amount they charge for manufacturing costs and profit. That share jumped from 24 cents per gallon in early January to 66 cents at the end of March. At the same time crude-oil costs rose just 8 cents a gallon. "At the price being paid at the pump, taxes account for 49 cents per gallon. Crude oil accounts for 66 cents. The rest is the oil refiner's cost and profits," states the *Register*.

For 1999, profits at British Petroleum Amoco—the world's second-largest oil company—rose 40 percent over the previous year, to \$6.2 billion.

Though prices are at record high levels, the big oil companies are not plowing their money back into exploration and production. "This is probably the longest sustained dramatic upturn in price not followed by a dramatic upturn in investment," commented Joseph Stanislaw, president of Cambridge Energy Research Associates.

Instead, these oil giants are seeking to merge with their competitors in order to

further tighten their monopoly control over all aspects of oil production while implementing various cost-cutting measures aimed at rights of labor. Last year Exxon and Mobil carried out an \$82 billion megamerger, creating the second-largest U.S. corporation in terms of total sales and the largest publicly traded oil company in the world. Recently, Royal Dutch/Shell and Texaco agreed to cooperate in a refining and marketing joint venture.

Eighteen months ago British Petroleum merged with Amoco. Now, it's seeking a \$27 billion deal to buy out the U.S. Atlantic Richfield Co. If this deal goes through it would give this oil conglomerate control more than 70 percent of Alaska's North Slope oil field, the largest in the United States.

Asserting right to control oil wealth

OPEC was formed in 1960 as part of the nationalist upsurge throughout the semicolonial world that asserted greater national sovereignty and control over natural resources. The governments in these countries sought to retain a share of the tremendous wealth being pumped out of their lands by U.S., British, and other imperialist powers. Washington despises any steps by the peoples of these former colonies towards controlling their own resources. The U.S. rulers use their economic power and influence in financial markets to undercut this example.

While OPEC did have an impact in getting for its member countries a greater share of the oil wealth, the organization has not been able to dictate world market prices nor dominate world supply and demand for this raw material.

The imperialist system thrives on the inherently unequal terms of trade it maintains with its former colonies in the Third World. What they lost in one area such as oil, the imperialists recoup in others. For example, the ruling rich import from these raw materials at cheap prices and sell back at monopoly prices finished manufactured products, agricultural products, and expensive military hardware.

School custodians march for wages, health care

BY HARVEY McARTHUR

CHICAGO— "Privatization just means the same work for less money," said Edward Little as he and 150 other public school custodians and supporters rallied in downtown Chicago March 12.

The march was called by Service Employees International Union Local 46, which represents 1,500 custodians who work in the Chicago public schools but are employed by private contractors. The union is demanding the Board of Education rebid all custodial contracts to allow for better wages and continued health coverage for the workers' families.

Little said he made \$11.85 per hour before 1996, when the Board of Education first contracted out custodial work. Little was one who kept on working, but his wage dropped to \$7.25 per hour. Today, most of the con-

tract custodians make around \$8.50 per hour. In addition, the union warns that the contractors are preparing to eliminate health-care coverage for dependents of the workers.

SEIU members voted to authorize a strike in December 1999, though the union is still trying to negotiate a settlement. The March 12 rally was called to coincide with the AFL-CIO Working Women's Conference held here March 11–12. About a dozen conference participants joined the demonstration as the custodians made their way chanting and rallying through downtown Chicago to the Board of Education headquarters.

Harvey McArthur is a meat packer and member of United Food and Commercial Workers, Local 100.

Wealth is also siphoned out of these semicolonial nations through interest payments on the huge debts owed to banks in the imperialist centers. In the case of Iraq, the military assault by Washington in the early 1990s and the ongoing economic embargo has devastated this oil-rich country, which had been one of the most industrialized nations in the Arab world.

Since the massive upsurge by workers and peasants overthrew the shah of Iran in a revolution in 1979, the U.S. rulers have conducted a military and economic campaign against Iran, the world's third-biggest oil exporter. Washington bankrolled an eight-year war by the government of Iraq against Iran in the 1980s, and they've maintained a 20-year embargo on most goods produced in the country.

Venezuela, another OPEC member, lies economically devastated with high unemployment, declining social services, and additional disaster for tens of thousands following recent torrential rains.

The Arabian oil kingdoms—Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates—with their reactionary social structure and semifeudal foundations were set up and are maintained in power by Washington. The U.S. government maintains some 1,600 U.S. troops inside Saudi Arabia. That government had to fork over to the U.S. imperialists nearly \$17 billion to cover the costs of Washington's war against Iraq. Another 20,000 U.S. troops remain in Kuwait.

Washington will continue to use its power in the region to reassert greater control over the organization of world oil markets, and bolster its competitive standing against other imperialist powers, over which it continues to have quite an edge in use of the oil weapon. Washington in 1997 imported 20 percent of its oil from the Arab-Persian Gulf, compared to some 35 percent by Germany and 70 percent by Japan in the early 1990s.

While coming into conflict with imperialism, OPEC member nations are themselves class divided, each with a developed capitalist class that seeks to look out for its own interests and fears most of all the working class in its own country. In each of these countries—from Iran and Iraq, with large and industrialized workforces, to Saudi Arabia, with its "guest" workers—class conflicts are a potentially explosive ingredient.

Workers in Finland end strike with better pay and conditions

After a week-long nationwide strike, 5,000 chemical and energy workers in Finland approved a new contract.

The workers, members of the union Kemianliitto, accepted a three-year contract that covers some 15,000 workers in the oil, gas, chemical, and pharmaceutical industries.

International solidarity played a role in putting pressure on the bosses to give in to the union's demands. Kemianliitto's sister union in Sweden, Industrifacket, had pledged to restrict trade in industrial chemicals and gases between Sweden and Finland, a move that would have paralyzed the paper mills and metal plants.

The chemical and energy workers also received solidarity from the Finnish Transport Workers' Union and the Seafarers' Union.

The union won a wage increase of nearly 4 percent, which covers 90 percent of the workers in oil, gas, and chemical industries in Finland. It is the highest pay hike won by a union in the country so far this year. Working time will decrease by eight hours annually with no loss in pay. Improvements in sick pay and more control over farming out jobs were other advances.

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YS in Canada supports locked-out workers

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 Young Socialists, call (718) 398-7852, or send an e-mail to: young_socialists@hotmail.com

BY BEN POBJOY
AND GABRIEL CHARBIN

TORONTO—The Young Socialists here visited locked-out workers at Superior Propane March 12.

Two workers were on the picket line the morning we arrived. We introduced ourselves as members of the Young Socialists and engaged in discussion with the Superior Propane drivers about their fight. As of last November the workers have become members of the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW). They explained that this is their first contract fight.

One reason workers are upset is because of safety. In the last 18 months 17 workers have been injured in the plant. The two workers said that the day before the February 19 contract negotiation deadline, they arrived at work to find locks on the gates

and hired security guards standing by.

We also discussed the fight of North American truckers who are currently protesting the increase in gas prices. The truckers in Canada have recently established their own organization called the National Truckers Association.

The two workers each bought a copy of the *Militant* and told us to return the following day when there would be more workers on the picket line. There were approximately 25 workers present the next morning. One of them, who we had met the previous day, introduced us to fellow co-workers. We introduced the *Militant* and two of the unionists bought a copy.

We learned that workers had mass pickets March 10 outside the Whitby and Guelph, Ontario Superior Propane plants. CAW members from the Ford plant in Oakville, in solidarity with the propane workers, were able to help shut down the two branches for the day.

Untrained replacement workers have been hired during the lockout. Workers said that the use of replacement workers endangers public safety. The workers emphasized that above all, this was a fight for dignity.

Ben Pobjoy and Gabriel Charbin are high school students and members of the Young Socialists.

YS kicks off fund drive

BY JASON ALESSIO

NEW YORK—On March 15 the Young Socialists kicked off a spring fund drive that is set to raise \$7,000 by June 1. Most chapters have set their goals and are making plans to raise funds on a weekly basis (see chart).

Chapters and members at-large will raise the money through the political work they are doing on their campuses or at their work sites.

On Sunday, March 26, members of the YS from Birmingham, Chicago, Twin Cities, and Detroit organized a fund-raiser in Chicago at the reportback from the Havana Book Fair. The YS members there raised \$579 by organizing a used political book sale and having a raffle at the event.

The political books were sold for \$1 each. The main objective was to get the history

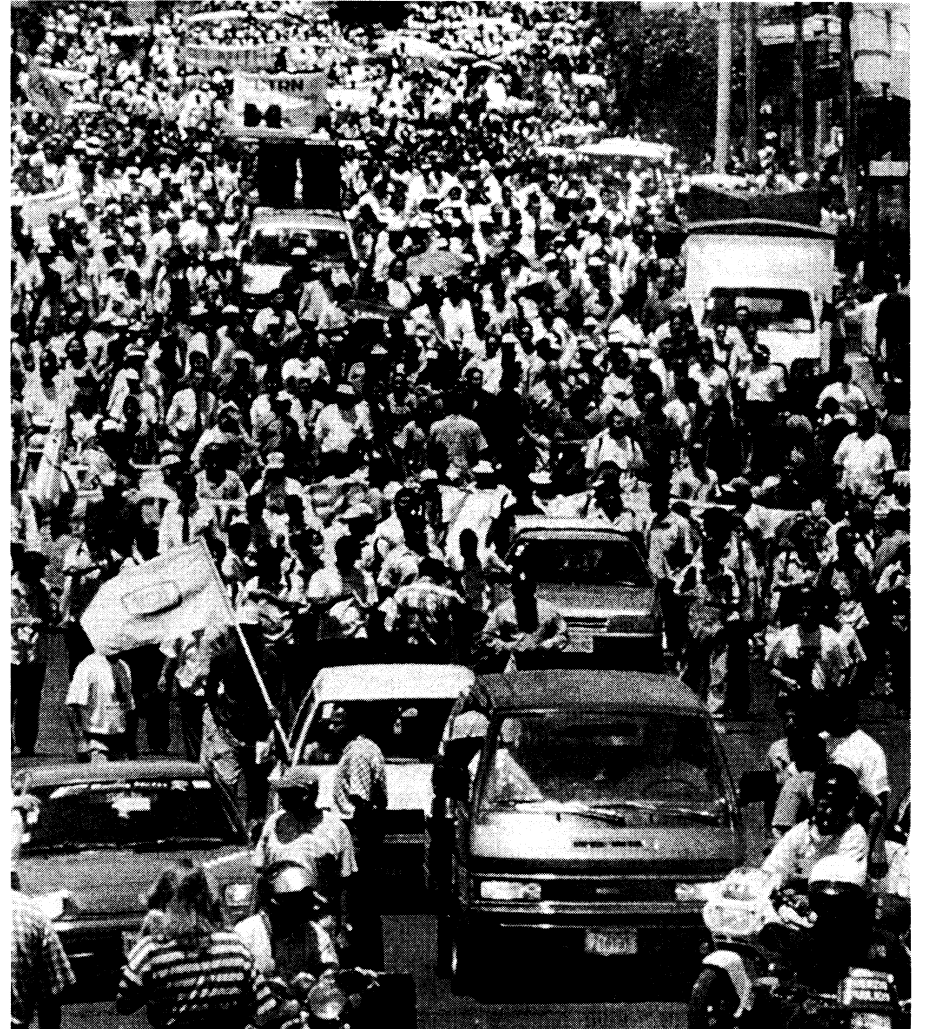
and lessons of the communist movement into the hands of youth interested in a communist perspective.

The grand prize at the raffle was a copy of *Making History* autographed by José Ramón Fernández, one of four generals of

Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces interviewed in the book.

The fund-raiser was a success because it was a joint effort by all four chapters of the YS. Each chapter raised \$144.70 toward meeting its goal.

100,000 protest in Costa Rica



Thousands of workers and students marched in the streets of San José, Costa Rica, March 23 in the fourth day of protests against government plans to sell off state-owned power and telecommunications enterprises. The action paralyzed the city, blocking roads and highways, as the demonstrators demanded that a bill approved by the legislature three days earlier be repealed.

Young Socialist Fund Drive Spring 2000 March 15–June 1

City	Goal
Birmingham	450
Chicago	800
Detroit	550
Fresno	200
Miami	400
Newark	700
New York	1000
Seattle	350
Tucson	200
Total	4,650

Socialists launch 2000 election campaign fund

BY DOUG JENNESS

ST. PAUL, Minnesota—In the coming weeks the Socialist Workers Party will be launching its campaign for U.S. president. The socialists' candidates for president and vice president, along with numerous campaigns for other federal and state offices, are workers and youth who are deeply involved in the struggles and resistance of working people today.

The campaign is the only one that explains that the source of the problems working people face—war, economic disaster, racism, oppression of women, antiunion attacks, and environmental destruction—is the capitalist system. The candidates point to the only resolution of these problems—a revolutionary overturn of the government of big business, bankers, and landlords and its replacement by a government of workers and farmers, opening the road to the fight for socialism.

Socialist workers are part of all struggles

of working people that can help forge the greater self-confidence and broader outlook necessary to advance this goal. An essential part of this perspective is the campaign's solidarity with workers and farmers throughout the world who are fighting national oppression by imperialism and capitalist exploitation.

To finance this effort, the Socialist Workers National Campaign Committee is launching a drive to raise \$100,000 by May 31. Funds are needed right away to help get the campaign underway. Those that can send in their contributions now are urged to do so.

Supporters in local areas are encouraged to discuss and adopt goals for the fund based on winning contributions from a wide range of unionists, farmers, and youth who want to see an alternative to the two-party setup of the ruling rich.

This working-class campaign stands in sharp contrast to all the parties and their candidates—Democrat, Republican, and

Reform—who support and defend capitalism and, at all times, put that goal ahead of what workers and farmers need.

Supporters of the Socialist Workers campaign will be organizing to win ballot status for the presidential ticket in more than a dozen states and Washington, D.C. In as many other states as possible they will seek official write-in standing for the ticket. Due to draconian election laws engineered by pro-capitalist legislators, it is impossible at this time for the working-class ticket to achieve ballot status in all 50 states.

However, socialist workers, Young Socialists, and other supporters of the campaign will fight for ballot status in as many places as possible because it opens more opportunities for the candidates to get a hearing for their ideas and to help legitimize a political party that the capitalist rulers have tried and will try again to outlaw. The ballot effort that is being projected will be a major national endeavor re-

quiring teams of supporters helping to make this possible.

The Young Socialists have decided to make the Socialist Workers presidential campaign the center of their activity through the rest of this year and will be among the candidates fielded by the socialists around the country.

The YS will also be organizing teams, setting up meetings, and helping to prepare and distribute literature on the campaign. There are thousands of young people across the country who are looking for a party and an outlook that they can confidently say, "Yes, this is my campaign. This is what I've been looking for."

The socialist presidential ticket will be joined by Socialist Workers campaigns for U.S. Senate, Congress, and local offices, which are already being launched in at least 14 states and Washington, D.C. They will be campaigning around the same working-class outlook as the presidential ticket.

The Socialist Workers campaign needs money to publish literature, field teams, and organize tours that are planned. If you are able to help, please send your contribution to: Socialist Workers National Campaign Committee, PO Box 14239, St. Paul, MN 55114.

Family farm conference planned in Mississippi

BY DAVID ROSENFELD

CHICAGO—The national conference and board meeting of the Family Farm Defenders (FFD) will take place in Durant, Mississippi, March 30–April 2. John Kinsman, a Wisconsin dairy farmer in his 70s and a stalwart farm activist for several decades, is the president of the FFD. He describes the group as a grassroots organization of family farmers and their supporters.

Two vans have been chartered in Wisconsin, "to drive through the center of the country picking up defenders of family farms along the way," according to a flyer promoting the conference.

Many FFD activists have been taking part in the Dairy Action 2000 protests in several states in the Midwest and Northeast. Kinsman expects about 40 to 50 farmers and their supporters to attend the conference, with participants coming from Wisconsin, Mississippi, and other states.

According to the tentative agenda for the meeting, topics will include "trade and building bridges with other states and countries," and the lawsuit filed by farmers who are Black against the U.S. Department of Agriculture for racial discrimination by the government agency.

A half day of the conference will consist

of a farm tour arranged by farmers in the area.

FFD leaders considered holding their meeting in Cuba, but decided that the costs would be prohibitive. The meeting is being held in Mississippi at the invitation of Eddie Carthan and other Black farmers who are hosting the event.

For more information about the conference, contact the FFD office at (608) 260-0900 or e-mail ffd@ureac.com.

David Rosenfeld is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 100-A in Chicago.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____

PHONE _____

ZIP _____

Enclosed is my initial contribution to get the campaign up and running! ☐\$500 ☐\$200 ☐\$100 ☐\$50 ☐Other _____

‘Militant’ kicks off drive at Ohio rally

Continued from front page
first days of the campaign.

They sold two more *Militant* subscriptions on the bus to workers who had been locked out by the *Detroit News/Free Press* and another one at the Mansfield rally to an AK Steelworker, whom they had met a week earlier in Detroit at an ox roast in solidarity with the locked-out workers.

Hoeppner said the unionist he talked to on the bus trip to Mansfield “said this was his first demonstration. He had been a beef farmer in a small town near Bay City before he started working in a plant organized by the USWA. He had volunteered for two organizing drives, one of them successful, going door-to-door in working-class neighborhoods explaining the importance of the union. He started reading the paper I gave him on the bus, then later he bought the subscription.”

Hoeppner explained how supporters in Detroit plan to get back to new people they had met in previous weeks to approach them about buying subscriptions. “We sold a subscription to a student at Wayne State University who went with us to show support for the students at the University of Michigan occupying the meeting quarters of a club whose practices are racist and offensive against Native Americans,” he said. “She had previously come to a Militant Labor Forum and bought a few Pathfinder pamphlets.

“This is basic follow-up. We have talked to a number of individuals but now we have our first results,” Hoeppner said, noting the potential to recruit youth to the Young Socialists through such activity.

Henry Hillenbrand, a USWA member in Cleveland, reported that participants at the Mansfield rally also purchased four Pathfinder titles, including *Mother Jones Speaks* and *Two Speeches by Malcolm X*. “One of the unionists who bought a *Militant* sub was a veteran of the USWA strike last year at RMI Titanium in Niles, Ohio,” said Hillenbrand. “He was already familiar with the paper.”

Supporters of the campaign in Cleveland have sold five *Militant* subscriptions, including one on a bus to the March 21 farmers’ rally in Washington and one to a worker at a plant where the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE) recently won its first contract.

In Chicago, one supporter of the sales drive, who is a member of UNITE, jumped on the USWA bus in Indiana and sold two

Militant subscriptions. “So far we have sold six subs to the socialist newsweekly, including three at the March 26 report from the Havana Book Fair meeting here,” wrote Cappy Kidd. “And we just sold a sub on the Overnite picket line in Indianapolis, Indiana.”

Kidd said that over the next few days *Militant* supporters are planning to travel with a group of farmers from Illinois and Wisconsin to the Family Farm Defenders Conference in Durant, Mississippi. They will also join in a celebration of John Mitchell Day on April 1 organized by two locals of the United Mine Workers of America in central Illinois. That event will be held outside the former strike headquarters of the Freeman coal miners.

Socialist workers in Miami sold two subscriptions going door-to-door in the Black community. “We sold one of the subs to a Black man who commented on the impact of the civil rights movement on Blacks living in Miami Beach where they used to need a pass to go to work,” said Rollande Girard, a garment worker. “He was very supportive of affirmative action.”

Girard said supporters of the sub drive plan to boost their efforts over the next week by sending someone to the five-day march called by the mayor of Charleston, South Carolina, to demand removal of the Confederate battle flag from the state capitol.

Black farmers in Wildwood, Florida, have invited farmers Karl Butts, Gladys Williams, and Willie Head to speak at a meeting there. Butts and the other two were part of a delegation of six farmers who recently returned from a fact-finding trip to Cuba. Another meeting for the farmers to speak about their experiences is planned April 4 at the University of South Florida.

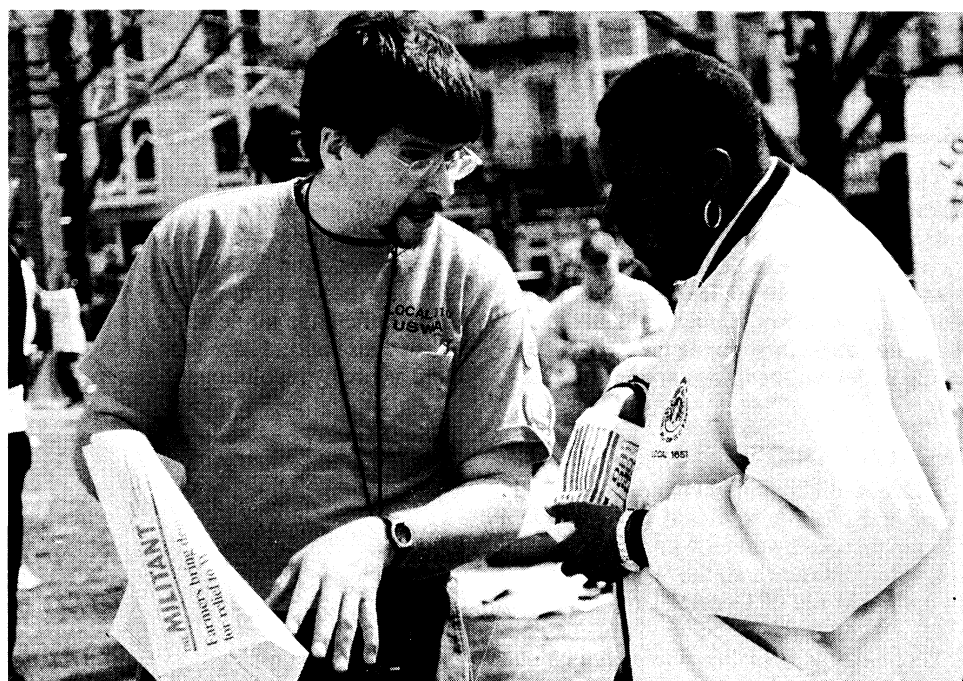
As the campaign shifts into high gear, the *Militant* encourages its supporters to send in articles and notes on sales activities and photos of participants in action at political events, at plant gates, and elsewhere. Comments from new readers among co-workers, students, and others are welcome.



Socialists in Seattle take sales campaign to co-workers

BY CHRIS RAYSON

SEATTLE—Two socialist workers in Seattle, John Naubert and Scott Breen, burst



Militant/John Sarge

Militant supporter selling paper at AK Steel rally in Mansfield, Ohio.

out of the starting blocks in the subscription campaign, selling three subs to co-workers. This was a key factor in our quick start. We sold seven subs in the first three days of the drive. John sold two of them on the job. He does hand trimming at Hexcel/Eathtecna, an aerospace composite plant of 650 workers that has a number of contracts with Boeing.

John told me how he did it and how he intends to follow up: “Last week I saw an Iranian co-worker who I had briefly met a year ago. A recent *Militant* had featured an article on the Iranian elections. I showed him the issue and he took it home. The next day he came up to me and said, ‘That was a very good article. How can I get this newspaper?’ I told him he could get a subscription. On the following day he paid for his subscription saying, ‘I really like a political newspaper.’

“I plan to go back to show him *New International* no. 7 featuring the article ‘Opening Guns of World War III,’ which also includes resolutions by Iranian communists on the Iran-Iraq War,” said Naubert.

“The other worker I sold to is a young union official who works in the plant and is head of the communications committee for the IAM local. He has been working with the women’s issues committee, which recently sponsored a march of Excel workers to a SPEEA picket line to show solidarity. The march was enthusiastically received by the striking workers. At the same time, this worker also bought a copy of *Capitalism’s World Disorder*.”

Below are the titles currently slated for delivery by the print shop for the four weeks of April:

1st week—*February 1965: The Final Speeches* by Malcolm X; *The Revolution Betrayed* by Leon Trotsky; *To Speak the Truth* by Fidel Castro and Che Guevara
2nd week—*My Life* by Leon Trotsky
Che Guevara Speaks; Introduction to Marxist Economic Theory by Ernest Mandel

3rd week—*Cointelpro: The FBI’s Secret War on Political Freedom; Socialism and Man in Cuba* by Che Guevara in Spanish; *John Coltrane and the Jazz Revolution of the 1960s* by Frank Kofsky
4th week—*The Last Year of Malcolm X; The Revolutionary Perspective for the United States*, an Education for Socialists Bulletin; *Malcolm X: The Last Speeches*

In addition, a hard-bound edition of *Making History: Interviews with Four Generals of Cuba’s Revolutionary Armed Forces*.

This publication is available in microform from University Microfilms International

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

Militant/Perspectiva Mundial Spring sub drive March 25–May 21

Country	Militant Goal	PM Goal	NI Goal
Australia	12	1	5
Canada			
Montreal	16	6	15
Toronto	25	5	20
Vancouver	25	5	15
Canada Total	66	16	50
France	4	4	20
Iceland	5	1	
New Zealand			
Auckland	20	1	3
Christchurch	12	1	3
N.Z. Total	32	2	6
Sweden	12	4	6
United Kingdom			
London	40	8	20
Manchester	25	2	2
UK Total	65	10	22
United States			
Allentown, PA	15	2	5
Atlanta	30	10	12
Birmingham, AL	45	5	15
Boston	35	10	15
Brooklyn	55	10	25
Cape Girardeau	12	4	4
Charlotte	10	3	5
Chicago	40	15	15
Chippewa Falls	15	10	10
Cleveland	25	8	5
Des Moines	30	15	10
Detroit	45	8	15
Fort Collins	12	1	4
Fresno	12	8	6
Houston	35	15	12
Los Angeles	60	30	30
Miami	40	15	20
N.Y. Garment Dist	60	20	20
Upper Manhattan	55	20	20
Newark, NJ	65	25	25
Philadelphia	35	10	15
Pittsburgh	25	2	8
San Francisco	50	20	25
Seattle	40	12	12
St. Louis	15	5	10
Twin Cities, MN	35	8	10
Washington, DC	30	10	11
U.S. Total	926	301	364
International Total	1122	339	473
International Goal	1100	300	450

Print shop steps up Pathfinder production

BY PETER THIERJUNG

NEW YORK—Pathfinder’s print shop workers have scheduled production of 12 Pathfinder titles in April. Planning and organizing this flow of books out of the shop, ready for use on sales tables set up by socialist workers and YS members, at labor

and farm actions, on the job, and from shelves of Pathfinder bookstores is a top priority of the print shop.

This pace is needed to get back in print numerous titles that are currently not available from Pathfinder. The shop has reserved time each week on printing presses and bindery equipment for production of Pathfinder titles, and is planning to produce three titles a week through September 1. This pace will catch up with and then meet the production flow now being set by an international team of volunteers who are putting Pathfinder titles into digital form. The shop currently has 23 digital files of books in hand.

In March, books delivered included titles that have been out of print for some time, such as *Struggle for a Proletarian Party* by James P. Cannon; *The Transitional Program* by Leon Trotsky; and *Teamster Politics* by Farrell Dobbs. One more title is scheduled to be delivered by month’s end, *Fidel Castro on Chile*, an Education for Socialists Bulletin. Thirteen titles in all are scheduled to be produced in March.

Now is a good time to sign up for the Pathfinder Readers Club which, for a \$10 annual fee, provides readers with regular 15 percent discounts and special offers to get these newly available titles. Pathfinder bookstores can also make plans to order sufficient quantities to restock store shelves and get them into the hands of workers and young fighters interested in socialism.

CORRECTIONS

The article entitled “Farmers bring demands for relief to Washington” in the issue no.13, dated April 3, incorrectly listed one of the sponsoring organizations. It should be the Presbyterian Church USA.

The article entitled “200 condemn cop killing in Philadelphia” in issue no. 11, dated March 20, omitted the year that Erin Forbes was part of a delegation to Cuba. It should have read, “In January 1995, while a student at Temple and chairperson of the Philadelphia chapter of the Young Socialists, Forbes was part of a delegation of young people to an International Youth Brigade in Cuba.”

In *Militant* issue #10, dated March 13, the picture on the back page should be credited to Lisa Ahlberg. The photo is a picture of an expanded SPEEA picket line, not of the February 23 rally at Boeing headquarters.

Meeting celebrates life of Donald Peterson

‘Don *acted*, selflessly, as part of a common vanguard effort of revolutionists’

The following is a message from Jack Barnes on behalf of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party to the meeting held in St. Paul, Minnesota, March 23 to celebrate Donald Peterson's more than 50 years of political activity in the communist movement (see article on facing page). Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

BY JACK BARNES

Many of us here tonight have read Farrell Dobbs's dedication to *Teamster Rebellion*: "To the men and women who gave me unshakable confidence in the working class, the rank and file of General Drivers Local 574."

Those words, like the four volumes on the Teamsters battles of the 1930s they introduce, are becoming familiar not only to our movement, but to broader numbers of working-class militants. In the course of resisting the employers' assault on conditions of life and work, class-conscious workers come to appreciate lessons from the strikes and organizing drives in the middle of the Great Depression that brought workers across the Midwest into action, with a sustained militancy the bosses couldn't believe.

Farrell speaks of *confidence* in the working class, gained in the course of extended battles. Not faith. Not logical deduction. But confidence, welded through the struggle of the human beings whose solidarity and combativity advance working people along our historic, zigzagging line of march toward the revolutionary conquest of power. But even if we've talked about these aspects of Farrell's dedication numerous times before, it's useful to think about it from some other angles tonight, as we celebrate Donald Peterson's fifty years as an unflinching communist and consistent party-builder.

In the age of "fame," of the nihilistic call to "do your own thing"—of the advertising-driven men and women of the millennium, the century, the decade, the hour, the minute, the nanosecond—Farrell's assertion at the opening of *Teamster Rebellion* might seem shocking, even scandalous. Farrell says the men and women, the rank and file, of General Drivers Local 574 lifted him, a recent Republican and disoriented young man, up from a coal yard in Minneapolis. They are the ones who made him the combat commander and revolutionary leader we've come to know. Not vice versa.

How many Farrell Dobbses are there among the toilers? We don't yet know. But we do know that those communists who had the opportunity to live through an earlier period of class battles and who led the Socialist Workers Party for many years—James P. Cannon, Vincent Raymond Dunne, Joseph Hansen, Farrell Dobbs himself, and

others—insisted to us that there are many, many millions. What is unusual is the opportunity to *apply* the abilities of a revolutionary organizer. We are not dealing here with false modesty: those who care nothing about fame have no need for that flip side of bad conscience. Rather, the discovery that there are many revolutionary leaders among

sible. As class battles deepen, it is the growth of a fighting proletarian vanguard that brings to bear the untested capacities and latent creativity of the toiling majority who have no interest in the defense of private property or in the reactionary prejudices, rationalizations, and oppression that prop up the market system worldwide.

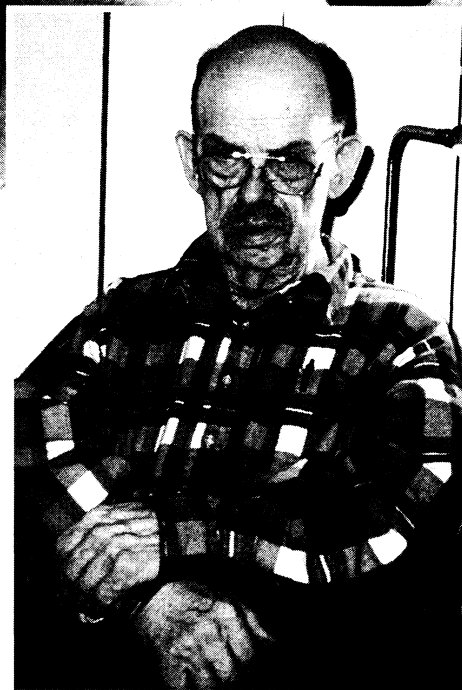


Above, truck drivers battle cops in Minneapolis during 1934 strike. Donald Peterson, right, joined the communist movement in the 1940s. He was recruited by revolutionists who participated in the Minneapolis Teamster battles of the 1930s. Class-conscious fighters like Peterson appreciated the lessons and organizing drives in the middle of the Great Depression that brought workers across the Midwest into action.

the masses is at the very heart of Marxism. It is the liberating recognition that who emerges as the leadership in the course of any mass struggle is accidental. The leaders are those who voice progress along the line of march, the historic direction, of an exploited class—generalizing the lessons from the concrete, ongoing struggles they are part of, the struggles of a propertyless fighting class.

And our teachers insisted on an even more important fact—that the potential of every working person is only infinitesimally realized under class society.

As Lenin so often affirmed, it is the numbers, the mass, of toilers involved in struggle that change the character and scope of working-class politics, making revolution pos-



All young revolutionists, from any background, must learn this. None knows it before he or she comes in contact with the organized workers who embody it. Revolutionists build their lives around an under-

standing of these proletarian attitudes—so deeply counter to bourgeois prejudices and common sense. When such attitudes become so ingrained they are no longer something we even think about, they have become habits. They become simply how we act.

And even seasoned revolutionists, at different times in their lives, need an occasional refresher course in habit formation.

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels—the founders of the modern communist movement, whom we often look back on in such awe—explained how as young revolutionists they first had to be stripped of class prejudice (also held by industrial workers themselves in bourgeois society) before they could be won to a working-class understanding, before they could recognize a working-class line of march. They had to see with their own eyes, and be involved with, enough workers organized in struggle to recognize that a new world outlook could only be charted from within the conscious, disciplined activity of the class to which they wedded their own present and future as individuals. All their accomplishments in proletarian strategy and communist thought depended on this precondition being realized.

‘Disciplined activity in common’

I say all this to the participants celebrating Don's half-century of political activity in order to underscore the most important thing we honor in the life of any party cadre—the fact that *our disciplined activity in common* with fellow revolutionists is what makes possible each of our various individual contributions. The common activity is the inevitable engine of any advance of the proletarian struggle. The individual contribution is accidental, and, as important as it may be, its realization is dependent.

Don did not *endure*, as so many workers have been condemned to do under capitalism. He *acted*, selflessly, as part of a common vanguard effort to overthrow the dictatorship of capital with all its accompanying horrors, including the stultification of working people. That cumulative effort by many millions over time is what makes possible the proletarian revolution.

I am grateful to the Political Committee of the Socialist Workers Party for asking me to prepare this message to the meeting to celebrate Don's life. Don was one of the comrades I met forty years ago during my first trip north to the Twin Cities from a college town in Minnesota to find out about the SWP.

Stockholm meeting celebrates new issue of ‘Ny International’

BY DAG TIRSÉN

STOCKHOLM—An enthusiastic meeting March 4 celebrated the publication of *Ny International* no. 3 here with a panel of speakers that reflected the struggles of working people today. "U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War," and articles on the Cuban revolution and building communist parties today are featured in the book.

Claudio Burgos, a leader of the Young Socialists in Sweden, highlighted another central feature of the book. He quoted from the "Young Socialists Manifesto," that says, "today there exists an open field where the YS can function as a revolutionary youth organization."

He pointed to the bus drivers' strike a year ago involving 15,000 workers all over Sweden. This became a central activity for the Young Socialists. Members visited picket lines, talked to strikers, and brought other young people to the struggle.

Alba Soto, second secretary of the Cuban embassy, also spoke. She pointed to the optimistic tone of the book and quoted from the article by Cuban leader José Ramón Balaguer, who writes that for the Cuban people, "Socialism is the only possible, the only valid option to place social relations on a moral footing."

Lwaki Ebarasi, a member of the Metal Workers union in Västerås, said that imperialism has subjected peoples in the semi-colonial countries to its dictates. Both the fighting perspective outlined in the book,

as well as the spirit that he had noticed among those working to produce the new title, can give people hope of another future, he said.

Peter Hemgren, a major contributor to the production of the book, explained how it was produced by workers and students giving their free time, but without making any compromises on the quality of the final product.

Catharina Tirsén, the editor of *Ny International*, pointed out that the main reason for the optimistic tone presented in the articles comes from the most "underestimated and unknown factor: that the working class still is at the center stage of politics." She pointed to problems the imperialist powers face around the world, such as Washington's failure to achieve its goals in the war against Iraq, to the incapacity of the German ruling class to unify the country and incorporate the workers state in the eastern part of the country.

Earlier during the day the Pathfinder bookstore celebrated its 10th anniversary with an open house. The first secretary of the Cuban embassy, Guillermo Vasques, spoke. He told the audience that Cuban ambassador Denis Guzman spoke at the opening celebration of the bookstore 10 years ago, which was appropriate for a bookstore with so many books on Cuba. "We know that we always can count on the solidarity of the people working with the Pathfinder bookstore," he said.

Lessons from the labor battles of the 1930s

from Pathfinder

Teamster Rebellion

Tells the story of the 1934 strikes that built an industrial union and a fighting social movement in Minneapolis. \$16.95

Teamster Power

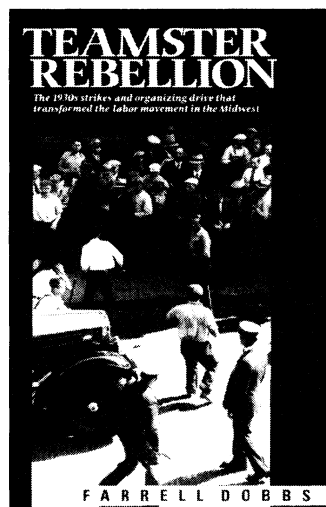
The growth and consolidation of the Teamsters union in Minneapolis and its class-struggle leadership, and the 11-state over-the-road organizing campaign that brought union power for the first time to many areas of the Midwest. \$17.95

Teamster Politics

How rank-and-file Teamsters led the fight against antiunion frame-ups and assaults by fascist goons; the battle for jobs for all; and efforts to advance independent labor political action. \$17.95

Teamster Bureaucracy

How the rank-and-file Teamsters leadership organized to oppose World War II, racism, and government efforts—backed by the international officialdom of the AFL, the CIO, and the Teamsters—to gag class-struggle-minded workers. \$18.95



Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 8, or write Pathfinder, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014. Fax: (212) 727-0150. If ordering by mail, please include \$3 for shipping and handling.

I wanted to see if this party—regardless of its exact program—was an organization that, if you threw in your lot with it, would act to bring about in North America what was happening so gloriously at that time in Cuba. That wasn't some theory I had; it was just how I approached politics in those days.

Consistent political commitment

It was that kind of party. And the fact that enough of the comrades I met in that small branch were representative of the kind of working people who would be attracted to such a party by the millions in revolutionary times was decisive in giving me—and many others like me—the opportunity to turn my life in a direction I've never altered. Don, to me, has always been one of those comrades.

I have no clear memory of what I did, what Don did, or what other individual comrades did—Helen Scheer, John Chelstrom, Joe Johnson, other young revolutionists in addition to myself—when we attended a meeting of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, or walked a picket line in front of Woolworth's in solidarity with the SNCC sit-ins, or participated in a Militant Labor Forum. But I know we were there, taking part, talking politics, selling our press, recruiting—and changing in the process. I know that consistent political commitment by Don and other comrades was responsible for transforming my life, and that of many like myself. It was responsible for giving me the confidence that I had a concrete and dependable answer to my question.

At the first meeting I ever took part in with Don—as an act of personal kindness, and, as I later figured out, simultaneously an act of critical evaluation—he offered me a cigar. He knew I'd developed the habit that no longer dare speak its name during my stay in Cuba in the summer of 1960. Like my father, Don smoked R.J. Dunn's—what my father called “an economical cigar.” Over the next decades, after events Don and I had participated in together, he would often give me one. Once in a while I'd get two—not as a reward, as it turned out, but as a silent boost when Don thought I could have worked a little harder and done a little better job. To this day, I judge various efforts as a one-cigar or a two-cigar accomplishment—being grateful Don never considered it necessary to tender three in order to make his point.

Like most comrades I got to know in the party in Minneapolis, Don deflected conversations about himself. When we talked, it was about important events, struggles, political lessons we'd learned, the health and fortunes of comrades we both knew. Don identified with what *we*—not just the party, but the working-class vanguard worldwide in the broadest sense—were accomplishing, and what we had left to do. It went without saying Don would do his part, and was confident we would do ours.

Confidence in working people

In many ways, the most important act of the twentieth century—Lenin's victorious struggle in 1917, within the Bolshevik leadership, to set the date for the October insurrection, openly informing the toilers—can be boiled down to the same thing Farrell was talking about in the dedication to *Teamster Rebellion* with which I opened this salute to Don. Lenin knew that if the call were made—at a time when conditions were ripe, and a political vanguard party had been prepared from among the most self-sacrificing toilers—the Bolsheviks could be *confident* in the men and women of Petrograd, and those like them throughout Russia and the lands dominated by the tsar. That confidence was not a deduction by Lenin, let alone a confession of faith. It was the product of decades of class-struggle experience *together* with men and women, vanguard militants of the working class and rural poor.

We are grateful that in 1948, in Duluth, Minnesota, a young man still in his twenties, interested in that year's election campaign, found a copy of the *Militant* on a bus. We appreciate his gumption in doing something, right off the bat, about the interest and sympathy the paper had evoked in him. We are proud that Ray Dunne and Grace Carlson replied to Don's inquiry; responding to a

worker interested in the party always went right to the top of Ray's “to do” list.

When Don joined the party in the late 1940s, the post-World War II labor upsurge in the United States had already peaked. The cadres of our movement could not yet know that we had entered what would turn out to be a very long retreat of the labor movement. The working class would sustain the effects of U.S. imperialism's assault on Korea, the consolidation of the “national security state,” and the impetus given to semifascist currents under the name of McCarthyism. The struggle for Black rights was still more than a decade away from the self-sustaining momentum that brought down Jim Crow segregation. But Don never saw this as a bad time to have joined the communist movement. Any time is the right time. And he was among those who stayed the course. Those who did were decisive to the party's transformation in the next upturn in the class struggle, which began to gain momentum in the early 1960s.

We are grateful to the Minnesota Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists for giving us the opportunity through this note to take part in your celebration of this lifetime of communist political work. The leadership of Don's party thanks you all for join-

Fifty years in the communist movement

BY TOM FISKE

ST. PAUL, Minnesota—“We draw inspiration from Don's steadfast commitment to the communist movement for more than 50 years and we learn from his example,” said Doug Jenness, the organizer of the Twin Cities branch of the Socialist Workers Party, who gave the main talk at a meeting here March 23 to celebrate the life of Donald Peterson. This theme was echoed many times throughout the memorial tribute.

Don was known by his comrades as a consistent, loyal, and determined soldier of the revolutionary movement. A number of messages were sent to the meeting, including from Jack Barnes, the national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, on behalf of the National Committee of the party.

Mildred Solem, active in building the party here in the 1930s and '40s, recalled, “Don was an avid reader and a man who made up his own mind and stood for his deep convictions. And he believed that convictions were to be put into practice. Whether it was selling the *Militant*, attending a demonstration, or going to a meeting, Donald was always part of it.”

A message from Charles Scheer, a leader of the branch and party for many years, pointed out the party was central to Don's life. “Don joined the movement as the post-war upsurge was coming to an end,” Scheer wrote. “He stuck with the party through the lean times of the 1950s. Don wholeheartedly welcomed and was inspired by the recruitment of new generations in the 1960s.”

John Steele worked as a young man with Don in the early 1960s. He wrote that Don's approach to politics exemplified a proletarian tone and confidence. “When you went with Don on a sale or a petition to get signatures to put an SWP candidate on the ballot, you knew that nobody would get by the corner without being approached. And Don would always be the last one to call it a day.”

Donald Peterson was born into a working-class family in 1918 in Duluth, Minnesota. As a young man growing up during the Great Depression of the 1930s and World War II, Don became acquainted firsthand with the ravaging effects of the capitalist system. At the same time he became familiar with the capacities of working people to resist and to forge a working-class movement.

On his own Don read socialist literature and came to view himself as a socialist. One day in 1948 he came across a copy of the *Militant* on a city bus. He liked what he read and wrote to the Socialist Workers Party in the Twin Cities about joining. Two leaders of the party from Minneapolis, Ray Dunne and Grace Carlson, traveled to Duluth to meet with Don at a meeting of the NAACP addressed by A. Phillip Randolph. From that



Militant/Joseph Hansen

Fair Play for Cuba Committee holds demonstration at United Nations in 1960. Peterson was a participant in actions to defend the Cuban revolution.

ing together this evening to salute his more than fifty years among us in the revolutionary workers movement. To salute Don's example of activity and dependability that never flagged.

In a deeper sense than we sometimes

think about, when we honor a cadre such as Donald Peterson, we at the same time honor the best in ourselves. We honor the proletarian discipline, determination, and steadfastness that is a precondition for the liberation of humanity.

meeting it was then arranged for Don to move to Minneapolis to live and become active with the party there. From then on he was an unflagging party builder.

Don worked at the Swedish Hospital in Minneapolis for 40 years where he was active in his union, the Service Employees International Union. Jeff Pike, who was a young worker at the hospital in the 1970s,

sent a message that explained Don signed him up for the union, after which he joined the Young Socialist Alliance.

Twenty people from Minnesota attended the meeting at the Pathfinder Bookstore. A collection was taken in honor of Don to the Pathfinder Fighting Fund to aid in the publication of Pathfinder books. Some \$520 was pledged from participants in the meeting.

Poultry workers win solidarity at AFL-CIO women's conference

BY ELYSE HATHAWAY

CHICAGO—“We want a voice at the workplace and we won't back down! We won't back down ever!” Ronda Aaron told an applauding crowd at a plenary session of the AFL-CIO Working Women's Conference here.

Aaron, who is 23 years old, and 27-year-old Tammy Bowlin, attended the conference to build support for the fight of poultry workers at the Cagle-Keystone plant in Albany, Kentucky. The two workers were recently fired by the bosses, but that did not diminish their sense of urgency or determination to fight for a union.

After six months on the job, Aaron was dismissed when she developed carpal tunnel syndrome in both her hands. The disease is a repetitive motion disorder that damages the nerves in the hands and wrist. “The doctor released me to go back to work after just three weeks, but I was still too hurt to work,” she said. In the brief period she worked in the plant the line speed doubled.

“It's very unsafe, bloody, dirty, cold, and in some areas it's very wet. When I started we did 70 birds a minute. When I was fired, the line was running 140 birds a minute. Every minute.”

Among other issues Aaron and her co-workers are fighting around are the right to go to the bathroom and to get medical attention when a worker gets hurt.

Bowlin was fired when, along with eight other co-workers, she put on a union T-shirt one morning at work. “I'm 100 percent for the union. We shouldn't have to be treated like dogs. We have to fight. It cannot get any worse.”

The two young women workers report that 600 out of 850 workers at Cagle-Keystone have signed cards to become members of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW). A union election last December was blocked when the National Labor Relations Board ruled that a fair election was not possible.

One example of the company's antiunion tactics is the firing of 41 of 62 union orga-

nizers, in addition to suspending 58 workers. Since December, 200 unfair labor practices have been filed by the union against the company.

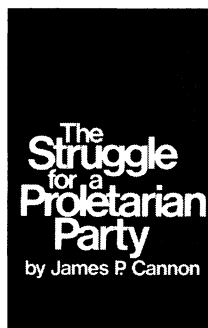
According to a UFCW flier, millions of tax dollars in Kentucky were spent on building the one-year-old plant. And Aaron and Bowlin report that under the Kentucky Rural Economic Development law, the state also allows the company to take \$20 out of every worker's paycheck to cover the cost of the building. “We have to pay for being able to work in the plant,” explained Aaron.

For further reading

The Struggle for a Proletarian Party

James P. Cannon

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



Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 8, or write Pathfinder, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014. Fax: (212) 727-0150. If ordering by mail, please include \$3 for shipping and handling.

Rally of 4,000 backs steelworkers in Ohio

Continued from front page

March it was trading around \$9 a share.

For the workers, who are members of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 169, unemployment benefits have run out, although the union is trying to get the state to extend them. Union officials say about 250 of the local's 620 members have found other jobs since the lockout began.

The central issue in the struggle remains the company's insistence on forcing unlimited mandatory overtime on the workers. In addition to the hardship this would cause, it would also enable AK Steel to eliminate nearly 20 percent of the jobs at the plant.

The company continues its offensive against the union on the legal front, with a battery of lawsuits and charges. AK Steel settled a lawsuit with the city of Mansfield and the mayor. The city in return agreed to restrict the union's ability to organize effective pickets. The local authorities approved the use of federal marshals to remove picket shacks the union has built near AK's gates and to create a no-walk zone around company gates when traffic is entering or leaving the plant.

Recognizing that this agreement would not sit well with the steelworkers, Mansfield mayor Lydia Reid withdrew as a speaker at

the rally. Referring to discussions she had with USWA officials, Reid said, "None of us felt it would be wise if I attended the rally. They did not want to see me embarrassed by people cussing at me or yelling at me."

Although this agreement has yet to be signed by a federal judge, a steelworker who asked not to be identified, said, AK Steel "is getting everything it wants done through attorneys and lawyers and the courts."

On the other hand, he pointed out, "Our big hope is the local unions that are supporting us." He said United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 549 at the GM plant in nearby Ontario, Ohio, has taken up four collections, each of about \$8,000. "When you see that, you know the local people are behind you. That's what is keeping us going."

Many members of the UAW local attended. Steve Noble, a UAW member and toolmaker with 16 years at the plant, said, "This rally is a communication tool. Now they [the company] want to take the picket shacks down and stop us from even standing or walking by the gates. We have to get the message out, especially to the youth: 'See for yourself. Visit the [USWA] Local.'"

USWA-organized tire workers came from Iowa, Mississippi, Illinois, and Ohio. Twelve strikers from Titan Tire attended the rally from Des Moines, Iowa, and Natchez, Mississippi. A leader of that strike announced a rally April 29 in Des Moines to mark the second anniversary of their fight.

A steelworker at Bridgestone/Firestone in Iowa spoke at the rally and presented a donation from his union local. Unionists from the Mansfield area exchanged names and phone numbers with the Titan workers. Union members also got out information about an April 8 protest against a plant closing in Ravenswood, West Virginia.

Veterans of other labor struggles in Ohio, like steelworkers from WCI in Warren and auto workers from General Motors in Dayton, joined the rally. Fifty workers from RMI Titanium in Niles, Ohio, rode to Mansfield in a bus organized by their local. Heather Barrass, one of 11 workers fired by the company during the seven-month struggle there that ended in April 1999, reported that she had started working again last month after waging a fight to win her job back.

A group from Oberlin College, called Student Labor Action Coalition, came to support the locked-out workers. The coalition is seeking ways to link up with and offer solidarity to workers in struggle.

Speeches from the stage, under a banner that read "Local 169 Locked Out 207 Days



Militant/Salm Kolis

Central issue in the strike remains company's insistence on unlimited, forced overtime.

By AK Steel," lasted more than two hours. The embattled union local reported it received \$50,000 in donations during the day.

The main speakers were USWA District 1 Director David McCall; George Becker and Edward Fire, the presidents of the USWA and the International Union of Electrical Workers respectively; and AFL-CIO secretary-treasurer Richard Trumka.

The turnout for the rally reflects the widespread support for the locked-out steelworkers in Mansfield. Even the president of the Mansfield-Richland County Chamber of Commerce, Kevin Nestor, had to admit to the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, "Mansfield has a history of organized labor. A large portion of the population is either a member of organized labor or has relatives or friends who are. Certainly there's a lot of support for the steelworkers in this community."

In contrast, Alan McCoy, the spokesperson for AK Steel, conceded, "If we have support in Mansfield, it's been silent."

Tula Fedochak, a member of the USWA at U.S. Steel's Gary Works for the past 33 years, came on a bus from Indiana. She was familiar with AK chairman and CEO Richard Wardrop. "He was the head man at Gary Works in 1986-87 when we had a lockout there for six months," she said. "That's why we sympathize with the workers here in Mansfield. At Gary Works, Wardrop built a spa on plant property for supervisors and

management, with a swimming pool, a sauna, the works. The union made him take it down."

Local 169 activist Bonnie Rooks was staffing a busy information booth in the rotunda on the square. She reported that she had gone to an AFL-CIO Women's Conference in Chicago two weeks before, where she raised \$675 for the fight.

Many informal discussions took place among the rally participants during the afternoon, ranging from the current stage of the fight at AK Steel to broader political questions. Capitalist politicians campaigning for the fall elections worked the crowd, supporters of ultrarightist presidential candidate Patrick Buchanan circulated ballot petitions, and many workers looked over and discussed socialist literature.

Commenting on the importance of strengthening labor's fight against the bosses' attacks, Pauline Pirtle-Gary, a member of USWA Local 1657 at Acme Steel in Chicago, said, "Clinton doesn't want affirmative action. They don't want the unity of the workers. We have to learn that we are at work for the same purposes, we live for the same reason. Affirmative action makes us stronger."

Tony Prince is a member of UNITE in Cleveland. UNITE member Mike Fitzsimmons and USWA members Henry Hillenbrand and Ray Parsons contributed to this article.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

GATT, the IMF and World Trade: Why Economic Nationalism is a Trap for Working People. Sun., April 9, 4:00 p.m. *Codman Square 683 Washington St. Dorchester (two blocks south of Codman Square).* Donation: \$4. Tel: (617) 282-2254.

MISSOURI

St. Louis

The Beginning of a Social Movement in the Coalfields. Speaker: Elyse Hathaway. Sun., April 2, 2:00 p.m. *Salad Bowl Cafeteria, 4949 Lindell.* Donation: \$5. Tel: (314) 924-2500.

NEW YORK

Brooklyn

Speakout Against Police Brutality. Justice for Patrick Dorismond! Jail the Guilty Cops! Speakers: Laura Garza, Socialist Workers Party; Jason Alessio, Young Socialists. Sat., April 1, 7:30 p.m. *1068 Fulton Ave. (Take the "C" train to the Franklin Ave. stop).* Donation: \$4. Tel: (718) 398-7850.

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

The Bosses' Hypocritical Campaign over Human Rights in China. Speaker: Pete Seidman, Socialist Workers Party, member of United Steelworkers of America. Fri., April 7, 7:30 p.m. *711 E. Passyunk Ave., (2 blocks south of South St. at 5th St.).* Donation: \$5. Tel: (215) 627-1237.

—CALENDAR—

FLORIDA

Miami

Reportback on Historic Visit by U.S. Small Farmers to Cuba. Sat., April 8, 7:00 p.m. Church of the Open Door, 6001 NW, 8th Ave. For more information contact Miami Coalition to End the U.S. Embargo of Cuba, P.O. Box 370867, Miami, FL 33137-0867.

WASHINGTON

Yakima

WCIW Local 2739 Solidarity Rally and Barbeque. Sat., April 8 at South Hill Park in Sunnyside. Rally and march for 130 union brothers and sisters in Sunnyside who have been on strike against Valley Manufactured Housing since Aug. 25, 1999. Meet 9:30 a.m. at WCIW Union Hall, 712, N. 7th St., Yakima. 11:30 a.m.—join picket line in Sunnyside, then march to South Hill Park for rally and barbeque. For more information, call (509) 248-5158.

CANADA

Toronto

Update on Cuba. Speaker: Manuel Montero, International Department, Central Trade Union of Cuba (CTC). Fri., April 7, 7:00 p.m. *Steelworkers Hall, 25 Cecil St.*

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Insatiable Greed Inc.—“There is a global crisis around the big killer diseases: pneumonia, tuberculosis, HIV and malaria. We have a major problem in that incentives



Harry Ring

are not in place for the pharmaceutical industry to invest in finding cures.”—Richard Feachem of the Institute for Global Health.

No big deal—Delaware officials disclosed that a neglected diesel pipeline at a Connectiv power plant has been leaking oil for maybe the past 12 years. They guesstimate that some 600,000 gallons leaked out. The pipeline is a couple of hundred feet from the Indian River. A state environmental official assured: “It’s somewhat manageable.” He said he didn’t know if the power company would face prosecution or even a fine for the spill.

P.S.—According to a Delaware reader, Connectiv, a major monopoly, discovered the leak some four months ago, but mum was the word until some fishermen spotted the oil slick and called state officials.

Affinity merger—The feds complained to a judge that while Chicago detectives were trying to hunt down a gang member they said was wanted for murder, other cops were helping him hide out. They alleged that a former police gang investigator had hired gang leaders as informers, but then went into business with them.

Oh dear—“You see these young guys worth \$3 billion to \$4 billion, and you think to yourself, ‘What have I done wrong?’”—Nelson Pelz, who’s “worth” \$890 million, most of which he gobbled up in the ’80s.

Not as dumb as they look—

Members of the Pennsylvania legislature are exempt from state ethics laws and have utilized their position to advance the financial interests of relatives and employers, according to a recent study. Citing a constitutional separation of powers, members of the legislature had persuaded the state ethics committee that they be exempted from most state “ethics” statutes.

They think people don’t trust them?—The census bureau would like its count to include undocumented immigrants and has an English/Spanish post asserting: “No INS. No FBI. NO CIA. No IRS.” And, the poster adds, perhaps sardonically: “That’s the law.”

Oops—The Nestlé company recalled 2.5 million cans of baby formula that “may not” have been properly sterilized.

Everybody else loves taxes—Recently, a *Los Angeles Times* article recounted some of the hard-nosed negotiations leading to the takeover of the paper by the *Chicago Tribune*. The principal owner of the *Times* is the enormously wealthy Chandler family. Said the article: “Another sticking point was the family’s traditional aversion to paying taxes. *Tribune* had fashioned its offer so that the family would receive stocks for their shares, which made the transaction tax-free for them.”

The employers’ assault on the value of labor power

The excerpt below is taken from “The vote for Ross Perot and Patrick Buchanan’s ‘Culture War’: What the 1992 Elections Revealed,” a talk presented a few days after the presidential elections in the United States, at a Militant Labor Forum in New York City. The entire talk appears in *Capitalism’s World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium*. Copyright © 1999 Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the Militant.

BY JACK BARNES

Workers should rid ourselves of the illusion that anything we or fellow working people have put away somewhere—in a bank, an insurance policy, a pension fund—is secure. There never has been and never will be any individual solution to weathering layoffs, illness, or a disability, or preparing to make

ing to recreate conditions in which those of us who are young enough and well enough to work are forced to do so for as little pay as possible—and those who are too old or too sick, to hell with them!

If a worker faces desperate economic pressures, the bosses insist, such problems ought be taken care of largely by that person’s family, or by charity, or by the church. Any government programs that do exist, they say, should be based purely on “need,” not provided as a social right, as an entitlement, to the entire working class and population. The capitalists’ goal is to deepen a division within the working class between those who earn, and those who “live off” others who earn (or are taken care of by charity). The goal is to demoralize layer after layer of the working class.

‘Battle for soul of the working class’

As from the earliest days of industrial capitalism, the rulers use sanctimonious religious and moral terms about charity to justify workhouses and the most heinous conditions for working people. University professors begin proposing that private orphanages be reopened across the country as the only solution to the “crisis of the single mother” and growing expenditures on Aid to Families with Dependent Children. And politicians begin echoing these reactionary proposals.¹ This is truly a battle for the soul of the working class as a class!

Moreover, beginning in the early 1970s, real wages—wages discounted for inflation, what workers can actually buy with what we bring home each week—began to slide in the United States. Last year, according to the government’s own figures, average hourly wages for manufacturing workers were *lower than in 1967!* The true situation is even worse when the decline in the social wage of the working class, and of the public services we use, are included. For the first time since the Great Depression of the 1930s, the capitalists may be actually driving down the value, not just the price, of our labor power.²

Unemployment rates are also substantially higher today on average than they used to be. In the United States, official jobless rates of 6 percent or even more—which were sure signs of a recession prior to the mid-1970s—are today the norm during upturns in the capitalist business cycle. The average annual unemployment rate since 1974 has been just above 7 percent, compared to 4.8 percent for the quarter century prior to that. And those jobless figures—the ones Washington releases each month—do not include the growing numbers who have been forced into low-wage temporary or part-time jobs or who are not counted as “looking for work” by government agencies. That figure, which the government does not publicize very much, has averaged 10 percent since the mid-1970s, and the true situation is undoubtedly worse than that.

Unemployment is even higher across capitalist Europe. The average jobless figure for the countries that make up the European Community is 10 percent, and that has been the average for most of the past decade; it has not dropped below 8 percent since 1981. And the figure is substantially higher in several of the weaker imperialist countries; in Spain, for example, the official jobless rate is more than 18 percent. Contrast those figures for Europe to the average during the two decades prior to 1974—2.7 percent.

At the same time that unemployment is



Militant/Lasse Johansson

Some 30,000 people demonstrated in Stockholm against unemployment, Dec. 15, 1993.

rising, overtime is stretching out the work-week the longest it has been since the end of World War II, further dividing the working class. And speedup is taking a heavier and heavier toll on health and safety on the job—and increasing the incidence of explosions, derailments, crashes, and other accidents that endanger the general public as well.

The experience of the working class over the past decade once again confirms Marx’s assessment some 130 years ago that “the same circumstances which allow the capitalist in the long run to prolong the working day also allow him at first, and compel him finally, to reduce the price of labor nomi-

nally as well until the total price of the increased number of hours goes down, and therefore the daily or weekly wage falls.”³

¹ In August 1996 Clinton signed into law the “Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act,” eliminating Aid to Families with Dependent Children.

² Six years after this talk was given, at the opening of 1999, median real earnings of workers in the United States—despite modest annual increases from 1996 through 1998—still had not surpassed their level of the early 1970s, nor had median family income.

³ *Capital*, vol. 1 (Penguin), p. 689.

from the pages of *Capitalism’s World Disorder*

it through retirement. Especially during a period such as we have lived through the last fifteen years, the only sure thing is that instability will increase. Insurance companies, banks, and pension funds are not immune from collapse. And in a really deep crisis, nothing “stands behind” these institutions, no matter what we have been told about alleged government guarantees.

What if someone had told us even one year ago that some of the largest banks and insurance companies in Sweden—supposedly one of the most stable capitalist economies in Europe—were going to be on the verge of bankruptcy and face a forced financial reorganization before the end of 1992? That the Swedish government would raise short-term interest rates to 500 percent for several weeks in an effort to fend off devaluation in face of a massive run on the krona? And that the officialdom of the trade unions and Social Democratic Party—in order to “save Sweden” and find a way for Swedish business to compete successfully in Europe—would openly support measures that began dismantling piece by piece government-financed health care, pension benefits, and other social rights won by the working class? All that happened this year.

What is happening to the so-called welfare state in Sweden is symptomatic of the growing pressures throughout the imperialist countries on the social wage. The capitalists and their governments are stepping up attacks on the right of the working class to get back a small portion of the wealth we produce, so that we and our families can make it through a lifetime.

Since the end of World War II, workers in industrially advanced capitalist countries have, to varying degrees, come to consider as fundamental rights certain kinds of lifetime social security we have fought for and won. In a few capitalist countries, including Sweden, these social conquests by the labor movement were quite extensive. But today it is as if the film is being run backward, and we are watching the modern capitalist world regress toward its infancy. In reality, however, what we are seeing are not newsreels but previews—previews of what capitalism always reverts to as a crisis sharply accelerates. The capitalists are push-

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—



April 11, 1975

Ten years ago this month Lyndon Johnson began the massive military escalation that ended with 540,000 U.S. troops in Vietnam.

One U.S. official in Saigon at the time, reacting to the first manifestations of international condemnation of the U.S. aggression, boasted: “We have shown that we are strong enough to do what we want without having to take international opinion into account.”

A decade later, it is precisely the deeply felt opposition to U.S. intervention in Indochina—shared by Americans and people throughout the world—that is blocking Washington from taking military action to crush the advancing rebel forces in Vietnam.

This month is also the tenth anniversary of the first nationwide demonstration in the United States against the Vietnam War, which was held in Washington, D.C., in April 1965. The public opinion that Johnson and his successors had so much contempt and hatred for, combined with the tenacity of the Vietnamese, eventually forced the U.S. rulers to bring the troops home from Vietnam.

Today as city after city falls to the liberation forces without a fight, the victories being won by the Vietnamese are victories for all humanity.



April 10, 1950

Any union leader who does not submit to the dictates of the U.S. State Department or who opposes the “cold war” policies of the Truman administration faces the threat of frame-up and imprisonment. That is the meaning of the conviction on the trumped up “perjury” charge of CIO Longshoremen’s leader Harry Bridges in an 85-day trial before a federal court in San Francisco.

And any lawyers who assume the defense of persons accused of being “Communists” and “subversives” do so at the risk of their own freedom. That is the meaning of the vindictive jail sentences for “contempt” imposed by the trial judge on Bridges’ attorneys.

The witch-hunters who set out deliberately to “get” Bridges and then cooked up the charge that he lied in swearing that he had never been a member of the Communist Party when he got his naturalization papers in 1948, are saying that Bridges got a “fair” trial before a “jury of his peers.”

The government’s case was based entirely on the testimony of stoolpigeons, most of them sworn enemies of Bridges in the labor movement. One of them gave the frame-up away when he testified that in October 1948 he had been called into conference by the then Attorney General, Tom Clark, who told the witness that “they wanted to remove the influence of Mr. Bridges and others from the labor movement.”

Police brutality: a class question

Mobilizations by working people in New York have placed the question of police brutality there in the national spotlight. No cop killing or assault of yet another young Black person is going unanswered. As protests have grown in size and confidence, like the one of thousands this past week to demand the cops responsible for gunning down Patrick Dorismond be jailed and prosecuted, many working people are showing no fear of the cop forces arrayed against them. At the March 25 action, participants in the protests pushed over police barricades, faced down the police show of force, and made the cops retreat from their intimidating and harassing presence.

Mayor Rudolph Giuliani's repeated and insistent defense of police conduct, his vilification of the victims of police bullets, and his refusal to prosecute killer cops does not come from irrational policies. The mayor, in charge of one of the larger governmental jurisdictions in the country, is at the spear-point of the assaults on working people and democratic rights. He carries out policies in the interests of the class he represents, the wealthy bankers, industrialists, and landlords in the city. He aims to win support from middle-class layers, who, from the results of all polls, back in large numbers his "war on crime" at the

expense of the lives and rights of working people.

Police brutality, attacks on democratic rights and freedom of expression, and going after unions that won't come to heel, go hand in hand in the Giuliani administration. At the same time the mayor is defending the cops, he is also pressing an effort to keep unions out of the Hunts Point meatpacking and produce industrial center, where thousands of workers labor. The mayor is preventing union organizers and union members on strike from going into the huge compound, restricting them to the area outside where they are ineffective and removed from the target company. This is the same area of the Bronx where Amadou Diallo and Malcolm Ferguson were shot down by the police.

The mobilizations against police brutality help point the way forward for working people. More and more the battle against the cops, to defend unions, and to protect democratic rights get joined together; actors in the streets in each struggle can reinforce each other. Taking on and fighting the mayor and his reactionary drive is the best way to build a movement that relies on neither the Democrats nor Republicans, but on the fighting strength, political capacities, and proletarian attitudes of working people.

Example set by union fighters

Reports from various fronts in labor battles point to the many ways unionists are finding to show their strength. From conferences of labor women to picket lines such as those at US Airways, to mass rallies by Steelworkers and others, many workers are charting a path of solidarity and organizing their numbers in fights against the bosses. They are setting an example of how to do so without prematurely taking the union officialdom head on, but making the most of the space they have to stand up to the company.

The turnout of 4,000 for the 620 locked-out workers at AK Steel did not come out of the blue. Workers and leaders of the struggle built the rally by joining with other workers and farmers who are also engaged in struggle. They backed other Steelworkers involved in defending their unions. By getting out the news of their fight, and why they are standing up to company take-back demands, they have won official union support and backing from thousands of working people who are face a similar onslaught.

The possibilities to reinforce each others' struggles, and to bring the lessons of one fight to the next, is something that all vanguard militants can become involved in. More plans are under way for rallies and actions like the very successful one in Mansfield.

Farmers will continue their struggle; truckers and others are by necessity in the streets demanding government relief from profiteering by oil monopolies; working people are standing up to police brutality; and youth are taking a stand in defense of democratic rights.

Within this exchange of experiences and mutual reinforcement in common struggles, there are many who will want and need a socialist newsweekly and books published and distributed by Pathfinder.

Reading, studying, and distributing books described in the pages of the *Militant*, and getting involved in the effort to widen the readership of the socialist press, is part and parcel of this spirit of collaboration among fighters. It is an essential contribution to building a consistent, uncompromising, and fighting vanguard of our class.

The great strength our class has to draw on—in addition to the possibilities to organize union and political instruments through which workers can be effective together and realize the fighting capacities of each—is the legacy and experiences of the struggles of the exploited and oppressed for more than 150 years, lessons that are more and more welcome and readily absorbed as thousands and tens of thousands carry out activity to advance working-class struggles.

Thousands protest killing by cop

Continued from front page

Speakers encouraged those in attendance to turn out in force for the march through the streets of Brooklyn the following day.

"Until we get justice for Patrick, we cannot say he's got peace," stated Vladimir Rodney of the Haitian-American Alliance, one of the groups that organized the march.

"I don't think Dorismond's death will be in vain," stated Abner Louima, who himself was brutally sodomized and tortured by Brooklyn police officers in August 1997. "We're not going to take any of the police brutality. No more."

As the wake ended, Marie Dorismond, Patrick's mother, told the protesters, "I want justice for my son. Without you all there will be no justice."

Dorismond's death came shortly after the verdict on February 25 in the Amadou Diallo case, where four plainclothes cops were acquitted of criminal charges after firing 41 shots at Diallo, an unarmed 22-year-old worker from Guinea. Five days after that verdict, Malcolm Ferguson, 23, also unarmed, was killed by plainclothes police in the Bronx, three blocks from where Diallo was shot. Last September the cops killed another unarmed Black man, Richard Watson, shooting him in the back.

New York mayor Rudolph Giuliani has taken the lead in defending the cop who killed Dorismond while continuing to promote a particularly vicious slander campaign against the character of the dead man in an effort to make a case that Dorismond had it coming.

"Mr. Dorismond spent a good deal of his adult life punching people," stated Giuliani, whose office released to the press information on a minor police complaint filed by his girlfriend a week before the shooting. The mayor

described Dorismond as no "altar boy," suggesting that his "pattern of behavior" and his actions the night the undercover cops approached him had contributed to his death.

Immediately after Dorismond was shot, the city administration issued a statement attempting to depict the Black youth as being a hardened criminal. The cops claimed that he had been previously charged with robbery, assault, and illegal possession of a weapon. Upon further investigation this turned out to be nothing more than a couple of disorderly conduct charges that resulted in a few days of community service by Dorismond in 1993 and 1996.

The mayor also authorized the release of Dorismond's juvenile police record dating back to when he was 13 years old, which included charges that had been dismissed and sealed by a court. Giuliani aggressively argued that the release of this record was justified as his right to privacy ended when he was shot to death.

Democratic party senatorial aspirant, Hillary Rodham Clinton, lamely described the mayor's actions as "a rush to judgement." She claimed that both she and the mayor "should wait and reserve judgement in this latest case, until all the facts come out."

Giuliani, for his part, intensified his campaign of slanders against those determined to take to the streets to continue protesting the cop killings. He defended the provocative actions of the cops at the March 25 action, denouncing the protesters for what he called an "orchestrated attack."

Glova Scott, a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees, Marc Lichtman, and Jason Corley contributed to this article.

Airline offers flight attendants new contract

Continued from front page

entire airline down.

The company's propaganda and threats against the flight attendants polarized the debate among other union groups. But as the flight attendants stepped up their activities, and information on their real issues and concerns was made known to other workers at US Airways, more were won to support their contract fight.

The large green buttons saying, "I Support US Airways Flight Attendants"—at first worn by only a few other unionists—were seen on the uniforms of more US Airways cleaners, mechanics, and ramp workers in the days before the March 25 deadline.

Several hundred flight attendants and supporters mobilized outside the Philadelphia airport the night of March 24. They cheered speakers from their union, and gave an especially enthusiastic reception to a recorded message from the Airline Pilots Association, pledging support to their fight. "Stop Corporate Greed," they chanted, and as the midnight deadline neared, they added, "In 15 minutes we will know, where this airline's going to go!" A group of about 10 fuelers in uniform, who work for ASI, the company contracted to fuel US Airways planes, led a popular chant, "No flight attendants, no fuel!"

"Our fight is the same as theirs," said Ken Brooks, secretary-treasurer of fuelers Local 10 of the United Independent Union.

In Charlotte, North Carolina, one of US Airways' three hubs along with Pittsburgh and Philadelphia, nearly 500 flight attendants and their supporters joined the March 24 action. Several members of the United Auto Workers from the Freightliner truck plant in Mt. Holly, North Carolina, also participated, along with other unionists. Bonnie McQuillen, a flight attendant for 16 years, said her biggest concern was retirement benefits.

'Women who work for a living'

In Atlanta, 80 AFA members and other supporters chanted, "No contract, no peace, no pay, no way," as the deadline neared. Several flight attendants from nonunion Delta Airlines joined them. Two members of the Atlanta Tradeswomen's Network, a group that fights to help women get and keep jobs in the skilled trades, also joined the action. Maura Dawson, a member of the network and a maintenance technician, explained, "Times have changed. We're not back in the days when women weren't workers, and sole income of the family was dependent on the husband's income. Women are the heads of households, we are the ones who need the money for survival." She added, "I was impressed by the flight attendants' spirit—their will to fight for what is rightfully theirs."

In Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, more than 50 people gathered for a vigil, including flight attendants from United, American, and an AFA organizer for Delta Airlines from Miami. Pat Hinchcliffe, coordinator for the AFA volunteers and a flight attendant for 22 years, said in an interview, "Divide and conquer is a management tool. It will not work if the members in all the union groups stay united in solidarity. This fight is for all of us." She noted that this experience had changed her. "It'll be a totally different me after this is over. I lost my respect for Wolf when I heard him call us 'his girls.' We're not girls. We are women who work for a living!"

More than 200 flight attendants and supporters joined the vigil and rally at Washington National Airport where unions represented included Painters, Teamsters, Hotel and Restaurant Workers, and the Newspaper Guild.

George Cherry, who has worked as a flight attendant for 13 years, said, "It was time to take a stand. Wolf says he will shut down the airline if we don't back down. Who is he, a czar? We are fighting for our families and for others. Who will be there for them? Some of them don't have unions. We do; we should use it."

Airline workers across the country were buoyed by the AFA's success in forcing the US Airways bosses to flinch. At the Northwest Airlines maintenance base in Atlanta, many mechanics and cleaners were upbeat that fellow airline workers had proven stronger than Stephen Wolf.

"What they did was show that they couldn't be pushed around, and that's a good thing," said one inspector, who had worked as a mechanic at Republic Airlines when Wolf had demanded concessions from workers there in the 1980s. "And in my opinion it couldn't have happened to a nicer guy."

"It's American history," US Airways flight attendant Tom Lopez said at the Philadelphia vigil March 24. "When you get pushed around long enough, you have to take a stand."

Rebecca Arenson and Nancy Cole are members of the International Association of Machinists and work for US Airways in Philadelphia. Rachele Fruit in Miami, Arlene Rubinstein in Atlanta, and Mary Martin from Washington contributed to this article.

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Interview with South African union leader

BY BRIAN HAUKE

VANCOUVER, Canada—The response of the governments of the world's wealthiest countries to the devastating floods in Mozambique has been completely inadequate, charged South African union leader Willie Madisha.

"People don't have food and water and are dying. Everything has been totally destroyed. Each and every country of the world must assist the people of Mozambique," he said.

Madisha is the president of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), and was in Vancouver to address the convention of the British Columbia Teachers Federation. Madisha is also president of the South African Democratic Teachers' Union, the third largest union in COSATU and a member of the Central Committee of the South African Communist Party.

"Countries with enormous wealth should have been there much earlier. We expected a lot of assistance from the United States and Canada, as the people in Mozambique

have lost everything. Aid from the United States and the United Kingdom arrived very late, and in insignificant amounts," he pointed out.

Madisha contrasted the limited aid given to Mozambique with the enormous military resources deployed by the imperialists, such as for the intervention in Kosovo.

The union leader said the floods killed 29 people in South Africa's Mpumalanga and Northern provinces. However, all assistance must go to Mozambique," he stressed. "South Africa is able to deal with the flooding at home and is the main country aiding Mozambique."

South Africa has so far rescued 12,000 people in Mozambique, and has sent food, he said. "The floods have made it impossible at the moment to do anything else except to rescue people. Minefields laid during many years of civil war aggravate the situation."

The imperialist powers' failure to act decisively to aid the people of Mozambique "is a continuation of their 'don't care' attitude," Madisha argued. "This should be payback time—when the rich countries give

back what they've taken from Africa. Mozambique's massive debt owed to the World Bank and the IMF should be canceled."

Unemployment remains high

Madisha also explained that COSATU is waging a "Job Crisis Campaign" against job losses and poverty, as well as the mass layoffs resulting from the sell-off of state enterprises to capitalist concerns. Almost 1 million jobs have been lost over the last nine years, Madisha said. The unemployment rate is 37 percent, which is well over 4.5 million people.

"Privatization is leading to massive retrenchments [layoffs]," he said. "There needs to be a moratorium on retrenchments. COSATU is also demanding that insolvency laws be amended because when companies become insolvent, the company owners' interests are taken care of but not the workers. Workers can be robbed of wages owed and pensions."

In 1998 the unions participated in a "jobs summit," where representatives of corporations, unions, and the government "came

together to say the big problem is unemployment," he said. "We proposed a job creation fund into which every worker would contribute one day's wages. The government hasn't done its part to implement summit resolutions or the massive public works program it promised following the overthrow of the racist apartheid government."

"The economic problems have not yet been dealt with," Madisha argued. "We no longer have racial oppression in South Africa. Instead, our worst enemy is economic oppression, particularly affecting women."

Madisha said apartheid not only "oppressed blacks but also damaged white workers, who saw themselves as removed from the day-to-day struggle of working people. White workers are no longer shielded as they were under apartheid, and now see themselves as part and parcel of the working class. The unions used to be divided along racial lines, but that's changing," he said. "In the mines, textile mills, and the civil service, our fights are converging. Now, there is more of a tendency for all workers to see themselves as part of one class."

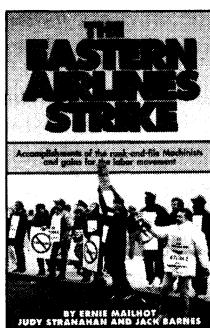
FROM PATHFINDER

The Eastern Airlines Strike

Accomplishments of the Rank-and-File Machinists and Gains for the Labor Movement

Ernie Mailhot, Judy Stranahan, and Jack Barnes

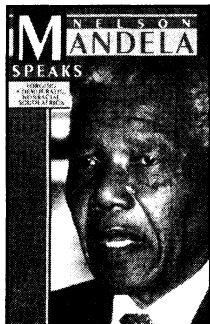
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BY SUSAN LAMONT

SCOTTSBORO, Alabama—After being locked out for five and a half months, the first shift of steelworkers returned to work at Scottsboro Aluminum March 20, to the cheers of union members and supporters who lined the roadway to the plant as the workers drove in.

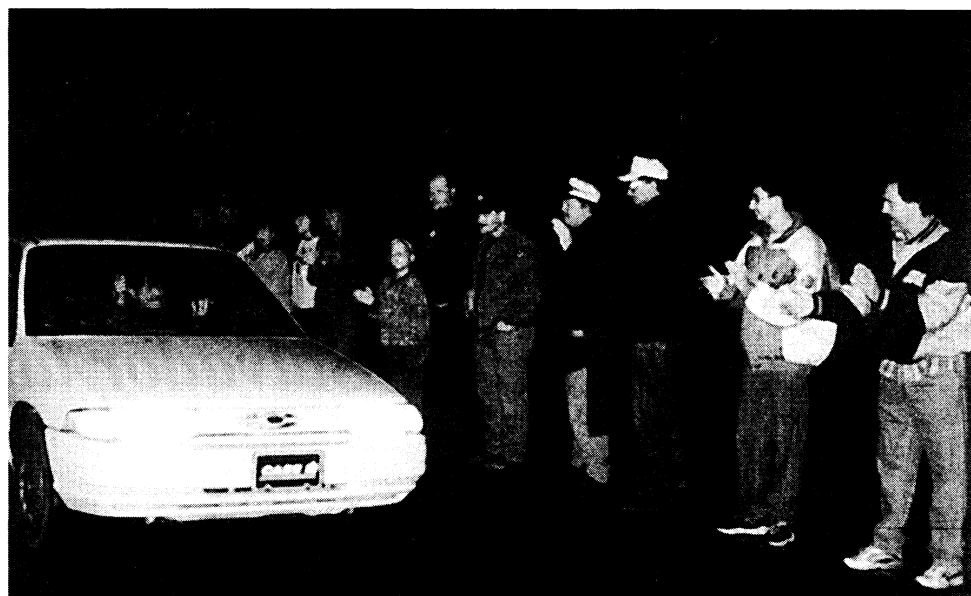
Members of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 7468 and their families celebrated victory with a potluck dinner and party at their union hall March 18. Earlier in the day, union members held a meeting where the contract was reviewed and questions answered. The contract had been agreed to several days before, after company and union officials met in negotiations in Nashville.

"Everybody's happy to return to work," said Samuel Nicholson, a 51-year-old cold rolling mill operator, in an interview several days later. Nicholson was one of the first ones back in the mill after the lockout ended. The contract is "one of the best we've had during the 30 years I've been there. The company saw we pulled together and got stronger and wouldn't give in." All of the 420 union members stood together in this fight.

"This experience has brought us together," Nicholson continued. "People are speaking now who hadn't spoken to each other before. We're bonded together now. As long as we stay that way, we'll be strong. We may have to build a new union hall, if people keep coming like they have been!"

The lockout began last October 10, when the company broke off negotiations as the old contract expired and closed the gates on the union members. The owners had been running the plant with scabs since then.

Although almost all the scabs hired during the lockout are out of the plant, there are nine scab foremen still inside, Nicholson



Militant/ Romina Green

Amid cheers of supporters and their families, Scottsboro Aluminum workers returned to work with a new contract after being locked out for more than five months.

said, which is a source of some animosity. They were hired as replacement workers and promoted to foremen.

During the lockout, a strong spirit of solidarity developed among the Local 7468 Steelworkers, who were aggressive in taking their message to the local community and to other unions in this rural area of northeastern Alabama.

The union hall was a bustling organizing center where meals were served three times a day for anyone in a union family. The Steelworkers' fight was given a big boost in November, when wives of the locked-out workers started a women's committee, which became an important part of the union's efforts. The committee organized fund-raising activities to help with the local's relief fund and worked to bring the union's side of the conflict to the attention

of the local media and politicians.

The new five-year contract includes a \$1.75 wage increase, improved medical benefits for retirees, increased bonuses for meeting production goals, and other gains.

Scottsboro Aluminum is one of the largest aluminum rolling mills in the United States. It was bought last summer by Michigan Avenue Partners, which also owns McCook Metals, an aluminum plant near Chicago. The owners are out to eliminate several hundred jobs from the Illinois plant. Union members there have been following the fight in Scottsboro closely. "Our victory will help them," said one Local 7468 member.

Susan LaMont is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 2122 in Fairfield, Alabama.

LETTERS

Farmers' demands

In a photo box in the March 20 *Militant* reporting on the March 1 rally in Minnesota in defense of family farmers, the closing sentence said, "Some participants in the rally carried signs and leaflets promoting the protectionist campaign against genetically modified seeds." Normally, "protectionism" refers to measures which protect native industry and bosses. The U.S. market for genetically modified seeds is dominated by U.S.-based companies like Monsanto and Archer Daniels Midland, so it is hard to see how it is protectionist for U.S. farmers to protest them. The fact that these companies control the world market gives actions by farmers in other imperialist countries against modified seeds (such as the French farmers' representatives at the anti-WTO protests in Seattle) a protectionist character.

U.S. grain farmers are being bullied by agribusiness and their creditors to sign up for genetically modified seeds. Their protest against this is like that of hog farmers who refuse to toe the line set by the packing companies and reject factory hog confinement facilities. Grain farmers have the right to demand that the Monsantos and ADMs of this world not try and run their farms, and to reject this thinly disguised corporate blackmail.

Gary Boyers
Detroit, Michigan

Massachusetts students oppose Diallo verdict

On February 28, 250 people rallied at Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts. They protested the decision, made three days earlier in a court in Albany, New York, to acquit four New York City cops of the killing of Amadou

Diallo. A number of student groups backed the action. Vanessa Daniel, a senior at the school, said that "there was a campus-wide meeting on the verdict." Through these and other actions, "we forced the administration to put out a statement saying that the verdict was unjust," she said.

The students also demanded that the college administration fund a bus to send students to the March 2 demonstration in Washington that called for federal charges against the cops. Fifty turned out from the school for the protest of 1,500 people. Under pressure, the college also sponsored a bus on March 7 that took 45 people to the Bronx, to demonstrate in front of the doorstep where Diallo was shot down.

Brock Satter
Boston, Massachusetts

Sweatshop hypocrisy

While reading a book called *A*

Political History of Japanese Capitalism, by Jon Halliday published in 1975, I came across an interesting passage regarding "Western business" charges of "sweatshop" conditions in Japanese factories.

During the 1930s, according to Halliday, Japanese cotton goods began to outcompete Britain in India, France in Morocco, and Britain, Italy, and the United States in Latin America.

For example, "While Britain's share of India's cotton cloth market fell from 97.1 percent in 1913-1914 to 47.3 percent in 1935, Japan's share rose from 0.3 percent (1913-14) to 50.9 percent (1935)—taking over the entire British loss."

"This economic threat led Western business into startling revelations about factory conditions in Japan...Books attacking working conditions in Japan began to appear. As well as the League of Nations,

the International Labor Organisation (ILO) was mobilized in a particularly hypocritical campaign since Britain and France had expressly prevented ILO stipulations being applied to their sweatshops in China when the organization was originally founded."

How familiar do these charges of sweatshops and bad working conditions sound as interimperialist competition heats up today, also keeping in mind what occurred during the '30s and what followed it.

David Johnson
Toronto, Ontario

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.

Explosion rocks Texas chemical plant

BY DEAN COOK
AND LEA SHERMAN

PASADENA, Texas—On March 27 at a 1:22 p.m., the Phillips Petroleum Co. plant was once again rocked by an explosion that killed one person and injured as many as 74 others.

The explosion occurred in the K-Resin plant, the same site as a June 1999 explosion that killed two workers and injured four others. Phillips is the nation's largest producer of K-Resin, a product used in the manufacture of clear plastics for drinking cups, plastic bottles, and other such products. The plant, which employs about 800 workers, is organized by the Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical, and Energy Workers International Union (PACE).

About 200 workers attended a meeting at the PACE Local 4-227 union hall two days later to get an update on the explosion. Union officials, lawyers, doctors and counselors spoke to the solemn crowd. Glen Irwin, a PACE union investigator, reported that there would be union members joining the company and OSHA investigation teams, but they did not know yet what caused the explosion.

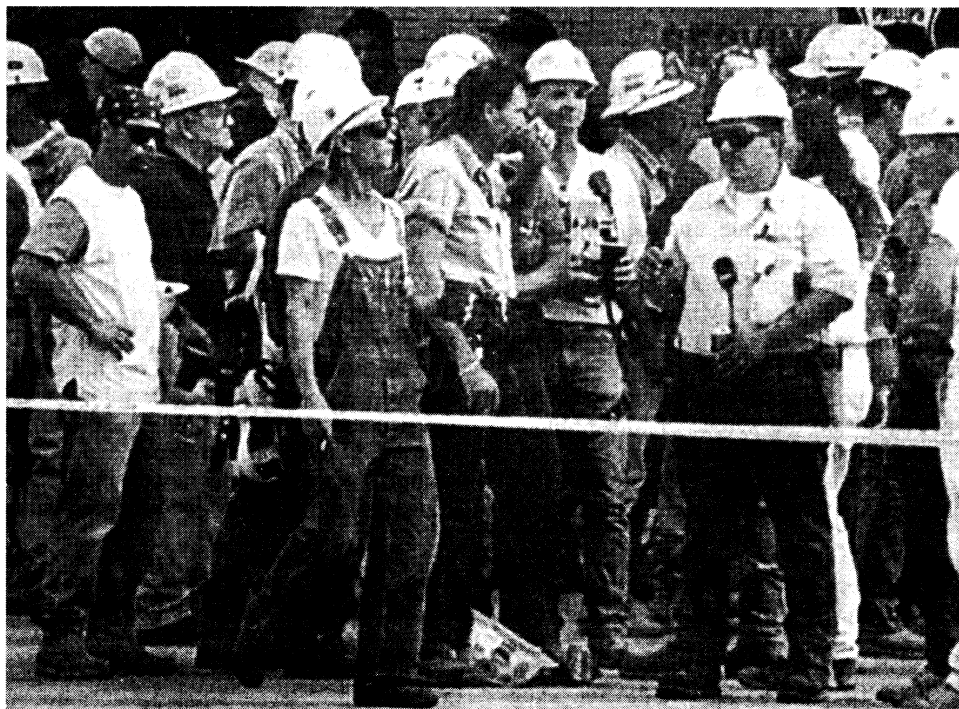
He also reported that the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, a federal police agency, as part of its "routine" response to explosions since the bombing of a federal office building in Oklahoma, was in the plant to investigate the possibility that the blast was caused by a bomb.

A longtime worker in the lab expressed his belief that the explosion originated in a tank that has been out of service for more than a year. He thought that a chemical residue remained in the tank and over a period of time became unstable, leading to the blast. He compared it to the explosion of a rail car at the plant in April 1999 under similar circumstances.

Derrick Norris, a nine-year veteran of the plant, said, "Normally in an explosion, you would be warned, but there was no vapor cloud, just a boom in an enclosed vessel. It happened so fast."

He noted that Rodney Gott, the supervisor who was killed, as well as the seriously injured maintenance workers, had many years of experience in the plant. This was unlike the two contract workers who were killed in the 1999 K-Resin plant explosion, he explained, who were not properly trained on the procedures.

During the discussion at the meeting several Phillips workers questioned the company's plans to restart several units, stating concerns for workers' safety. An operator in the K-Resin plant emphasized that the unit is understaffed and workers are overworked, despite company promises to increase staffing. Another worker mentioned

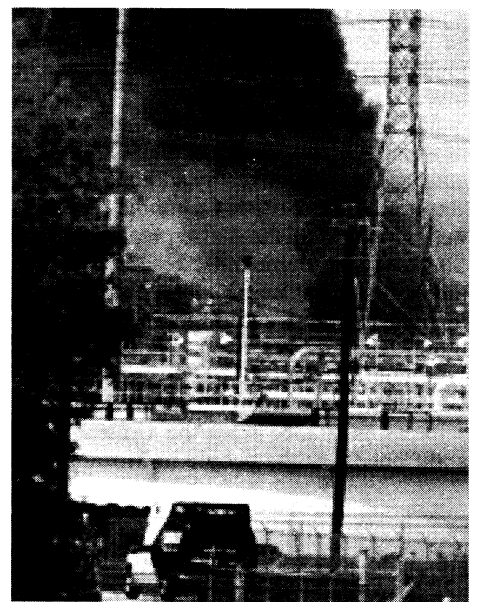


the fact that the company has ignored a recent report issued by a consulting firm hired by Phillips that recommended hiring more operators.

The company has an abysmal safety record. Thirty deaths have occurred in the past 11 years. In October 1989, the poly-

ethylene plant exploded, killing 23 and injuring 130. In December 1989, a worker was killed after being hit in the head by a piece of sheet metal. In 1992 a worker was crushed to death.

"Phillips takes great pride in its safety record," Jere Smith, a Phillips spokesman,



Thirty workers have lost their lives at Phillips Petroleum over past 11 years. Left: workers gather in car parking lot across from the burning plant (above).

told the *Dallas Morning News*. He was discussing the explosion and the company's efforts to "avoid these incidents."

Dean Cook is a member of PACE Local 4-227 and a locked-out Crown Petroleum worker. Lea Sherman is a meat packer.

El Salvador labor actions oppose privatizations

BY JANNE ABULLARADE

SEATTLE—Thousands of people marched in El Salvador over the past few weeks against privatization of the health care system and in support of medical personnel who have been on strike since November 15. The labor actions are a reflection of the increasing resistance of workers and farmers in El Salvador since 1998. For example, public sector unions alone organized 18 strikes in 1999.

In El Salvador, a Central American country with a population of 5.5 million, the government puts unemployment at 7.3 percent, but concedes that at least 1 million people are underemployed. While almost 2.5 million people are qualified to work, almost 180,000 are jobless.

In this context, one of the most significant labor actions was the nationwide strike by two of the unions of the Salvadoran Institute of Social Security (ISSS). The strikes ended on March 10 after nearly four months. The strike by the Union of Workers of the ISSS (STISSS) was over the failure to receive a salary increase promised as part of the agreement to end a one-month strike in

May 1998.

The strike was supported, and later on joined, by the Union of Medical Doctors Working in the ISSS (SIMETRISSS). The two unions also demanded a halt to the process of privatization of health care in El Salvador. Doctors from public hospitals and some private clinics around the country also backed the fight.

At several large marches in the capital, San Salvador, the ranks of members of the two ISSS unions were swelled by peasant organizations, members of the Integrated Movement of Labor Organizations, and university students.

Unions representing dock workers, railroad workers, and teachers, as well as members of 50 rural communities that came together after the devastation of Hurricane Mitch in 1998, also participated in marches in cities across the country. The demonstrations called for support to the strike and demanded a halt to the selling off to capitalist enterprises of health-care facilities, educational institutions, and water service.

The government refused to negotiate and declared the strike illegal two days after it

started. A week later the administrators declared a state of emergency, which allowed the government to send police outside and inside hospitals and other ISSS sites nationwide. Unionists condemned the police presence in the health institutions. Ruperto Mejía, first secretary of STISSS, said that there was no reason to have the police in the facilities as the union has allowed doctors, nurses, and others into the medical centers.

The administration of the ISSS fired 221 workers and threatened to fire more, and told the doctors that, according to the law, they could be fined and lose their licenses for striking. The STISSS pointed out, however, that there were already 1,000 people fired, including doctors, nurses, and hospital workers.

While public health care was seriously affected, and despite declarations in the media by the Archbishop of San Salvador, Fernando Sáenz, President Francisco Flores, and other high-ranking government officials that the strike was hurting a large number of people for the benefit of a few, a public opinion poll conducted by *La Prensa Gráfica* in San Salvador February 24 reported that 53 percent blamed the government for prolongation of the strike.

On March 10, two days before municipal and legislative elections, the strike ended when the government promised to comply with the agreements of May 1998, including salary increases. Both sides agreed to comply with the ruling of the Supreme Court regarding the 221 workers who were fired and to continue negotiations.

While not breaking any new ground in their contract, this fight and the broad support it generated is an example of the growing resistance to the selling off to capitalist concerns of the social infrastructure and industries that provide basic services throughout the Americas.

At a meeting on the agreement, the unionists celebrated their victory with cheers to the union representatives and boos to the government delegation headed by Minister of Health José López Beltrán. "Are you sad minister? We won," yelled one worker. Later on the unionists marched through the main streets of the city, led by the general secretary of the STISSS. As the president of SIMETRISSS said, to explain the widespread support their strike received: "It is the people who are uniting to protest against privatization."

Atlanta authorities trample on rights of the accused

BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

ATLANTA—Authorities here are using the shooting death of a cop to undermine the right to be presumed innocent and to bolster the image of the police.

The state is pressing for a murder indictment against Jamil Abdullah Al-Amin. The one-time Black Panther Party leader, then known as H. Rap Brown, is charged with killing a Fulton County sheriff's deputy and wounding another officer on March 16.

Al-Amin is currently being held in solitary confinement in a Montgomery, Alabama, jail cell and is fighting extradition to Georgia. He faces federal fugitive charges after being captured in Lowndes County, Alabama, on March 20.

Once found there, as many as 150 Georgia and Alabama police, FBI SWAT teams, and other federal cops surrounded a shack where Al-Amin was hiding. Overhead was an Alabama National Guard helicopter with Forward-Looking Infrared Radar.

In the aftermath of the March 16 shooting of the two police officers, the Atlanta West End community was the target of a massive police manhunt. The 100-officer

force was quadrupled March 17 when police deputy Richard Kinchen died.

The front-page banner headline of the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* March 18 read, "Officers vow to find former Black Panther." Residents say the Black working-class community has been the target of cop harassment for several years. Some are asking why the two police deputies waited until dark to serve Al-Amin with an arrest warrant for failing to appear in court when he lives, works, and is active in a Muslim mosque in the West End.

The March 21 funeral of Kinchen became a mobilization of uniformed police officers. At each of the 12 county lines, along the 180 miles to Tifton, Georgia, where Kinchen was buried, a different set of cop cars with lights flashing accompanied the hearse to the next county line.

"Can he possibly get a fair trial? Does he even have a chance with all of this going on?" asked a meat packer at the Hormel plant gate the day of the funeral. "As for the rest of us, we better mind our p's and q's."

Al-Amin is being presumed guilty and tried daily in the local press. His case is

discussed in workplaces throughout the city, where many workers doubt that he will get a fair trial. The police and local politicians have made progress in their propaganda campaign, reflected in the fact that some argue that if Al-Amin killed a "peace officer," he should get what's coming to him.

The case is also provoking discussion at Georgia State University and other area campuses. Tarwiyah Thomas, a senior, said, "Al-Amin is being exploited by the media. They claim he has two wives. What does that have to do with anything, other than most people would view it as a negative, if it were true. They bring up the Black Panthers, which is another way for them to portray him as a negative."

Supporters of Al-Amin are demanding that he be presumed innocent until proven guilty. They also point out that Al-Amin was set up in 1995 on aggravated assault charges. The man who claimed he was shot by Al-Amin later recanted and said he was pressured by authorities to finger Al-Amin.

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