

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

CPUSA is dropping
pretense of Leninism

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 65/NO. 27 JULY 16, 2001

Canada health-care strikers resist gov't attack on unions

BY JOE YATES

VANCOUVER, British Columbia—Some 2,900 hospital workers, members of the Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union, went on strike June 27. The 2,100 Halifax-area nurses respected their picket lines. Nine and a half hours later, the provincial government passed a law making strikes by hospital workers illegal. The strike continued until the next day when the workers during a mass meeting decided to submit resignations effective in two weeks if the government does not significantly improve its offer. At least 66 percent have signed forms saying they will resign.

Three thousand health-care workers demonstrated June 19 outside the provincial legislature in Halifax while the government debated the law that imposes daily fines of \$2,000. Another 4,400 nurses, represented by the Nova Scotia Nurses Union, are set to strike on July 9.

They turned down a 10.5 percent raise and are demanding 20 percent. Other key issues are mandatory overtime and understaffing. Other hospital workers turned down an 8.5 percent increase over three years.

The newly elected Liberal government met in special session June 19 to impose a 60-day "cooling-off" period on 23,000 British Columbia nurses and 14,000 other hospital workers who are members of the Health Sciences Association (HSA). In the May 16

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California raisin farmers confront low prices

BY ROLLANDE GIRARD
AND NED MEASEL

FRESNO, California--Raisin growers in central California have announced the organization they recently formed to defend their interests against the big packing companies will also serve as a bargaining association.

Many growers face ruin due to rock-bottom prices the packers are offering for the raisin crop.

At a meeting of 150 growers June 5 in Kerman, California, Marvin Horne, a member of the board of directors of the California Raisin Reform Association (CRRRA), announced "we are now a bargaining association."

The association will set the price its members receive from the packers.

The CRRRA was formed last fall by growers who wanted to reform the Raisin Administrative Committee (RAC) because they felt it represented the interests of the packers over those of the growers. It had proposed reforms to the RAC's board of directors, including that it be limited to growers. Growers have organized meetings, mobilized at RAC hearings, and set up picket lines at the state capital as part of their fight

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Milosevic 'war crimes' trial will boost U.S. intervention

Workers are target of Washington's pressure on Yugoslavia

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

Bowing to economic and diplomatic pressure applied by the U.S. government and its allies, the government of Serbia turned over former president Slobodan Milosevic to imperialist forces on June 28 to stand trial before the "war crimes tribunal" in The Hague, Netherlands, established under the auspices of the United Nations. Washington has raised the banner of "war crimes" against Milosevic and other political figures as part of its propaganda campaign to justify U.S. and NATO military intervention in the Balkans.

The U.S. military played a central part in the June 28 operation. Serbian government officials handed the former president over at the U.S. air base in Tuzla, Bosnia, which is used by U.S. occupation troops in that region of Yugoslavia. From there Milosevic was flown on a NATO plane to a military facility near The Hague.

Milosevic was brought before the tribunal July 2 to face charges of "crimes against humanity" in Kosovo. The charge by the UN court points to the forced deportation of

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U.S. crews prepare B-1 warplanes during NATO bombing of Serbia in 1999. Washington will use 'war crimes' show trial of Milosevic to justify its military and political intervention in Yugoslavia, where there are now thousands of U.S. occupation troops.

Kyoto treaty fraud shows imperialist rivalries

BY MAGGIE TROWE

The debate over the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change brings into relief the tensions between U.S. imperialism and its competitors in Europe and Japan as each jockeys to promote its national interests. It also exposes the exploitive social relations between the billionaire capitalist families of the industrialized capitalist countries and the countries held in semicolonial bondage.

As Japanese prime minister Junichiro Koizumi headed for Washington to meet with U.S. president George Bush at the end of June, he told the media he would urge Bush to reverse his administration's decision against the accords and to sign the treaty. After meeting with Bush, Koizumi said he wasn't "disappointed in the president's position" on the Kyoto Protocol, adding that Bush is "enthusiastic about environmental issues." The Japanese prime minister said that there is "still time to dis-

cuss this issue" and that he had no "intention of proceeding without the cooperation of the United States."

Emerging from the discussions with U.S. administration officials, a spokesman for Japan's government-backed Federation of Electric Power Companies said, "We are greatly encouraged by the fact that a nation that plays a key role in the direction world energy policy takes has shifted to backing nuclear power."

About a third of Japan's electric power comes from its 51 commercial nuclear reactors. Bush's energy task force, headed by Vice President Richard Cheney, has called for increasing the use of nuclear power, which does not produce carbon dioxide and other "greenhouse gases."

Bush stuck to his guns during his recent trip to Europe on his March announcement that the administration would not sign the protocol or seek to impose mandatory emissions reductions for U.S. power plants and

other companies.

The protocol was cobbled together in Kyoto, Japan, in 1997 at an 11-day conference of representatives from 150 countries. From the first day to the last, the meeting featured contending imperialist powers promoting their national interests at the expense of their rivals and of workers and farmers in the semicolonial world. It has been touted by its supporters as a means of limiting emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases thought to cause global warming.

The agreement would in theory require 39 industrialized countries to reduce their collective emissions of these gases to at least 5 percent below 1990 levels by a target period between 2008 and 2012. The plan would go into effect if ratified by countries representing 55 percent of the 1990 level of carbon dioxide emissions.

From the start, Washington, then under the administration of president William Clinton, demanded semicolonial countries also be required to make cuts in emissions. In addition, the final treaty contains a provision promoted by the Clinton administration that would allow wealthy countries to get around the treaty by purchasing "emission reduction units" from underdeveloped countries that currently have, or attain through voluntary reductions, emissions below the required level.

In effect, the wealthy capitalist countries would buy the "units" created by imperialist-imposed underdevelopment such as lack of power plants, few automobiles, and a low level of heavy industry.

Likely targets would be countries comprising the two billion people in the world who have no electricity and the more than 800 million who live with hunger and malnutrition.

The "emission credit" scam is not a new idea. In fact, it was made in the USA. The so-called Clean Air Act of 1990, adopted with bipartisan support, permits this sort of trade in pollution credits between capitalists in the United States.

The United States, which accounts for 25

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Attend the Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange

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Participants in workshop at the 1996 Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange

For information contact the Youth Exchange Information Center, American Indian Learning Resource Center, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455, (763) 443-8730; e-mail: youthexchange01@yahoo.com; or visit the website: <http://youthexchange01.8m.com>

Working people in Miami protest spate of killings by cops

BY MIKE ITALIE

MIAMI—Working people in Miami are joining picket lines, protests, and other actions in response to a string of nearly weekly killings by the police. In their latest assaults cops shot a wheelchair-bound man in the back and released a 17-bullet barrage on a man they had surrounded and who was carrying nothing more than a pocketknife.

Haitian workers have been at the center of the largest protests, demanding justice in the death of Marc Dorvil. The killing and the police cover-up and slander against Dorvil led to a June 2 rally of 1,000 initiated by Haitian-American rights organization Veye Yo. A June 23 funeral of some 500 people for Dorvil—who died while in custody of North Bay Village police—became the second mass protest demanding the truth and that action be taken against the cops responsible for Dorvil's death.

Dorvil, a carpenter at the Friedman Brothers plant in nearby Medley, and a part-time minister, was involved in a minor traffic accident May 14. The police claim it took eight of them to subdue Dorvil, who they hog-tied and placed face down in the back of a patrol car. The *Miami Herald* repeated the cops' story as fact, stating Dorvil "banged his head against the window" of the patrol car and that he was having a "cocaine fit." An ambulance was called to treat the police but Dorvil was left unattended in the back of the police car.

The medical examiner's report confirmed there were no drugs in his system, something Dorvil's friends had insisted on. But the report then rejected charges of police wrongdoing by claiming Dorvil suffered from a "rare brain chemical malady" that caused his behavior to resemble that of violent reaction to cocaine and that he died of "acute exhaustive mania."

The June 23 funeral brought together workers and others angered by the killing and the cops' refusal to provide information on Dorvil's death. Souvenie Hilarde was one of four sewing machine operators from the Goodwill Industries plant to attend the

funeral. She has been paying attention to the many police shootings here and pointed out, "Every time the police kill people they don't go to jail, so they keep on doing it. To get justice we must do everything we can—petitions, demonstrations, and phone calls."

Ynecesse Belhomme worked as a machine operator at the same factory as Dorvil and came to the funeral to express his support for the family and anger at the cops' "brutality and discrimination. It could happen to anybody," he said. "Black, white, woman, or man. If there are not more demonstrations this will only get worse." Belhomme said that he could have just as easily been killed by the police because the cops stopped the van he was driving several weeks earlier, telling him that "this car costs too much for someone like you," and then grabbed him by the throat and threw him into the back of their patrol car. He had to prove to the cops that the van was not stolen before they would release him.

At times during the funeral ceremony members of the audience would shout out "Justice!" "Justice for Marc Dorvil!" and "Racist police!" Speakers at the funeral included several members of Dorvil's family, a wide range of ministers in Miami, elected officials, and activists in the fight against police brutality.

Shoot first, ask questions later

Two other police shootings have broken into the news in the month since the killing of Marc Dorvil. In each case the police blatantly asserted their authority to shoot first and ask questions later.

On June 6 a Miami police officer killed Richard Beatty, a homeless Vietnam veteran, in a 17-shot burst of fire. City homicide detectives refuse to make the cop's name public, but he was part of what the *Miami Herald* described as a "parade of police" following Beatty, who they claim had threatened an all-night cafeteria worker with a pocketknife.

The police followed Beatty for nearly a mile, tried to surround him with patrol cars,



Militant/John Studer

Members of the United Food and Commercial Workers union on strike against Dunkin' Donuts hold an informational picket line near the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia. The workers walked out of the distribution center outside the city that serves the entire Northeast. The strikers are fighting for dignity on the job and against company firings of union members. Against the backdrop of a huge rat labeled Dunkin' Donuts, strikers told the press they are urging people not to patronize Dunkin' Donuts stores until the company agrees to treat the workers with respect and sign a contract with the union.

and then hit him with a face full of pepper spray before gunning him down. Miami police public information officer Lt. William Schwartz defended the killing, claiming that "the officers used incredible restraint" in handling Beatty and his pocketknife.

On June 17 North Miami Beach police officer Dennis Fogelgren shot and killed wheelchair-bound Alphaeus Dailey with eight rounds in the back. The cops immediately labeled Dailey, 30, a "career criminal" and released extensive details about his arrest record and claimed that the gun they found in the area was his. In contrast, Fogelgren was reported as having a favorable record, leading all street patrol officers last year with 571 citations and 149 arrests, about three times the average for his shift.

More than 100 people turned out the next day to question the cops at a meeting at the Washington Park Community Center near where Dailey lived and was killed. When North Miami Beach police chief William Berger called for quiet, then-Miami NAACP president Victor Curry responded: "The powers-that-be take the lives" of African-American men "then tell us to calm down. Tell the police officers to calm down."

Miami police chief Raul Martinez announced to Black rights and community activists June 19 that the investigation into the April 30 police shooting of 18-year-old Nicholas Singleton had been completed. But he released no details and said it was now up to the state attorney's office to decide whether any of the three cops involved in the shooting will be prosecuted.

Singleton was killed by a bullet to the back of the head as he was chased by police for allegedly stealing a car. Despite initial police reports that he and others with him had fired shots, no weapon was found. In-

stead, searches of the neighborhood turned up 19 spent shells from police handguns and tests showed that Singleton did not have gunpowder residue on his hands.

Frame-up unravels

The case of Jerry Townsend, however, has provided some of the most damning evidence of police lies, coercion, and cover-up. Townsend, 49 and mentally disabled, was released from prison last month nearly 22 years after being sentenced to life without parole for seven murder and rape convictions. When DNA test results on April 27 showed that he could not have committed two of the murders the other convictions unraveled rapidly.

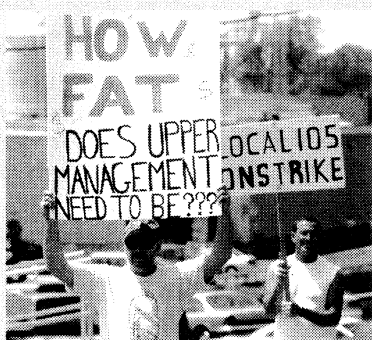
At the heart of the police and prosecutor's frame-up of Townsend were the series of confessions forced out of the mentally disabled man. All but one of the seven convictions were based solely on his confessions. Richard Ofshe, an independent analyst of police interrogations, said, "What emerges is as horrible an example of victimization of somebody who is handicapped as I have ever seen."

A *Miami Herald* review of Townsend's cases showed that the police detectives fed him information, corrected his "mistakes," and showed him crime-scene photos to influence his confessions. At one point in the taped confession, a detective asked Townsend how he had killed a young woman who had been strangled with her brassiere. The reply: "a little thin wire." In response the detective said, "I think you're getting a little confused," and turned off the recorder. When the tape comes back on Townsend says, "I choke her with her own bra." The independent analyst Ofshe concluded that the cops' "conduct is immoral and unconscionable."

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The Militant

Vol. 65/No. 27

Closing news date: July 4, 2001

Editor: MARTIN KOPPEL

Business Manager: MAURICE WILLIAMS

Editorial Staff: Roger Calero, Greg McCartan, Maggie Trowe, Brian Williams, and Maurice Williams.

Young Socialists column editor: ROMINA GREEN

Published weekly except for two weeks in August and one week in December.

The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Telephone: (212) 243-6392; Fax (212) 924-6040.

E-mail: TheMilitant@compuserve.com

The Militant website is: www.themilitant.com

Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to The Militant Business Office, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Subscriptions: **United States:** for one-year subscription send \$45 to above address.

Latin America, Caribbean: for one-year subscription send \$65, drawn on a U.S. bank, to above address. By first-class (airmail), send \$80.

Asia: send \$80 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.

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Workers in France say, 'No more layoffs!'

BY NAT LONDON

PARIS—More than 20,000 workers from throughout France demonstrated here June 9 demanding expanded union rights to combat the continuing wave of layoffs and plant closures. The demonstration was called by several political parties, including the French Communist Party (PCF) and Lutte Ouvrière (LO).

It was the second such demonstration in several weeks. On May 22, close to 15,000 workers struck and demonstrated in Paris and more than 5,000 in Marseille in response to the call of the General Confederation of Labor (CGT), the largest union of industrial workers in the country. The CGT slogan, "the conquering spirit: new century, new workers rights," reflects the deepening combative mood among workers in France.

This fighting spirit is spreading from workers in the state-run industries such as the railroads, postal, telephone, and gas and electric workers to industrial workers in privately owned companies. Workers in private industry suffered a series of sharp defeats in the 1980s in such industries as coal, steel, auto, shipyards, and textiles, from which they are only now beginning to recover.

Following the June 9 action, workers at the Bata shoe factory in Moussey, in the Lorraine region, announced that they were "releasing" Antonius Van Es, their plant director, who had been retained in his office by 100 workers for more than 24 hours. The workers took turns blocking the plant's gates. Van Es promised he would return to the plant Monday for negotiations. The factory remained occupied. "We want Toronto [where the Bata family has its headquarters] to commit all means necessary to ensure that we have zero unemployment," said Anita Marchal, representing a three-union coordinating committee.

On June 11, the director returned to the factory to announce that the plant, which has 875 workers and had already laid off 277 workers in 1997, would close permanently. Workers voted to continue to occupy the plant, holding 450,000 pairs of Bata shoes inside the factory as their "war chest."

"Before, we used to protest, but finally accepted layoffs. We had a sort of fatalistic attitude," said José Perez, as he stopped by a table doing a brisk business selling Pathfinder books at the Paris demonstration. Perez had come to the demonstration from the Sotteville railroad depots in Rouen, where he became a well-known figure in the nationwide railroad strikes in 1986 and 1995. "Now workers are discussing how to forbid layoffs. We are more offensive than we were before."

Correa Bissent agreed. He also stopped by the Pathfinder table to check out the books and pamphlets and speak to some of his co-workers helping staff the table. "If a company is making profits, it should not have the right to lay off workers," said Bissent, who comes from Senegal and has worked for the last 10 years at the Peugeot auto assembly plant at Poissy near Paris

where he is a member of the CGT. "We need a law giving new rights to union representatives allowing them to block layoffs."

Workers have been particularly angered by layoffs in companies that have been making substantial profits. These have been dubbed "licenciements boursier"—stock market layoffs. The lead contingent in the June 9 demonstration came from more than 20 companies at which such layoffs have been announced, including the workers at the two LU cookie factories owned by the Danone company, the AOL-Air Liberté airline, Valéo auto parts, Bull computer equipment, Moulinex household appliances, Marks and Spencer department stores, and Dim clothing.

Support from Basque Workers Union

Two thousand workers from the Basque Workers Union (LAB) came to the June 9 Paris demonstration. Members of the LAB had previously occupied the Basque summer residence of Franck Riboud, the director of the Danone company, in solidarity with the struggle of workers protesting the closure of Danone's LU cookie factories in northern France.

They had come to Paris for another demonstration that morning, together with Corsican and Breton nationalists, to defend the rights of political prisoners from the three areas. Many of the Basque workers came from that part of the Basque country occupied by the Spanish state. They stayed over to join thousands of French workers for the afternoon demonstration protesting layoffs. Their youthful and enthusiastic contingent waved Basque flags and sang the *International* in Basque.

Storm clouds have been rapidly gathering on the European economic horizon as both the German and French governments have been forced to lower their expectations for economic growth this year. Since last fall French economics minister Laurent Fabius has continued to lower the projected growth rate of the French economy from 3.3 percent to "a little less than" 2.5 percent. At the same time, officials announced an increase in May unemployment, reversing a four-year trend to lower rates. The euro took its sharpest one-day dive against the dollar in the last six months.

Companies in Europe have started to cut back production and reduce their workforce as the economic slowdown takes hold. This has sparked a wave of strikes and demonstrations in France, as well as a political debate among workers as to what measures offer the best protection against such layoffs. The debate has also involved the Socialist Party (SP) and French Communist Party that make up the governing coalition known as the Plural Left, and the CGT.

Union demands

Militant workers involved in the struggles have been increasingly raising the demand to give veto rights over layoffs to the shop committees. Such committees, made up of



Militant/Nat London

Auto workers from Renault Cleon plant in Rouen march in Paris May 22 demanding government action against layoffs. Some 20,000 workers marched in Paris and Marseille.

union representatives elected by workers, are obligatory in any workplace of at least 50 workers. The committees already have some legal rights, including the right to open the company's books under certain conditions, but under current law they can only give their opinion concerning the company's decisions.

The CGT called its May 22 national day of action and demonstrations for a new law making "every plan to restructure a company dependent on the consultation of the workers and the agreement of a majority of their elected representatives," thus giving shop committees decision-making power.

Most of the leaders of the CGT are also members of the Communist Party and public differences between the two organizations are very rare. Nevertheless, the PCF, which is in the government coalition, did not mobilize for the CGT's May 22 action, calling instead for its own action June 9, supported by the Green party and several centrist groups, including the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR) and Lutte Ouvrière. In return, the CGT publicly announced it would not mobilize for the June 9 Communist Party demonstration, but instead would send only a limited delegation. In the end, a number of local CGT unions such as those from the Peugeot auto assembly plant at Poissy and the Citroën assembly plant at Aulnay-sous-bois were present with small delegations at the June 9 action, but with banners repeating their call for union veto power over layoffs.

Workers' resistance to layoffs has also provoked a debate within the government over a draft law, the Social Modernization Act.

Contradictory amendments to the law were presented by Socialist Party premier Lionel Jospin and by the French Communist Party.

With Jospin insisting that "the state can not forbid layoffs," the Socialist Party introduced amendments doubling the minimum severance pay which, they said, would discourage companies from laying off workers "unnecessarily." But under pressure from workers demonstrating for "new union rights," the PCF announced that they would vote against the law, putting the government in a minority.

Following the mass demonstrations, the SP and PCF agreed on an amended version of the law that would give shop committees the right to vote on layoffs. However, if they vote against, a mediator would be named and given a month to try to reach an agreement. After one month, the company would be free to go ahead with the layoffs anyway.

Bernard Thibault, the general secretary of the CGT, regretted the move, saying that the government's adoption of measures concerning a mediator are ones "the unions had not asked for." Charles Hoareau, the leader of the CGT unemployed committees in Marseille, wrote a public letter to PCF leader Robert Hue asking how he "expects us to feel other than as someone who has been stabbed in the back?" Hue insisted that the law demanded by the unions "would prevent thousands and thousands of speculative layoffs."

Nat London is an auto worker at the Renault auto parts plant in Choisy-le-roi and a member of the CGT.

Cleveland rally condemns shooting by cop

BY TONY PRINCE

CLEVELAND—Seventy-five people, most of them young, rallied here June 24 to protest the shooting of an unarmed man by a Cleveland cop five days earlier. The bullet fired by the police officer also severely injured a six-year-old boy. The shooting is provoking angry reactions from working people here.

According to many witnesses, police officer Michael Meyer shot 23-year-old Jimmy Nelson after a car chase. When Nelson and his cousin, Chaz Flonnory, got out of the car, the police grabbed Flonnory. Nelson took off running but didn't get very far before Meyer shot him. Meyer's bullet hit Nelson in the shoulder and then hit six-year-old Trevon Williams, who was sitting on the porch of a nearby house. The bullet went through the abdomen of Williams and then came out his back. Williams suffered serious injuries, but appears likely to survive. Both the victims of the shooting are Black, as are most of the residents of the neighborhood.

The police and city officials claimed that Meyer shot Nelson in the course of a struggle. Cleveland mayor Michael White said Nelson "became entangled with a police officer."

The police say they were pursuing Nelson and Flonnory in response to a complaint about drug dealing. They admit that the two were unarmed and do not assert either had drugs on them. City regulations state the police can fire their weapons only if their lives or the lives of others are in danger.

Neighborhood residents who witnessed the shooting disputed the story told by city

officials and the cops. Eileen Latham, whose house is located in the middle of the incident, said, "They were not wrestling. I saw him [the cop] fire the shot. He pulled out his weapon and positioned and fired." Her husband, Mark Latham, added, "I don't feel that there was a need for a shot to be fired. They had him cornered. He wasn't going anywhere."

In interviews with the *Militant*, working people in the area were generally skeptical of the police version of events and said the problem of police violence is not going to go away. James Clardy, a 40-year-old truck driver, said, "What happened here is going to happen again. Drugs are always a convenient excuse for the police. It's the first thing they say. And it's not the small people who are bringing in the dope anyway."

Twenty-six-year-old Jontia Jackson said that on the street where the shooting occurred, "everyone sitting on their porches that day saw what happened: the cop deliberately knelt and aimed and fired at the guy who was running away. Everybody saw it. We all think this is a cover-up; why else would they put the cop on paid leave?"

Natalie Roberts, a 19-year-old student, also believed that police brutality is "not going to stop." But, she added, referring to the *Militant*, "I think we need to get more literature out about this so the people become more aware. Because of course the media is going with the police on this."

Tony Prince is a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees and is the Socialist Workers candidate for Cleveland City Council, Ward 18.

NEW FROM PATHFINDER

CUBA and the Coming American Revolution

by Jack Barnes

There will be a victorious revolution in the United States before a victorious counterrevolution in Cuba

— Fidel Castro, March 1961

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U.S. youth prepare for exchange in Cuba

BY MAGGIE TROWE

A number of young people in several U.S. cities are raising funds, organizing classes, and taking other steps to prepare to attend the Second Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange, which will take place July 22-30 in Havana.

The meeting, called by the Federation of University Students, Federation of High School Students, Union of Young Communists, and other Cuban youth organizations, will provide a forum for students and young workers from the United States and Cuba to discuss a range of important questions in U.S., Cuban, and world politics.

In Minneapolis-St. Paul, some two dozen youth will be traveling to Havana, including students from the University of Minnesota, St. Cloud State University, high school students, and youth from Omaha, Nebraska, and Des Moines, Iowa.

The group has already organized two discussion classes on speeches by Cuban president Fidel Castro—a 1960 speech at the United Nations and one given this year on the 40th anniversary of the declaration of the socialist character of the Cuban Revolution.

The Minnesota youth have also organized fund-raising events to help cover travel and other costs—including a social, a raffle, and a benefit with local bands at the Intermedia Arts Center, raising a total of \$1,000 so far. Now they are selling T-shirts designed by a member of the group.

The youth have established the Youth Exchange Information Center, located at the American Indian Learning Resource Center on the University of Minnesota campus. It serves as a national center for disseminating information about the Havana meeting.

In Miami, nine young people are expected to participate in the Youth Exchange. The Miami Coalition Against the Embargo of Cuba has featured the Havana gathering at its meetings and events, and is helping to

raise funds. Participants include students from Florida International University (FIU) North as well as youth from Tampa.

The FIU students have campaigned with the coalition to publicize the Youth Exchange by setting up street tables and arranging invitations by professors to speak at their classes.

The Miami youth have organized a class on "History Will Absolve Me," Fidel Castro's explanation of the political and social goals of the Cuban Revolution based on his 1953 defense speech at his trial for leading a revolutionary assault on the U.S.-backed dictatorship's Moncada army barracks.

The Miami Coalition is also organizing a send-off fund-raising party the night before the participants leave for Cuba. When they return, some of them will speak at a meeting being organized by supporters on the FIU South campus.

In New York City, eight youth, including a high school student, students from colleges in the area, and youth active with the church of San Romero de las Américas, which is based in the largely Dominican community of Washington Heights, have signed up to attend the Youth Exchange.

These youth are getting help from Cuba solidarity activists to send out a 500-piece fund appeal, and is organizing calls to groups and churches in Harlem and elsewhere to educate about the Exchange and raise travel funds. Several groups have agreed to e-mail their memberships to let them know about the Youth Exchange and the fund-raising for it.

In Chicago, young people have organized the Cuba Youth Exchange Committee and have been meeting at the University of Illinois-Chicago campus once a week to plan their participation in the event. The committee is comprised of members of Casa Guatemala and the Young Socialists, stu-



Militant/Brian Taylor

Session of 1996 Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange. Youth in several U.S. cities are raising funds, holding classes, and taking other steps to attend this year's event in Havana.

dents at the University of Illinois (UIC) and Northeastern, and young workers from throughout Chicago. The committee's meetings have featured an educational workshop on the Cuban Revolution and an informational session on the Exchange. At least seven people are on board to go from Chicago, including a graduate student at UIC and an artist who was a part of the fight for a high school in the largely Mexican neighborhood of Little Village.

On July 1 the committee organized a fund-raiser at the Hot House, where almost \$700 was raised. Restaurants donated some food to the event, and the rest was brought by those attending. Several musicians performed. There was a raffle, which included a piece of

artwork donated by an artist in Little Village who plans to attend the Exchange.

Bernard Isley reports from Pittsburgh that so far five youth are preparing to attend the Youth Exchange, including students at the University of Edinboro and the University of Pittsburgh, as well as three young workers. They are planning public events when they return to discuss what they learned. To raise money, they organized a car wash that netted \$130, and are preparing a potluck dinner at the Edinboro campus and a benefit at a local tavern where rappers and poets will perform.

One of the Pittsburgh youth contacted the *Chicago Defender*, a Black community newspaper, and was assigned to report on the Youth Exchange.

For more information on participation in the Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange, see the ad on the front page of this issue.

Court upholds freelance author copyright

BY GREG MCCARTAN

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled June 25 in favor of six freelance journalists who had sued a group of newspaper and magazine publishers for violating copyright laws when the group made articles available to an Internet data base without the permission of the authors.

The journalists brought the lawsuit in 1993 against the *New York Times*, Time Inc., and *Newsday*. Jonathan Tasini, president of the National Writers Union and the lead plaintiff in the case, said in response the ruling, "Now it's time for the media industry to pay creators their fair share. Let's sit

down and negotiate over this today."

The three publishers had licensed the contents of the papers and magazines to Lexis/Nexis, where individual articles in text format can be retrieved electronically. The publishers argued that they were in compliance with the Copyright Act of 1976, which gives the holder of the copyright for the entirety of an issue the right to reproduce "any revision of that collective work."

In a minority opinion, Justices John Paul Stevens and Stephen Breyer agreed with the publishers that "neither the conversion of the print publishers' collective works from printed to electronic form,

nor the transmission of those electronic versions of collective works to the electronic databases, nor even the actions of the electronic databases once they received those electronic versions does anything to deprive those electronic versions of their status as mere 'revisions' of the original collective works."

But the court majority found that unlike microfilm, where the reader can see the article in its original context, someone calling up individual articles from a data base on their computer sees the works "disconnected from their original context."

Since the mid-1990s many publishers have required freelance authors to waive their electronic publishing rights, limiting the overall liability of the publishers in the case. But it is likely the publishers still owe substantial damages to the authors and thousands of others who have joined three class-action lawsuits against providers of electronic data bases, which the court also found liable for copyright infringement.

Final Scoreboard Young Socialists Fund Drive! May 6-July 1

City	Goal	Paid	%
Seattle	90	165	183%
Tucson	300	392	131%
Pittsburgh	200	202	101%
Chicago	300	300	100%
Los Angeles	450	326	72%
New York	700	470	67%
Philadelphia	150	70	47%
Twin Cities	300	99	33%
Tuscaloosa		115	
Other		427	
Total	2,490	2,566	107%
Nat'l goal/ Should be	2,400	2,400	100%

Staff writer takes new assignment to help build socialist movement

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

Hilda Cuzco, a staff writer for the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* since 1993, is heading to Pennsylvania to build the communist movement there.

Over the past eight years Cuzco wrote on a variety of political topics, from the rightist-led "culture war" in the United States to the capitalist economic crisis in Latin America and the resistance there by working people. Last year she traveled to Ecuador to provide firsthand coverage on the mobilizations by workers and Indian peasants against government austerity measures in the wake of the January 2000 indigenous uprising there. Cuzco also covered the pro-independence demonstrations in Guánica, Puerto Rico, in July 1998, on the 100th anniversary of the U.S. invasion of that nation.

Cuzco wrote and translated articles for *Perspectiva Mundial*, and did much of the layout and design work for the monthly socialist magazine. She also frequently served as photographer for both socialist

publications.

In the transition made by the staff to producing both the *Militant* and *PM* in a desktop publishing program, Cuzco learned and then taught other staff members efficient production methods. She became skilled at ad design, helping improve the overall presentation of the paper.

During this time the socialist publications also began a digital photo file, which meant staff members learning the scanning and digital preparation of photographs. Cuzco trained herself and others in these skills, demonstrating the qualitatively better results possible by conquering the complex photo processing programs.

Prior to joining the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* staff, Cuzco worked assembling cabs for 18-wheel trucks at the Kenworth trucking Co. plant in Seattle, and was a member of the International Association of Machinists. In addition to Seattle, she was previously active in building the Socialist Workers branches in Omaha, Nebraska; Dallas, Texas; and Washington, D.C.

Join the U.S. delegation to the 15th World Festival of Youth and Students

August 8-16, Algiers, Algeria

The festival will bring together thousands of youth from around the globe. Given its location, it is expected to draw attendance particularly from Africa and the Middle East, in addition to Europe, Latin America, North America, and Asia.

The program will offer nine days of discussion and debate on wide-ranging political topics, from the struggles for self-determination in Palestine, Western Sahara, and Puerto Rico, to the U.S. military buildup in Latin America, to the fight for women's rights, to U.S. imperialism's drive to expand NATO eastward.

☐ I am interested in attending the Festival

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO APPLY: contact the U.S. National Preparatory Committee, 15th World Festival of Youth and Students, 237 W. 23rd St., New York, NY 10011, e-mail: www.usnpc.org; or contact the Young Socialists at P.O. Box 33, New York, NY 10018. Tel: (212) 695-1809.

YS projects summer campaigns to recruit, study

BY OLYMPIA NEWTON

OBERLIN, Ohio—At the end of the July 14–17 Active Workers Conference in this city, more than 30 young people attended a meeting open to all conference participants of Young Socialists age.

The meeting centered on the summer campaigns of the YS. These include working with others to build broad delegations of young people to the July 22–30 Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange in Havana and to the World Festival of Youth and Students, scheduled for August 8–16 in Algiers, Algeria. The other major effort is the socialist summer schools, which will be centered in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Pittsburgh, and Minneapolis.

Jacob Perasso, the organizer of the Young Socialists National Executive Committee, opened the meeting with a report on YS summer perspectives. “We need to work with every individual and group interested in building the Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange and the World Festival of Youth and Students this summer,” he said.

“We need to continue building these events on the job in factories, on campuses, and in the workers districts we are reaching into along with the Socialist Workers Party. We need to be working with others to raise the money for these events; this will help us to reach out even more broadly to find new people who want to join the delegations with us.”

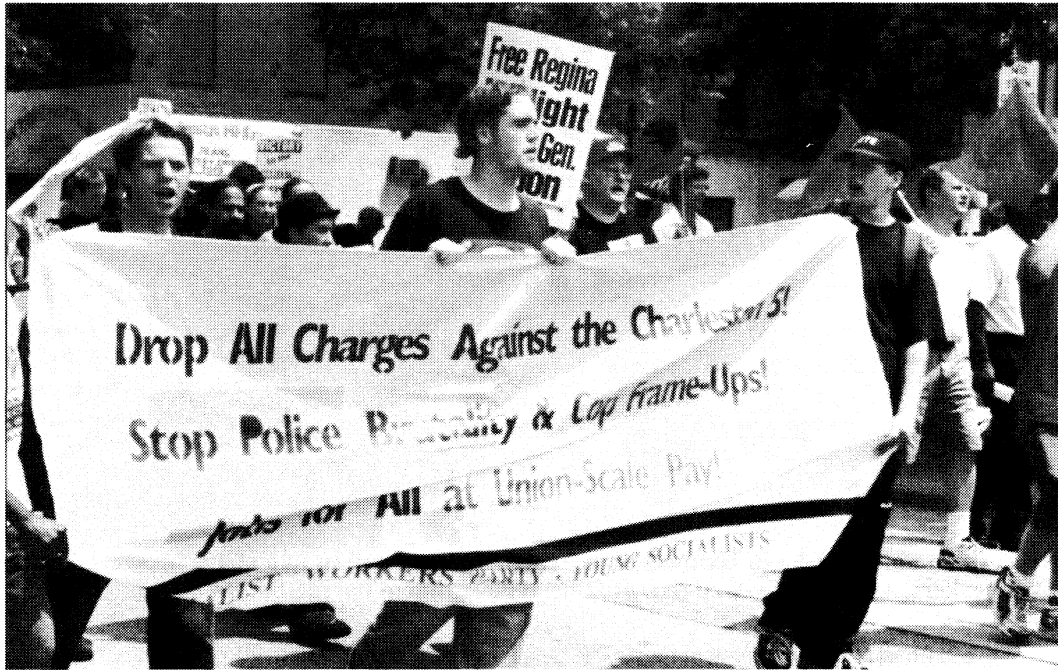
Perasso pointed to several examples from around the country where opportunities have opened up for the Young Socialists in this work. During the discussion on the report, Arrin Hawkins, a YS member and meat packer in Chicago, described a recent meeting at her union hall that heard a local union member speak about a recent visit he and a dairy farmer made to Cuba and meetings organized by the Cuban farmers organization. The union meeting raised interest among her co-workers in the Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange.

As part of regular weekly sales of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, members of the YS and the Socialist Workers Party in New York met a group of young people associated with a church in Washington Heights who are building a delegation to both events this summer.

Socialist summer schools

“The summer schools we are launching coming out of the Active Workers Conference are central to the work we are doing to build the YS this summer,” Perasso said. “Our summer schools are an opportunity to study the history of the communist movement and current Marxist analysis together with several generations of the communist movement, many of whom have a living link to the continuity we will be studying. The summer school classes will complement the weekly Militant Labor Forums series in every single city.”

Perasso stressed that the success of all these campaigns depends on the YS carrying them out alongside units of the Socialist Workers Party. “Every young person in this room will make decisions about their relationship to the communist movement in the immediate future,” Perasso noted. “Un-



Militant/Dave Wulp

YS contingent at June 9 rally in Colombia, South Carolina, in defense of framed-up dockworkers. “You study the history of the communist movement, and then you take what you’ve learned to the streets, to plant gates, on the job, and on campuses,” said YS leader Jason Alessio at meeting.

der capitalism, we are taught to think only of ourselves. In order to be revolutionaries, we have to challenge ourselves and each other to transform ourselves. As Che Guevara explained, we have to be selfless and make decisions based on what advances the interests of the communist movement.”

Winning youth to communist movement

The discussion that followed was a real exchange of experiences and ideas on recruiting to the YS, launching the socialist summer schools, and building delegations to the Youth Exchange and Youth Festival.

Marcie Pedraza, a member of the Chicago chapter of the YS, explained how her chapter took advantage of the interest in the Cuban Revolution and in revolutionary politics in the United States that they ran into as part of the recent campus-based speaking tour of Cuban youth leaders Yanelis Martínez and Javier Dueñas to build the Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange. “There are weekly meetings of a dozen people in Chicago,” Pedraza explained. “We watch videos and study books on Cuba and organize fund-raising activities for the Youth Exchange. We’ve also attracted some of the young people involved in a struggle

for a public high school in their Chicano neighborhood to the idea of going to the Exchange.”

In New York, YS members who marched in the “U.S. Navy out of Vieques” contingent in the Puerto Rican Day Parade met several young people who are active in Al-Awda, the Palestine Right to Return Coalition, explained Romina Green. “We will meet fighters who want to study Marxism and join the YS as we are building delegations to the meetings in Havana and Algiers, and we will meet fighters from all around the world at these two events.”

Jason Alessio, a member of the YS on his way to build the communist movement in Grand Junction, Colorado, explained his experiences in previous YS summer schools. “You study the history of the communist movement, and then you take what you’ve learned to the streets, to the plant gates, on the job, and on campuses. The summer schools are one of the best opportunities for YS members to work closely with a broader layer of our movement and learn from them.”

Shem Morton from the Los Angeles chapter explained the impact the strike by members of the Union of Needletrades, Indus-

trial and Textile Employees at Hollander Home Fashions in Vernon, California, had on the YS chapter there, whose members joined the picket lines and met several strikers. He also explained how the chapter was using the YS national fund drive to organize events geared toward recruiting some of the young people around them.

“We organized a video showing of a movie on Cuba and a class on the book *Playa Girón*,” Morton said. “Members of the Socialist Workers Party in Los Angeles sold five copies of *Playa Girón* at an organizing meeting for the Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange,” he noted, referring to the Pathfinder book on the 1961 Cuban victory over the U.S.-backed mercenary invasion at the Bay of Pigs.

“There are about 15 people in the Twin Cities planning on going to the Youth Exchange,” reported Lawrence Mikesch, the organizer of the YS there. “We have a broad coalition of students and professors, and are working to involve others we have met around anti-police brutality actions in this work. We are using the opportunity of the Youth Exchange to recruit to the YS in the Twin Cities. A few

of the individuals active in building the Exchange are very interested in joining the YS. By working with others around the Exchange and the Festival, we are getting to know them politically and drawing them closer to the YS.”

Perasso explained how all work done to build the Youth Exchange is work toward building the World Festival of Youth and Students. “The two events go hand in hand politically. Young people attracted to the Cuban Revolution can also be won to the idea of attending an international anti-imperialist youth festival in Algeria, a country where there was a successful revolution more than 30 years ago.”

Janice Smith, a brand-new YS member in Vancouver, British Columbia, explained that she had been attracted to the communist politics of the YS since she met members of the organization at an International Women’s Day event several months ago. She urged those in the room who were not yet YS members to “think seriously about why you want to be a member. I joined because it is a way to improve people’s lives by struggling for what you believe in,” which means making a socialist revolution.

Report: Blacks denied voting rights in Florida

BY MAGGIE TROWE

A report issued by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights found that in the 2000 presidential elections many Black residents of Florida were turned away from the polls or wrongfully purged from the voter registration rolls, and that a heavy presence of state police around polling places in Black communities had a chilling effect on people exercising their right to vote. The commission found that a number of disabled voters were denied their rights as well.

Commission chairperson Mary Frances Berry said she planned to meet with Attorney General John Ashcroft to ask the Jus-

tice Department to organize an investigation of whether the commission’s findings constitute a violation of the federal Voting Rights Act.

The commission focused its report, issued June 8, on a study of ballots that had been rejected as improperly marked during a recount in several counties initiated by supporters of then Vice President Albert Gore, Democratic Party candidate for President, who lost Florida to George Bush by 537 votes. The commission found that 54 percent of the rejected ballots were cast by Black voters.

Gore, seeking to regain a plurality in Florida, rushed to demand a recount in counties where Democrats expected he could pick up enough votes to change the results. The Clinton-Gore administration, however, showed little interest in demands by the NAACP on election day to investigate widespread reports of intimidation of and interference with the ability of Blacks, both U.S.-born and Haitian-American, to cast a vote. The administration waited until December 3 to send two representatives to determine whether an investigation was necessary.

On January 10 the NAACP and other civil rights groups filed a class-action lawsuit in federal court. The organization presented testimony of intimidation of Blacks attempting to vote, of names of many Blacks missing from voter rolls, of the closing of polls while Black people were still in line to vote, and of first-time Haitian voters, many of them newly naturalized U.S. citizens, being prevented from getting help from Creole-language translators.

The U.S. Justice Department is now investigating charges that a short supply of Spanish-speaking poll workers and a lack

of bilingual ballots interfered with the ability of some Latinos to vote. The election supervisor in Osceola County, where Latinos make up 29 percent of the population, refused to print ballots in Spanish.

As a result of campaigns to register Blacks to vote, more than 900,000 African Americans voted in Florida November 7, an increase of 65 percent from the 1996 election.

The report by the U.S. civil rights commission cited “overzealous efforts” to purge state voter lists of disenfranchised voters who are Black, of other oppressed nationalities, or disabled; failure of polling workers in many cases to verify voters’ registration status; and polling workers who told African American voters that the polls were closed but permitted white voters to cast a ballot.

A large number of workers in the United States are disenfranchised by election officials on the basis that they have served or are serving a prison sentence. The civil rights commission report pointed out that more than 36 percent of disenfranchised former prisoners are African American men. In Florida, 31 percent of the population denied voting rights consists of Black men. The commission recommended that the Florida government restore civil rights, including voting rights, to former convicted felons.

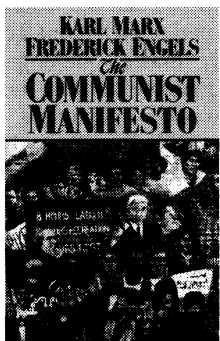
The commission’s report was sharply critical of Florida governor John Bush and Secretary of State Katherine Harris, both Republicans. Two of the eight commission members, both appointed by Republicans, voted against the report, calling it a partisan document with “inflammatory language.”

The Working Class & the Transformation of Learning

The Fraud of Education Reform under Capitalism

By Jack Barnes

“Until society is reorganized so that education is a human activity from the time we are very young until the time we die, there will be no education worthy of working, creating humanity. That is the historic truth.” \$3



The Communist Manifesto

By Karl Marx and Frederick Engels

Founding document of the modern working-class movement, published in 1848. Explains why communism is derived not from preconceived principles but from facts and from proletarian movements springing from the actual class struggle. \$3.95

Available from bookstores listed on page 12.

Canada health workers resist strikebreaking

Continued from front page

provincial elections, the big-business Liberals won 77 out of 79 seats.

The government's action makes the British Columbia Nurses Union's overtime ban illegal and orders members of the HSA to end their strike.

Outside the provincial legislature in Victoria, 1,000 nurses held a demonstration, shouting "Shame" as a band played *God Save the Queen*. Earlier in the day, 2,000 unionists marched in Vancouver, with many passing motorists honking in approval.

The nurses are demanding a 45 percent wage increase, stating that this is necessary to deal with the shortage of about 1,000 nurses in British Columbia. On June 5 nurses turned down an offer of a 22 percent increase by a 96 percent majority.

Acute shortage of nurses

Nurses have been carrying out an overtime ban for two months to bring pressure on the employers. The fact that this has led to the cancellation of thousands of surgeries underlines the shortage of nurses. The employers estimate that nurses must work a total of 3,600 overtime hours every day to keep the system functioning.

In the last negotiations in 1998 the nurses received raises of 0, 0, and 2 percent over a three-year contract. The HSA is demanding a 27 percent raise over two years. The Health Employers' Association is offering a 6 percent increase over three years.

Nurses at the Vancouver Hospital expressed anger at the government order to work overtime. One nurse, who asked not to be identified by name, said, "It's pretty crappy. Most of the nurses are still not going to be working overtime." Brenda Ramsay, with seven-and-a-half years as a nurse, said, "Sixty days from now we will be in the same place as we are now. It's a waste of time." She added, explaining the nurses' wage demand, "No one remembers that the last time [1998] we got 0,0, and 2." Catharina Wimpe, a nurse for five years, pointed out, "With what the employers are offering, I would make Can\$215 more a month. I couldn't even pay a month of day care with that." (Can\$1 = US 66 cents).

Ramsay continued, "After your 12th hour they ask you to work another four hours. You can't function safely. If they are not acutely sick, patients are sent home. We only



Nurses at union meeting in Halifax, Nova Scotia, applaud call to join strike by other health-care workers. After they walked out, provincial government barred the strike.

have time to attend to physical needs."

The Vancouver area transit strike that began April 1 has continued despite acceptance by union members of a mediator's proposal. Members of the Canadian Auto

Workers union voted 90 percent in favor. Some 1,860 voted out of 3,400. On the crucial issue of part-time work and contracting out, the mediator proposed the issues be "studied" by a committee and go to binding

arbitration by October 2002 if there is no agreement. The company, Coast Mountain Bus Co., refused the mediator's proposal, saying it would cost too much and that it needed to act on contracting out and part-time work now.

Ruth Ritchey, a picket captain for Canadian Auto Workers Local 111 and a driver for 11 years, explained the vote in favor of the mediator's proposal. "The main thing is to get negotiations rolling, to stimulate a return to the bargaining table. With the committee we will prove the point that part time and contracting out are a false calculation. Better than where we are now just sitting. It is better to get things going," she said.

Asked to comment on the outcome if the issues go to compulsory arbitration, Ritchey said, "It is definitely a risk. I don't have much faith in Translink bargaining favorably. I am not wholeheartedly convinced it will go in our favor." James Johnston, another bus driver, explained, "Nobody really knows because it's a 50-50 thing. It depends on who is the arbitrator. Dave Dobel was CEO of Translink and he is on the arbitration committee. That's a scary thing." Translink is the parent company of Coast Mountain.

Montreal strikers make gains at GE-owned plant

BY JOANNE WALLADOR

MONTREAL—After 69 days on strike, members of Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Local 501, representing some 800 workers, voted June 11 by a 77.6 percent margin to accept a contract with Camco, a manufacturer of household appliances majority-owned by General Electric. The contract was also accepted by a majority of office workers in Local 504.

This was the first strike that workers had conducted against the company in 20 years. Alain Leduc, president of Local 501, said that the bosses should take note of the fact that the vote indicated that many workers were not entirely satisfied with the contract. As part of the back-to-work agreement, the company agreed to drop all legal and disciplinary measures taken against strikers.

The unionists originally walked out to fight concessions the company was demanding on pensions, medical insurance, and the introduction of a seven-day, 12-hour schedule in some departments. Through boisterous mass picketing, numerous marches, and their determination to hold out "one minute more than the company," workers forced the bosses to withdraw these concessions after three-and-a-half weeks. The aim of the strike then became to win what had already been accepted by Camco workers in Hamilton, Ontario, on April 25, and to gain improvements in the pension plan.

The company May 9 presented a new offer that matched the Hamilton contract. But since it did not include pension improvements, the union executive committee did not put it to a vote by the union membership. The company then went on an offensive in an effort to defeat the strike. It sent letters to workers at their homes, urging them to demand a vote on the bosses' proposal. It raised the threat of either moving some of the production from its Montreal plant or of closing down the plant.

In response, some workers then started a petition calling for a vote on the company's offer. While it was signed by only 45 workers, a major big business daily here in Montreal, *La Presse*, jumped into the fray with a headline proclaiming dissension among the ranks of the union and carried an anonymous report that "union goons" had destroyed the petition and threatened to physically attack those circulating it.

Local president Leduc explained that the union had organized an informational meeting where those supporting the petition gave their point of view and the union leadership explained its position of maintaining the strike until they won a reduction of penalties for those taking their retirement at 60 and 61 years of age.

Spirits were high on the picket line June 5 as the unionists expressed their determination to win their demand for improvements in the pension plan. Some 50 strikers at the busy intersection near the port of Montreal waved their picket signs, blew whistles, and shouted for truckers to blow their horns in solidarity. Banners hung on the fence across from the company offices

proclaimed the unity of the strikers.

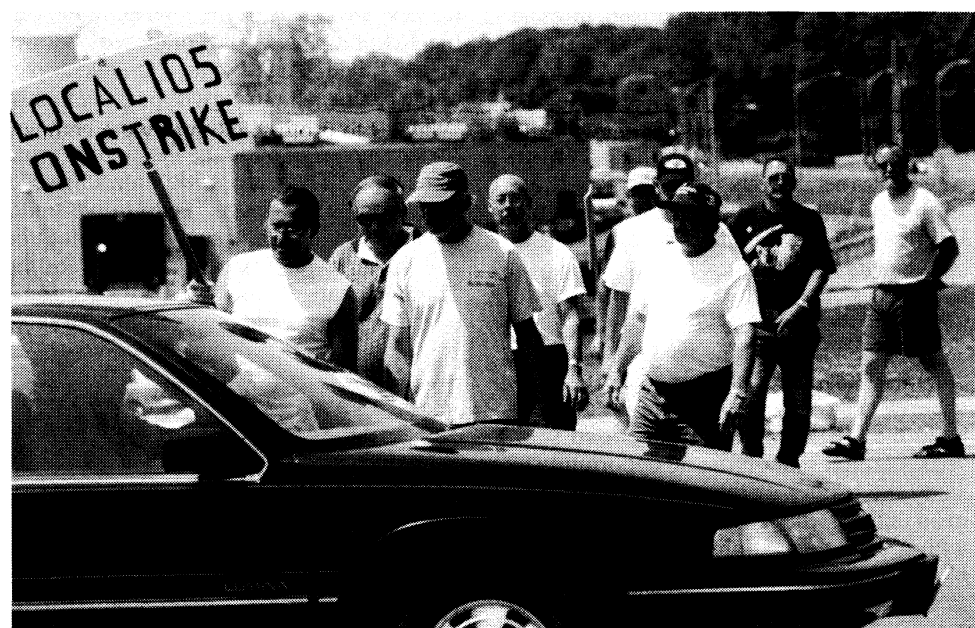
An older worker commented that he had encouraged the union executive in its efforts to organize weekly meetings. "It's the only way to maintain unity," he said.

Manon St-Hilaire, a younger worker who is one of the growing number of women employed at the plant, said, "For 12 years, Hamilton has had a better contract than us.

But now the company will take us more seriously three years from now" when the next contract expires.

The pension improvement for those wanting to retire at 60 or 61 was in the form of a lump sum rather than as a percentage of wages as the union had originally demanded. The new contract also included a 9.5 percent wage increase over three years.

600 paper workers strike in N.Y. State



Militant/Eric Simpson

Some 600 unionists from seven different union locals are on strike against Finch, Pruyn & Co. in Glen Falls, New York. Finch proposes to cut pay by about \$10,000 per year.

BY ERIC SIMPSON

GLEN FALLS, New York—More than 600 unionists employed by New York specialty papermaker Finch, Pruyn & Co. went on strike here June 16 after rejecting what the company claimed was its final contract offer. The vote to walk out was nearly unanimous, according to several strikers, although the exact results were not announced by the unions.

The striking workers from seven different union locals are conducting spirited round-the-clock picketing. They are jointly negotiating new contracts and making sure that the lines are well staffed at all hours. Outside the plant T-shirts proudly list the unions involved: Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical and Energy Workers International Union (PACE) locals 18 and 155; Plumbers, Pipefitters and Steamfitters Local 773; the Firemen and Oilers; International Association of Machinists Local 365; International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 236; and United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America Local 229.

Finch, Pruyn is demanding that workers give up double time pay on Sundays and holidays, and that employees start paying half their health insurance costs—which would total at least \$3,500 per year. Workers estimate that these proposed concessionary demands would amount to an annual

wage reduction of about \$10,000.

The employers make no secret that they are demanding takebacks from the workers. Company press agents claim the changes are needed to keep the company "competitive in a recession."

Located on the Hudson River, the mill, with 870 workers, is the largest private employer in town. And with 166,000 acres of woodlands in the Adirondack mountains for its private exploitation, Finch, Pruyn surely counts as one of New York State's largest private landowners.

The company claims that the health insurance co-payments demanded are reasonable. And the local newspaper repeats the company line that insurance was "free" to the workers under the old contract. A number of strikers have pointed out that the insurance was actually paid as part of their overall compensation—no "freer" than any other part of their pay—and the massive jump in the co-payment deducted weekly is a pay cut.

Police presence outside the plant and the private security firms brought in for the strike have created an aura of tension on the picket lines. Already several pickets have been arrested and one was struck by a car driven by a private security guard leaving the plant.

Eric Simpson is a meat packer in Miami. Tom Simpson contributed to this article.

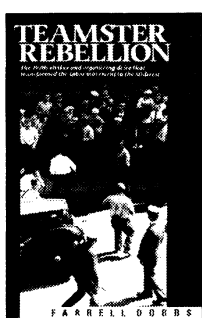
The Teamsters series

Lessons from the labor battles of the 1930s

BY FARRELL DOBBS

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Available from bookstores, including the Pathfinder bookstores listed on page 12

Steelworkers strike Alabama plant to oppose concessions

BY BRIAN TAYLOR

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama—"We are family!" chanted unionists on a feisty 4:30 a.m. picket line here outside the Meadowcraft plant July 2. Members of United Steelworkers of America Local 8285 voted to strike the plant June 30 after rejecting a concessionary contract that would cut \$2 or more from some workers' hourly wages. Meadowcraft, which employs about 500 workers, is a manufacturer of metal lawn chairs.

More than 120 strikers and their families showed up on the picket line on the first day of the strike. Some workers held signs reading "8285: no incentives." Bernard Effinger, a heavy machine operator, explained, "They want to put welders on an incentive plan where they will have to work at 104 percent production every day of the working week to make \$12.88 an hour. If you don't make 104 percent, you will make \$8.16 an hour." Welders currently make between \$10.25 and \$12. Effinger commented that "104 percent is hard to make."

"There isn't a person on the picket line who wants to be out here," said Charles King, who has worked at the plant for 31 years. "But if it wasn't for the union they would try to cut us to minimum wage. That's what they'd like to do. You can get sick in this plant and the same supervisor who drives you to the hospital will write you up for leaving early. That's the kind of people they are. They care about as much for people out here as the dirt under their feet."

José Gutiérrez, a welder for five years at the plant, said, "It's not fair—I've been working here for five years, but some workers have given their lives to the company and are now older. You can't expect them to make 104 percent. Some have arthritis. It's also difficult because they give you bad parts to weld."

One worker, 27, who asked that his name not be used, said, "We are out here because they are trying to introduce an incentive plan to decrease welders' pay. We have a number

of people who are older and may not be able to make rate."

Speaking over the blare of a passing semi-truck honking in support, María García stated, "I think it is humiliating that they want to lower our wages to as little as \$7." García is a finishing welder, a job that earns about 50 cents an hour more than parts welders. "I'm making \$10.75. Now they want to pay me \$7? That's crazy!"

Dora López, who has worked at the plant for 10 months, said, "I will not accept a drop in my wages."

Close to half the workers at the plant are Mexican-born. A number of U.S.-born workers remarked that the role Mexican workers play in the strike is crucial to its victory. At the July 1 picket one striker who is a Black woman hopped out of a truck and asked, "Where are the Spanish signs?" When she found out there weren't any, she approached one of her Mexican co-workers, and they got some fluorescent green poster board to make several signs. The next morning a striker who is Black decided to hold the Spanish-language sign, which read, "*Compañeros mexicanos*, we need your support for this strike because it is beneficial to



Militant/Jeanne FitzMaurice

Steelworkers picket Meadowcraft July 2 in fight against threatened wage cuts, speedup.

everyone that [the company] respects the decision of the union because it would be humiliating for one who would accept to work for less money."

Striker Rafael Sánchez declared, "No one from Mexico will enter that plant." His words were echoed by his co-worker Antonio Pérez.

Meadowcraft had security guards at the gate with video cameras. A plain white company van crossed the line several times. People would yell "Scab!" each time. But when the van went into the plant and let out passengers, workers noted that they were supervisors and office staff. It did not appear to strikers that a serious attempt to work

production was yet being organized.

"What it boils down to is they want to make us do a day-and-a-half's work in one day," explained Maurice Coleman. "If they make the welder work harder, every department will get sped up, too. Incentive pay is like gambling: if I make 100 percent, if I can do it for a week. We as welders are already underpaid. Most places start at \$12 or \$13 an hour. If we let them put welders on incentive, they will start to do it to every department."

Jeanne FitzMaurice, a garment worker in Alabama, contributed to this article.

Chicago food workers demand dignity

BY PATTIE THOMPSON

CHICAGO—"We're into our fourth week on strike, which has taken the company by surprise. They believed we would not be strong enough, prepared enough, or have enough economic resources to stay out. They underestimated us," said Maximino Rodea, a member of Teamsters Local 703 on strike against V&V Supremo Foods, Inc.

The 105 members of the local walked out May 29 to protest stalling by the company on recognizing the union and signing a contract. Since April 11, V&V Supremo has not

responded to a single offer by the union.

Over the past nine months the union has consolidated its support among these workers. Truck drivers, helpers, and workers in customer service voted 21 to 7 for the union last October. Seven months later the cheese makers, laborers, pasteurizers, and packers in the firm voted 46 to 31 for union representation. On June 22 the National Labor Relations Board declared the elections valid against the company's legal challenge.

"For 35 years this company has gotten rich off immigrant labor, no respect, no benefits," said Rodea, who works in the outlet store catering to the public and local small businesses. Many of the strikers are immigrant workers from Mexico. The company's share of the market for the high quality Mexican-style cheese and chorizo they produce has steadily grown, he said.

Jesús Guzmán, a 22-year-old truck driver receives \$8.25 an hour in wages. "Wage increases have been tied to supervisor evaluations," he explained. "In my last review, I was praised highly but then told I only deserve a 45-cent raise. You can't pay the rent with praises. Union scale for truck drivers here is \$17-22 an hour."

As the most prominent spokesperson of the strike, Guzmán has been in the Cook County Circuit Court almost daily, responding to company attempts to criminalize or intimidate picketers or to limit their numbers.

The company's distribution center and outlet is now surrounded by a high fence topped with razor wire and floodlights. Private security officers carrying radios and video cameras are posted on the roof and at each gate. They escort the office workers now working in production and the strike-breakers hired from temporary agencies into the plant. They have been unable to provoke a single incident, however, or to find grounds for one arrest.

At a June 22 solidarity rally held in front of the company's distribution center, Marcelo Guerrero, a warehouse helper for one year, outlined the workers' demands for higher wages and affordable health insurance.

Health care plan out of reach

Around 200 people representing a range of unions in the city attended the action. The truck that served as the speakers' platform was flanked by two giant inflatable rats.

Wages are too low, said Guerrero, who is 25. He explained that the workers have gone without a raise for three years, and the health-care plan the company provides is out of reach for most single workers, while family coverage is impossible to afford.

Important as these issues are, he added, "money and health care is not enough. We also demand to be treated with dignity and

fairness."

Victorino González, 32, started as a laborer at \$5.15 an hour six years ago. He now makes \$7.95 as an assistant operator. The work requires skill and strength, he told the *Militant*, explaining that it involves working the cheese with bare hands at a temperature of 110 degrees until the texture is right. "We should be treated in a way we deserve instead of however they feel like treating us," he said.

Strikers raised other problems. They mentioned the mandatory 14- to 16-hour workdays; the bosses' incompetence, covered by yelling and demands to speed up; the lack of safety equipment; the inadequate 401 (k) retirement fund; the pay differentials based on favoritism; and the many firings of workers who had spoken out as individuals against abusive treatment.

The workers have reached out for support at meetings and rallies for immigrant rights and labor solidarity, and have posted strike fliers in city buses and elsewhere. Grocery store workers, Teamster members, and others have donated food, while local Hispanic politicians and religious leaders have visited the picket line.

"The bosses are not going to come out and say, 'Here it is, this is what's yours.' We have to fight for it," said Guzmán the day after the rally. That action "encouraged us, and brought more weight to bear on the bosses to join a dialogue," he emphasized.

Guerrero added, "Once you made that decision to go after what is yours, you move forward, not back. Now we must stick together in order to win and so the boss cannot victimize anyone. We must keep in mind that this is the only way those that come after us can have benefits we haven't had."

Twenty strikers from Local 703 joined a June 23 march demanding that workers without papers be eligible for drivers licenses and for access to higher education. The march, which proceeded from Pietrowski Park in the city's Southwest side to the Social Security Administration building, was part of an AFL-CIO national week of actions on the issue of immigrant rights.

Around 800 people took part. Among them were contingents from union organizations, including the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) and the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees, along with community groups, such as the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now.

Speakers included Dan Turner, president of the AFL-CIO in Chicago; Democratic Party congressman Luis Gutiérrez; Victor Valdez from SEIU Local 150, on strike to win a contract at a golf course; and a janitor originally from Poland, who stressed the need for equality for workers of all nationalities to be able to live in this country.

UNITE members in Illinois defend union

BY CAPPY KIDD

SKOKIE, Illinois—"We demand that BBJ Boutique Linen stop the threats, respect the right to organize, and bring back the fired workers," said Joe Costigan, the political director of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE). Costigan welcomed 250 unionists and community activists to a rally here June 19 in support of 140 workers at the laundry fighting to win union recognition.

BBJ Boutique Linen, a multimillion-dollar company that operates in several U.S. cities, forces up to 95 percent of its mostly immigrant workforce to work as temporaries with no benefits, earning the minimum wage of \$5.15 an hour. Many have worked as temps for more than five years. In early

May, 40 workers, fed up with the working conditions and mistreatment in the plant, walked off the job and contacted UNITE. Four were later fired.

Maricella Reyes told the rally that the company had dismissed her, believing her to be part of the union-organizing drive. Sophia Hernandez said she had been fired for asking for a wage increase.

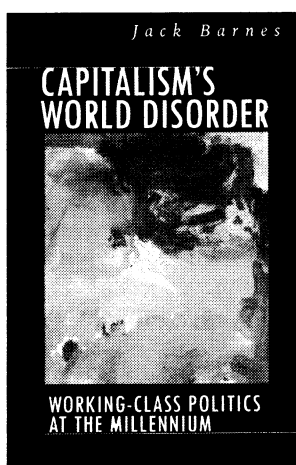
Illinois Democratic Party congressman Luis Gutiérrez declared support for the workers' right to organize.

Domico Mendoza, 60, said the company informed him the reason for his termination was that he was too old and not working fast enough.

"I am demanding justice for myself and the fired workers," he said.

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Cuba offers doctors, drugs for AIDS crisis

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Cuban vice president Carlos Lage told the United Nations General Assembly June 25 that Cuba's revolutionary government is offering to supply 4,000 doctors and health-care workers, plus AIDS-fighting drugs to help treat patients in Third World countries and combat the spread of the disease in the world's most affected areas, particularly sub-Saharan Africa. He was speaking at a special UN conference on AIDS.

The volunteer medical personnel will help create a network to supply prescription medicine to the population and provide "vital follow-up," Lage said, while training additional nurses and health-care workers.

Cuba will provide enough teachers to create 20 medical schools in these countries to train 1,000 doctors a year. Many of the instructors would be drawn from the more than 2,300 Cuban doctors already taking part in internationalist missions in 17 countries.

Lage said his country will provide anti-retroviral drugs for 30,000 patients, as well as doctors, teachers, psychologists, and equipment to help develop education and prevention programs in the affected areas.

"Our program to fight AIDS guarantees complete care for carriers and sufferers of the disease, including free anti-retroviral treatment for all AIDS sufferers, specialized medical centers for those who require them, and a constant struggle for patients to obtain full social integration, so that they can exercise their rights and are not discriminated against," he told the UN delegates.

Lage noted the advances in treating AIDS



Militant/T.J. Figueroa

Cuban doctor and South African nurse in orthopedic ward of hospital in rural township in South Africa. While capitalist politicians at UN meeting talked for three days about AIDS crisis, Cuba volunteered 4,000 doctors and AIDS-fighting drugs.

patients in Cuba despite Washington's economic embargo, which among other things denies the country access to 50 percent of the world's new medicines because they are produced in the United States. In spite of the U.S. attempt to strangle Cuba, "we have the lowest AIDS rate in the Americas and one of the lowest in the world," he stated. "We have controlled the epidemic, and what

is more, achieved a life expectancy of 76 years," a level comparable to the most advanced imperialist countries.

The lack of treatment of people afflicted by AIDS has sharply reduced life expectancies in African countries, where almost half the people live on less than \$1 per day. Most cannot afford the privately supplied drugs to extend their lives, and die without treat-

ment. In Botswana, for example, life expectancy has plummeted from 64 years to 49 since the onset of the epidemic.

More than 25 million of the 36 million people worldwide infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, live in sub-Saharan Africa, one of the world's most exploited regions. In the 20 years since the affects of AIDS were first medically diagnosed, more than 22 million people have died of the disease, according to the *Economist*. Seventeen million of them were on the African continent. Some 85 percent of the 2.8 million people who died of AIDS in 1999 were Africans. AIDS has also become a major epidemic in many Caribbean nations, where the incidence rate is accelerating at a pace second only to sub-Saharan Africa.

At the UNAIDS conference, some 3,000 government officials, drug company executives, and others discussed the issue for three days. At the end they approved a "battle plan" for fighting the disease and raising funds. UN secretary general Kofi Annan called for raising and spending up to \$10 billion a year to respond to the pandemic. The U.S. government offered a measly \$200 million toward this effort.

Lage questioned why wealthy powers could not provide the \$10 billion. He noted that at least 22 individuals living in capitalist countries have private fortunes exceeding that amount.

'We need justice and solidarity'

"Donations and goodwill to help calm the pain and suffering are welcome and gratefully received, but they are not the solutions to humanity's problems," Lage stated. "What we need is justice and solidarity."

The Cuban leader pointed out that Washington was the only government to vote against a resolution that calls for guaranteeing every individual the right to have access to AIDS medicines.

"The international economic order is criminally unjust," he added. "When the words 'democracy,' 'human rights,' 'individual liberty,' and 'equal opportunities' and others come out the mouths of the powerful, they ring hollow and demagogic."

Lage called on the UN conference to declare an end to patents for AIDS drugs and other medicines, which the owners of pharmaceutical companies in imperialist countries use to jack up prices and line their pockets.

He also urged the assembled governments to demand cancellation of the debt of semicolonial countries owed to banks in imperialist countries. "They have already paid more than once," he noted. African nations are saddled with a foreign debt of \$315 billion, and their interest payments to the imperialist financial institutions amount to \$15 billion a year.

"We believe it is necessary and possible to break down the imperialist dogmas that rule the world, but it will be a long fight," Lage stated. "None of the 36.1 million people living with HIV/AIDS, nor the million who die each year from malaria, nor the three million from tuberculosis, nor the 35,000 children who die daily from illnesses that can be prevented, nor many other groups, have time to wait."

Cuba aims for energy self-sufficiency

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Some 2 billion people, one-third of the world's population who live mostly in the semicolonial countries of the Third World, have no access to modern electricity. In contrast, Cuba, even though it inherited an economy marked by underdevelopment when the revolution triumphed in 1959, has been able to extend electrification to 95 percent of the country. Over the past decade the revolutionary government has also taken steps to sharply increase the amount of electricity produced from domestic resources.

"By the end of the year, 90 percent of our electricity will be produced with domestic oil or gas," Cuba's Minister of Basic Industry, Marcos Portal, told a meeting of business officials in Havana earlier this year. "Last year, 50 percent of the country's electricity was already generated with domestic fuel. So far this year, we are already running at more than 70 percent."

Portal said that more than \$1 billion has been invested in Cuba's electricity industry over the past eight years, much of this in joint ventures with foreign capitalist concerns. High voltage power lines had already been installed with help from the former Soviet Union and other countries in Eastern Europe—they run from one end of the island to the other.

The increase in generation of electricity today is a big turnaround from just seven years ago when Cuba suffered from power

blackouts of up to 12 hours a day. Portal noted that electrical service to the population has improved. "When there is a breakdown, the service is affected, but we immediately start up the reserve plants," he stated. "Moreover, in the last 10 years, we have supplied a further half a million Cuban families with electricity, maintaining the electrification of 95 percent of the country, in the middle of the special period."

The Special Period is referred to by the Cuban people as a time of deepening economic crisis and plummeting living standards following the collapse of trade and aid from the former Soviet Union and other countries in Eastern Europe in the early 1990s. Imports of petroleum products from the Soviet Union, which stood at 13.11 million tons, plummeted. The oil refinery in Havana was closed as a result and did not resume operations until 1997. The Santiago refinery was reopened last year.

"The process going on in Cuba of prospecting and drilling for oil has converted the country into a world leader in the application of modern technologies in the field," stated *Cuba Business*, reporting on remarks by Marcos Portal to the fourth annual Congress on Geology and Mining in Havana last March.

One factor in the increased production of electricity is the decision of the government

to build modern and highly efficient gas-fired plants utilizing gas that had previously been released into the atmosphere during oil production. The equivalent of 565 tons of fuel has been produced this way. Steps have also been taken to increase the efficiency of power plants.

Cuba has entered into joint ventures with companies from France, Canada, Britain, Brazil, Sweden, and Spain for oil exploration. These involve the foreign company getting up to 50 percent of profits. According to *Granma Internacional*, the most important discovery of oil over the last five years was made on the country's north coast between Havana and Matanzas where they are currently producing 200-250 tons per day from wells at Puerto Escondido.

The country's total oil production last year was 2.65 million tons, while it imported 100,000 barrels of oil a day. The increased domestic oil production saved Cuba an estimated \$250 million in import costs last year, *Cuba Business* reported. But due to higher world prices of oil, Cuba had to pay \$500 million more than budgeted for oil last year. High fuel costs, bad weather, and other factors led to a decline in the sugar crop this year.

Cuba has also granted licenses for exploration in deep-water sites in Cuban national waters in the Gulf of Mexico.

California raisin farmers confront low prices

Continued from front page

against the squeeze the big companies are putting on them.

The RAC regulates the marketing and inventory of raisins according to a Federal Raisin Marketing Order. CRRA members decided to form a bargaining association after they realized that if they followed the procedures to make changes to the RAC it would take two to four years to win any reforms.

There are around 5,000 raisin farmers in California. Until now, some 2,000 raisin farmers have been represented by the Raisin Bargaining Association, which bargains with 16 companies, including Sun Maid, California Packing Co., and others.

Horne explained to growers at the June 5 meeting that the association will be negotiating a price of 85 cents per pound for organic raisins and of 55 cents per pound for regular raisins. The association will demand this price for 100 percent of the crop.

The meeting was covered by several local TV channels.

Last year's crop was the largest in California's history at 427,396 tons, and the RAC figured that only 53 percent of the crop could be sold on the market. The rest of the crop, although delivered to packers, was put into a "reserve" that the packers control. This means that although Raisin Bargaining Association members eventually received \$877.50 a ton, they were paid for only 53 percent of their crop. It costs about \$700 to produce a ton of raisins. One of the reforms sought earlier by the CRRA was the establishment of a central storage facility owned by the growers, to be able to hold their crop rather than turning it over to the packers.

Horne said to the participants at the meeting that the growers should let the packers "deal with the reserve. We will be bargaining for 100 percent payment," he continued. "And we will not deliver the 2001-02 crop" until the price is settled on. "If you give your

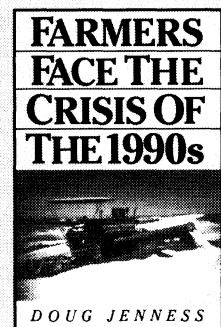
raisins up you can't bargain," he added.

At a June 20 meeting in Selma, Horne announced that farmers growing 80 percent of the organic crop had signed on with the CRRA and expressed confidence that they would get what they are asking for. Mike Jerkovich, president of the CRRA, said at the June 20 meeting that farmers growing 50,000 tons of raisins had signed on and the goal was to represent 80,000 to 100,000 tons.

The organization will also work on acquiring a line of credit to provide loans to farmers. Some of the leaders of the organization went to Washington at the end of June armed with petitions signed by raisin farmers asking members of Congress and senators to write an appropriation bill that would help the raisin farmers.

Three meetings were held in June to explain the new bargaining association and recruit members. Farmers at the meetings signed bargaining authorization forms and took more to give to others.

Farmers face the crisis of the 1990s Doug Jenness



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'The philosophy here is that doctors should work for the people'

BY MAGGIE TROWE

Eight young people are among the first students from the United States to receive scholarships to attend the Latin American School of Medical Sciences in Havana.

Two of the youths, Mirtha Arzu and Eric Khalil Marshall, are from the Bronx. They have begun intensive studies in basic sciences. The two were interviewed by a *New York Times* reporter at their new campus recently.

Arzu, 22, whose parents are from Honduras, grew up in the south Bronx. She and a college roommate were considering joining the U.S. Marines in order to obtain scholarship money to continue their studies. Arzu's experiences, growing up in the Bronx, with the callous way the medical system treats working people motivated her to seek to be a different kind of doctor.

"I remember being in Lincoln Hospital with my mother for over six hours and crying because she was in pain," Arzu said. "She was in the emergency room and nobody saw her. What I noticed is that doctors have forgotten about the people. Yes, there is good money; it can help you survive. But if you are going to take care of others, you have to make sure they are really O.K."

Marshall, who like Arzu is Black, joined the Navy several years ago after the recruiter promised job training. After two years, however, repelled by racism and unequal treatment and stymied in his attempt to get training, he took an administrative discharge. "There were people that I had higher rank than, and more time, who were doing their jobs, while I was washing dishes and buffing floors," Marshall said.

On his return, Marshall became involved with various political groups, including the Black Panther Collective. "I want to be a natural doctor, a holistic doctor," Marshall said. "There are a lot of issues going on in my community that do not have to be like that. People are homeless and I'm from the so-called richest country in the world. Why don't we have health care for everybody, things like people who have less than us,

like in Cuba, have?"

Karima Mosi, 22, from San Diego, told a *Boston Globe* reporter that she was overwhelmed by the warm welcome she received at the medical school from teachers and fellow students. "The philosophy here is that doctors should work for the people, not for their own financial benefit, and I agree completely with that."

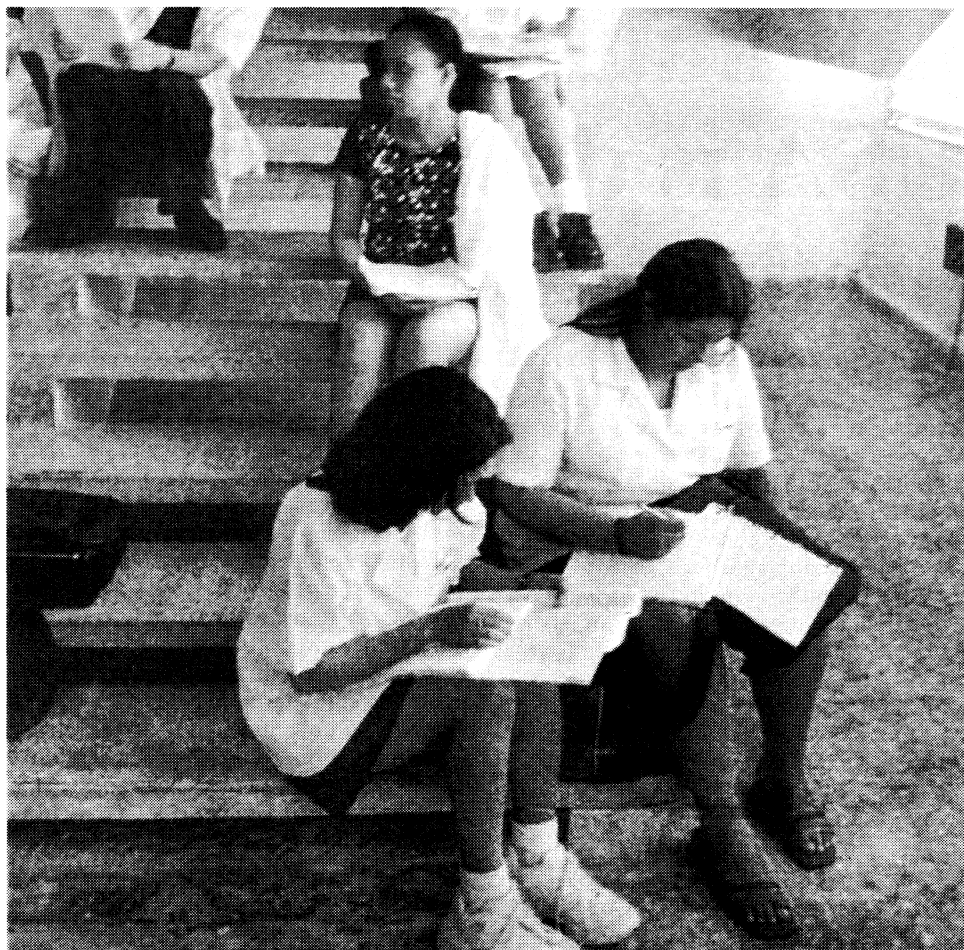
The more than 3,400 international students at the school come from 23 Latin American, Caribbean, and African countries. The initiative to admit students from the United States came from Cuban president Fidel Castro last year during a visit to Havana by the Congressional Black Caucus.

The Cuban government has offered full scholarships to up to 500 students from communities in the United States that lack access to good medical care. The next group of youth from the United States is expected to arrive in September.

International students attend the Latin American School of Medical Sciences for two years before transferring to one of Cuba's 21 other medical schools to complete their studies. On returning to the United States, they will be required to take three years of post-graduate, hands-on training and pass a national licensing examination in English. Both Arzu and Marshall say they plan to practice in the Bronx when they complete their studies.

When the *Times* reporter asked Arzu and Marshall how they were adjusting to studying with such a diverse group of people, Arzu replied, "Did we ever meet so many different people? Yes, in New York. That is why I feel at home. Khalil and myself, we got to know people from all walks of life because of the life we had in New York. We lived with them in New York."

In addition to training thousands of doctors from other countries, Cuba sends some 20,000 volunteer doctors as well as other medical personnel to work in rural areas in countries throughout Africa and Latin America, often in areas where other doctors will not work.



Youth study between classes at the Latin American School of Medical Sciences in Havana, where eight U.S. students are among those receiving medical training under program of scholarships offered by Cuba's revolutionary government.

Some 800 volunteer Cuban doctors have gone to Haiti, the most impoverished country in the hemisphere. After Hurricane Mitch struck in 1998, Cuba sent 121 doctors to Honduras and a similar number to Nicaragua, and Cuban doctors are carrying out an AIDS prevention campaign in Uganda.

Cuba has made striking advances in pub-

lic health since the 1959 revolution. The infant mortality rate was 7.9 per 1,000 live births in 1997., one of the lowest in the world. Aggressive vaccination campaigns have eradicated such diseases as measles, mumps, polio, diphtheria, and tuberculosis. Life expectancy is 75 years, only one year less than the United States.

Fraud of Kyoto accords

Continued from front page

percent of annual economic production in the world, had a growth of carbon emissions of 11.2 percent between 1990 and 1998, according to the Environmental Protection Agency, with a 2.7 percent rise last year from the burning of fossil fuels alone. Until recently Bush expressed the view that there is an "incomplete state of scientific knowledge of the causes of, and solutions to, global climate change." More recently he and other administration officials have acknowledged there is a connection between global warming and greenhouse gases.

Bush has said the protocol's goals are "unrealistic" and that it is "fatally flawed" because it does not place mandatory cuts in emissions on "developing nations," including India and China, continuing the arguments advanced by the Clinton administration. The U.S. Senate voted 95-0 in 1997 against permitting Washington to participate in any global-warming treaty that does not mandate "new specific scheduled commitments to limit or reduce greenhouse gas emissions for Developing Country Parties within the same compliance period." This was also the policy of the trade union leadership, and the AFL-CIO lobbied for and endorsed this approach.

The U.S. rulers have attacked the Chinese workers state, considered to be the largest emitter of carbon dioxide after the United States, when in fact China has made strides in reducing emissions since 1996 according to a number of studies.

"China's emissions of carbon dioxide have shrunk by 17 percent since the mid-1990s," during which time the country's

gross domestic product grew by 36 percent, reported researchers at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory in California. "Even without undertaking binding commitments under an international agreement," the report continued, China "has nevertheless contributed substantially to reducing growth in global emissions." Factors cited include ending state subsidies on coal and other measures to limit coal use, resulting in a 4 percent decline in coal consumption. By contrast during the same years the United States had the largest absolute increase in coal consumption.

The European powers fault Bush's "America First" approach, such as his remarks to German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder in March that he wouldn't sign the Kyoto pact because "we will not do anything that harms our economy, because first things first are the people who live in America." However, the European capitalist governments act in the same nationalist self-interest. As *Wall Street Journal* staff reporter Cecilie Rohwedder wrote in April, "Some Europeans say part of the local finger-pointing could be a self-serving effort to score with voters ahead of major elections in Italy and Britain this year, and France and Germany in 2002. 'It gives you a moral position, a high ground to make yourself look good compared to others,' said Guillaume Parmenier, head of the Center for the United States at the French Institute for International Relations in Paris."

At the end of the 1997 Kyoto meeting the treaty was signed by representatives of participating nations, but no industrialized country has since ratified it.

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During the recently concluded spring circulation campaign, the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* met with a particularly welcome reception—and an increasing subscription rate—among workers and farmers on the front lines of resistance against attacks by those who benefit from the current U.S. tax system: the capitalist families and well-off professionals who serve them. Subscriptions and singles issues were bought by miners, by striking UNITE garment and laundry workers; by workers standing up to speedup by the packing bosses in the Midwest; by raisin farmers and dairy farmers devastated by falling incomes and rising indebtedness; by the families of uranium miners who have been poisoned and often killed by the conditions under which they were forced to work; and many others.

These working people, as well as students and other young people, are interested not only in our coverage of ongoing struggles by unionists and farmers across North America, but the range of political articles week in and week out on questions ranging from Washington's efforts to deploy a "Star Wars" national missile "defense" system, to opposition to the class terror of the death penalty, to struggles against racist cop killings, to defense of Cuba's socialist revolution, to articles on the history of working-class struggles over the past 150 years.

Your contributions—small and large—will enable *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* to keep getting these working-class weapons into the hands of those who need them.

The IRS says taxpayers will receive a notice in mid-July on how much their refund will be. Tens of millions of working people will receive nothing because their earnings were so low they did not pay taxes. Others will receive far less than the \$300. But many, including *Militant* and *PM* supporters, will get up to the \$300 limit.

The *Militant* will run each week, through the end of August, a chart indicating the number of people who have made a pledge to the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* Tax Refund and the total amount pledged. If you want to make a contribution but need to wait to see how big (or small) the IRS check is, send in your name and indicate you'll be making a pledge later.

Workers in factories, farmers, and young people are encouraged to appeal to others who may want to support the two papers. Contributions of any size are welcome and will be put to good use.

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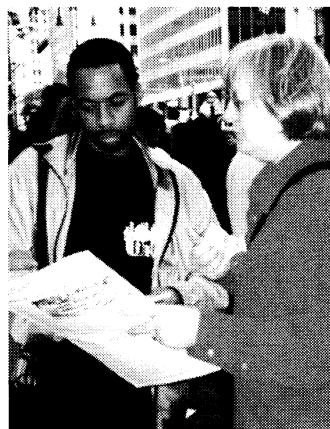
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Communist Party USA is dropping pretense of Leninism

BY GREG McCARTAN

The July 6-8 national convention of the Communist Party USA is expected to put a stamp of approval on a major change in political course that has already taken place in the organization.

The CPUSA is a party that for decades, while subordinating itself to the petty-bourgeois bureaucratic caste in the former Soviet Union, has tried to pass itself off as the legitimate bearer of the legacy of the October 1917 Russian Revolution and as an organization that aspires to lead the working class to take power in the United States.

In a series of articles published in the CPUSA's newspaper, the *People's Weekly World*, its theoretical journal *Political Affairs*, and on a web site where preconvention articles are posted, leaders of the organization over the past year have stated their decision to alter or set aside basic Marxist conceptions of the class struggle and party building.

These shifts have accelerated swiftly on the heels of the death last October of longtime CPUSA national chairperson Gus Hall. The Hall wing of the CP leadership was deeply imbued for more than a half century with the party's Stalinist course of class collaboration on a national and international scale. Since the party's new officers were announced in the *People's Weekly World* in the spring of 2000, they have more and more openly repudiated the party's stated adherence to the need to build a party in the United States along Bolshevik lines. Once Hall was out of the way, new CPUSA chairman Sam Webb and others in the leadership organized several meetings that registered the party's decisive weakening and accelerated turn away from even posturing as a Bolshevik organization.

Lenin 'too stiff'

In a March 2000 document titled, "Class, Class Struggle, and Class Consciousness," published in *Political Affairs*, Webb states that Lenin's concept of the party and the working class was "too stiff." Webb says Lenin was wrong when he wrote in *What Is To Be Done?* that "the working class by its own efforts could only develop trade union

consciousness." *What Is To Be Done?* written in 1902, was one of several works by Lenin that were part of the struggle within the vanguard of the working class in tsarist Russia to forge a disciplined, revolutionary centralist party of worker-bolsheviks capable of leading the fight for political power.

Lenin explained that the "history of all countries shows that the working class, exclusively by its own effort, is able to develop only trade-union consciousness, i.e., the conviction that it is necessary to combine in unions, fight the employers, and strive to compel the government to pass necessary labor legislation, etc." He adds later, "Class political consciousness can be brought to the workers *only from without*, that is, only from outside the economic struggle, from outside the sphere of relations between workers and employers. The sphere from which alone it is possible to obtain this knowledge is the sphere of relationships of *all* classes and strata to the state and the government, the sphere of the interrelations between *all* classes" (emphasis in the original).

Webb tips his hat to the idea that "industrial concentration"—organizing party members to work and carry out politics in targeted industries—"remains a cornerstone of our Party's work." During the decade before his death, Hall—who like many of the CP leaders of his generation had experience in industrial union struggles of the 1930s and '40s—had repeatedly pointed to the growing problems the party was having in organizing its members to get industrial union jobs and do political work in the industrial unions.

Webb rejects what he calls the CPUSA's long-standing explanation for industrial concentration: that the aim "is to build the Party among industrial workers" and that "the purpose of our concentration policy is to focus on the struggles of workers in basic industry." He calls "both conceptions of our policy somewhat narrowly constructed."

In a report in July 2000 to the party's National Board, Scott Marshall, vice chair of the CPUSA, said the leadership is "not prepared to lay out a plan of concentration." He adds: "How will we have a concentration policy that not only fits workers in



Militant/Stu Singer

Union miners at May 2000 rally in Washington, D.C., to defend lifetime health care. CPUSA is openly moving away from its longstanding orientation to industrial unions.

manufacturing but helps to bring around this key sector of the class, the vast explosive numbers of workers in the service and public sectors?"

Class struggle 'not the only causal factor'

In his report, Webb, without stating openly what he is doing, rejects the statement by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels at the opening of the *Communist Manifesto* that "the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles." According to Webb, the "class struggle is the main thread in historical development, but it is not the only thread, it is not the only causal factor."

"The historical process," the CPUSA national chairman says, "is exceedingly complicated and other struggles leave their imprint on history's record as well." He adds that "only at a high level of theoretical abstraction does the class struggle appear in pure form, does it dance on the stage of history untouched and untainted by the world swirling around it."

A report in *Political Affairs* on the CP's December 2000 Central Committee meeting quotes Webb: "No one is challenging the revolutionary role of the working class, or the strategic alliance of labor and the racially oppressed or the predatory and parasitic danger of imperialism, or the necessity of socialism. But even these concepts have to undergo some modification in a changing world.... Our concepts are not set in stone."

CPUSA organization secretary Elena Mora, in a report on the May National Committee meeting reported in the *People's Weekly World*, added a "few words about socialism" to her remarks. "We have not changed our minds in any way about the need for socialism," she reminded the meeting. "But the world has changed greatly, and even if it hadn't, I think our Party needs to greatly refresh and strengthen how we see socialism, how we advocate it, how we understand the path to it, and most of all how we see its connection with present-day struggles." For CP members "It is still an uphill battle to portray socialism as American," Mora adds, "as democratic, as an option to our class and people."

CP's new orientation

The reports and pre-convention discussion articles point the party in the direction of deepening "an orientation toward bourgeois trade unionists, and social democratic and centrist political forces. Webb says in his report that the party is still shaped "by the sectarian policies of the Communist movement in its formative period." Today, "the impact of globalization and the assault of the extreme right" are having an effect on "social democratic-minded leaders" such as the John Sweeney leadership of the AFL-CIO. Webb adds that this "section of the labor movement is shedding not all at once, but shedding nonetheless, concepts that held them back from mass struggle" opening up "possibilities for broad unity and radical change."

Webb points to examples of mobilizations he sees at the forefront of struggles today, such as the protests in Seattle against the World Trade Organization, which the top layers of the trade union officialdom participated in and used, along with other organizations, to press their American nationalist perspectives; the pro-gun control "Mil-

lion Mom March"; and what he calls other "anticorporate" and "anti-far-right" actions.

The CP's nationalist perspective was featured in the *People's Weekly World* in March, in an article on the crisis of the steel industry. The CP urged the government to "Rebuild with American steel," backing the protectionist campaign waged by the steel industry and top officials of the United Steelworkers of America. The paper is also promoting the Rebuilding America's Infrastructure Act, sponsored by Congressman Dennis Kucinich. The measure claims "illegal steel dumping" is responsible for "the recent string of bankruptcies and mill closings of steel companies." It advocates no federal monies be allocated for infrastructure projects unless they meet requirements of the Buy America Act.

Referring to the Seattle demonstrations, Webb said, "Perhaps no one appreciates the diverse nature of this movement more than the new leadership of the AFL-CIO. Since their watch began in 1995, this leadership has shown unusual understanding of the entangled nature of class and social struggles."

Decline of book publishing

In the many pages of reports and preconvention discussion articles, it is hard to find mention of publishing and distributing books by communist leaders such as Marx, Engels, and Lenin, or producing Marxist analysis of current political developments to be broadly available for working people. The CPUSA had, through its relations with Progress Publishers in Moscow before the fall of the Soviet Union, distributed basic works of Marx, Engels, and Lenin through International Publishers in the United States. The publishing house also produced a wide range of books and pamphlets. Supporting such a publishing effort now is not among the priorities discussed in the documents leading up to the convention. In fact, International Publishers has published only a handful of new titles recently—none dealing with pressing questions of the class struggle in the United States or the world today.

The decline of book publishing and distribution efforts has been going on for a number of years. In a report published in the December 1996 *Political Affairs*, party chairman Hall, in discussing the financial challenges the party faced, complained that "notwithstanding the importance and benefits of having a Party publishing house, the fact is the Party does not get any financial benefits" from International Publishers.

Webb says that the CPUSA has for too long stood aside from the struggles for women, for gay rights, and other developments, "labeling them middle class, petit bourgeois, or social democratic." Nonetheless, several recent articles by CP leaders continue the party's reactionary glorification of the family and political support to bourgeois forces in the women's rights struggle.

In a piece published in *Political Affairs* responding to letters from party members, Webb says it is "hard to envision, for example, a successful challenge to the political ascendancy of the ultra right in our nation without the full measure of involvement of women as child bearers, care givers for the young and elderly, community activists,

Continued on next page

New International no. 11 U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War

by Jack Barnes

The Communist Strategy of Party Building Today

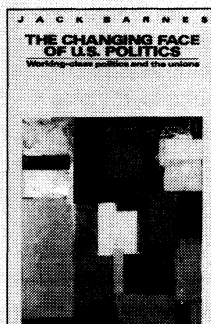
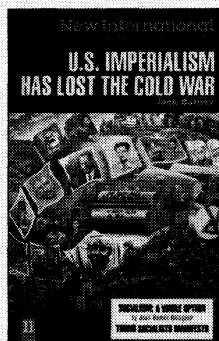
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Young Socialists Manifesto

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The Changing Face of U.S. Politics

Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions

By Jack Barnes

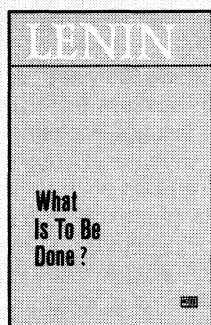
A handbook for workers coming into the factories, mines, and mills, as they react to the uncertain life, turmoil, and brutality of capitalism in the closing years of the twentieth century. It shows how millions of workers, as political resistance grows, will revolutionize themselves, their unions, and

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By V.I. Lenin

Lenin, the central leader of the Bolshevik party, which led the October 1917 revolution, explains the type of party that is necessary to lead workers and farmers in a revolutionary struggle for power. \$7.95



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Ontario oil workers strike for pensions

BY ROSEMARY RAY

MISSISSAUGA, Ontario—Since April 1 some 450 refinery operators and maintenance workers, members of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union (CEP) Local 593, have been on strike against Petro-Canada in a fight for better pensions.

In mid-June the CEP informed Petro-Canada that its members in Ontario—at the Mississauga and Oakville plants—would return to work under the same contract that the other Petro-Canada locals had already accepted. The company responded with what it called a “framework to end the strike.” This “framework” contains contract concessions such as increasing the hours of work, allowing supervisors to operate refinery equipment, and a wage freeze for workers in the Lubeplex section of the Mississauga plant and for all workers at the Oakville terminal.

When the strike first began a Petro-Canada Council bargaining chain was set up by the CEP so that workers employed by the company in Ontario, Quebec, Alberta, and British Columbia could bargain for a national contract together. The union bargaining chain, however, broke down within weeks after the walkout began when CEP members at the Alberta and British Columbia plants returned to work without having won pension parity. CEP members in Quebec decided to accept the company offer without going on strike.

Lively discussions are occurring on the picket line here in response to the company's latest concessionary demands with strikers expressing different opinions on what to do next. Mike, an operator with 23 years in the Mississauga plant, told the *Militant* he was ready to go back to work for the concession contract because “when the other locals went back to work the solidarity was broken and it pulled our hearts out and we were left alone.” He added, “Why do we have a government that lets scabs cross our picket lines while we are on strike? There should be laws to protect us especially given that the federal government of Canada owns 18 percent of Petro-Canada shares, which makes it the largest single shareholder.”

Ron Ashley commented, “Even if we go back with a concession contract we can hold our heads up high because at least we put up a fight and that's what counts.” Another striker, John, disagreed, saying that he would vote against going back to work.

Over the past few months, unionists have organized rallies at the main Petro-Canada terminal in Toronto, handed out leaflets on their strike to commuters at the central railway station in Toronto, hung banners from



Workers at Petro-Canada rally to oppose increased work hours and other concessions

overpasses on highways in Mississauga, and has called for a boycott of Petro-Canada retail gas stations. According to union officials, over the May 21 national holiday weekend picketing at gas stations resulted in 112 Petro-Canada stations running out of gas completely. Other stations ran out of the cheaper grade regular gas and to keep their customers happy were forced to sell their higher priced premium gas at the lower regular gas prices.

Ashley told the *Militant* that the union has filed charges with the Ontario Labor Relations Board against Petro-Canada that accuse the company of “bargaining in bad faith and unfair labor practices.” On June 30 he

was pushed aside by a car crossing the picket line. The company has won an injunction against the union reducing the amount of time scab vehicles can be held up on the line to five minutes.

Tom McEwan, a refinery operator with 24 years service is concerned about safety since the refinery is now being run by scabs at what most strikers think is up to about 50 percent of pre-strike production levels. McEwan said that it took him four years to train as a qualified operator and get his compressor ticket issued by the Ontario government qualifying him to operate high pressure vessels. He explained that a few weeks before the strike began Petro-Canada

brought in supervisory staff from its other plants across the country and ordered the workers to train the supervisors on how to operate the equipment. He said, “We trained these salaried personnel for only three weeks and now they are operating complex equipment in the refinery where hydrogen gas is injected into process vessels at 3,500 pounds of pressure at 400 to 500 degrees Fahrenheit!”

According to its web site, Petro-Canada has assets “in excess of \$8.4 billion” and “is the largest Canadian-owned oil and gas company” in the country. It owns retail and wholesale gas and propane operations nationwide and its petroleum-based stocks of lubricants, greases, and white oils are sold on “seven continents.”

Bev Reynolds, a stationary engineer who has worked at the Mississauga plant for 26 years, said that the refinery produces 40 percent of the world market supply of white oil. Only two other refineries in the world produce this highly purified oil; one in South Korea, the other in Texas. White oil is used in the food and cosmetics industry. Reynolds described the Mississauga refinery as the “flagship of Petro-Canada's operations and the most profitable” because it not only produces white oil from petroleum based stock but through using a hydrogen filtration process can simultaneously produce automotive lubricants and greases from the same base stock.

Tom Moore, a blender at the Mississauga plant and president of the union local, told the *Militant* that Petro-Canada made \$897 million (Can) in profits last year and that first quarter profits for this year were a record \$358 million. He said that given these enormous profits, meeting the union's demand for better pensions would have amounted to a “drop in the bucket” for the company.

CPUSA dropping pretense of Leninism

Continued from Page 10

workers, trade unionists, and women.”

In March the party held a conference in Chicago on Women's Equality and the Struggle for Democracy. In a report to the meeting, CPUSA leader Dee Myles said in regard to abortion that the “most advanced position on this question is that which says the right of choice is a health-care issue.”

In contrast, in arguing that the right to abortion is in the interests of all working people, communists champion this struggle—as do tens of thousands of other fighters for women's rights—as the right of women to control their own bodies: a precondition to women's full integration into economic, social, and political life.

Original Communist Party

The original Communist Party in the United States was founded in 1919 by working-class revolutionists who were inspired by and determined to emulate on U.S. soil the Bolshevik-led revolution in Russia. But by the latter 1920s a rising bureaucratic layer in the state and party apparatus in the Soviet Union, whose chief spokesperson became Joseph Stalin, began to systematically defend its own privileged, middle-class existence against the interests of workers and peasants in Russia and internationally.

This petty-bourgeois social caste gained political dominance as a result of the international isolation stemming from the defeat of other revolutionary struggles for power such as in Germany; a three-year civil war organized by the landlords, capitalists, and remnants of the tsarist regime; the devastation caused by the imperialist armies that invaded the country in a drive to overthrow the world's first socialist revolution; the economic backwardness of Russia at the time; and the fact that tens of thousands of the most advanced workers and peasants gave their lives in these battles to defend their revolutionary conquests.

While the nationalized property relations and fundamental social conquests of the 1917 revolution were not overturned, the bureaucratic stratum carried out a political counter-revolution. It reversed the internationalist perspective of the Bolsheviks under Lenin's leadership and pursued a class-collaborationist, national socialist course at home and abroad. Thousands of communist workers who sought to continue Lenin's course inside the Soviet Union were imprisoned, murdered, or died in work camps.

By the late 1920s and early 1930s, the

Communist parties around the world had been turned into a foreign policy instrument of the counterrevolutionary regime in Moscow. In the United States, many communists were expelled from the party as they came to oppose the devastating consequences of Stalin's course. Among those were revolutionists who, expelled in 1928, formed a new organization—which later became the Socialist Workers Party—to continue the fight to build a Bolshevik party.

For decades, the CPUSA and parties like it around the world acted under the political direction of the Kremlin. What they passed off as Marxism before working people was simply the ideological rationalizations for the reactionary course of the bureaucratic regime. It was a counterfeit. While carrying out a negation of the communist course of the Bolsheviks, the Stalinist parties continued to claim the mantle of Marx, Engels, and Lenin. As the dominant current in the workers movement, backed by a state power in Moscow, the Stalinists won the best working class, farmer, and other fighters and destroyed them as revolutionists.

Moscow and its international apparatus did everything in their power to block the development of revolutionary and communist organizations around the world. From the mid- to late 1920s, its policies were a disaster for revolutionary struggles in Europe, Asia, and elsewhere, leading to historic defeats.

In Germany, for example, the fascists took power without mass resistance because of the CP's refusal to form a united front with the Social Democratic Party. Their course subverted revolutionary opportunities for socialist revolution in France, Italy, Greece, and elsewhere prior to and following World War II. Those who sought to chart a revolutionary course—or simply refused to subordinate the struggle to Moscow's dictates—were attacked as opponents of Marxism and socialism and often killed by the international Stalinist murder machine.

Decline of CPUSA

The decline of the Stalinized Communist Party in the United States has been going on for some decades. In *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics*, SWP leader Jack Barnes wrote that at the end of World War II—during which the CPUSA had actively campaigned for and supported the U.S. capitalist rulers' intervention in the inter-imperialist slaughter—the Communist Party claimed

100,000 members. They dominated several major industrial unions and had a periphery of hundreds of thousands of fellow travelers, intellectuals, Black sympathizers, and so on.

“American Stalinism began losing its leading position in the American left from that point on. Their wartime line of speedup and a no-strike pledge, their postwar line of support for the perspective of American-Soviet maintenance of the status quo and of class peace, yielded its first fruits when the ruling class turned against their wartime servitors in the Cold War witch-hunt. The Stalinists looked around for popular support and found they had none. The only permanent factor in their policies—subordination of the class struggle in the United States to the diplomatic needs of Moscow—won a bitter reward from the workers they had misled,” Barnes wrote. “The crushing of the [1956] Hungarian revolution and Khrushchev's admission of some of Stalin's crimes further weakened the CP.”

By the early 1990s, shaken by the collapse of the Stalinist regime in Moscow, the CPUSA underwent a split. A current that included central leaders left the party and “announced the formation of a ‘network’ called the Committees of Correspondence,” Barnes writes in *Capitalism's World Disorder*. “Yes, a ‘network,’ not even a party-in-becoming. They honestly disclaim any such effort. They have retained most of the CPUSA's politics, but none of its weight as an organization. They bring with them their political tutelage in corruption, but not any firepower. The prognosis for the organization is shaky.” By the end of the decade the Committees of Correspondence remained a few scattered chapters lacking any national or political cohesion.

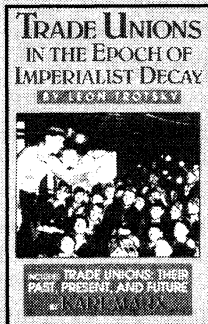
Now the CP is going the same way. At the party's May National Committee meeting, Joe Sims, editor of *Political Affairs*, “gave a report on unity and building the left, which updated the NC on different meetings held with left activists and organizations, including former CPUSA leaders,” the *People's Weekly World* reported.

In the February issue of the party's pre-convention discussion bulletin posted on the Internet, one CP member writes the party leadership is “putting in question basic, fundamental principles which represent the bedrock of the Party's existence.” The course of the organization, he concludes, “makes one wonder whether the bitter ideological struggle of ten years ago that led to the split in the Party was a necessary one.”

Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay

Leon Trotsky
Featuring “Trade Unions: Their Past, Present, and future” by Karl Marx

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'War crimes' trial will boost U.S. intervention

Continued from front page

740,000 Albanians and the deaths of hundreds of people by Serbian government forces under the Milosevic regime in 1999.

That year, Washington seized on incursions into Kosova by Serb paramilitary forces and special military forces to launch a 78-day NATO bombing assault on targets in Serbia and Kosova. Using cluster bombs and other munitions, U.S. and British warplanes rained destruction on factories, power plants, bridges, and working-class neighborhoods. The offensive devastated the country's economy and hit the industrial working class particularly hard.

Following this bombing campaign, a U.S.-led military occupation force was established in Kosova. It was after NATO launched this war that the Hague tribunal, at U.S. insistence, issued the "war crimes" indictment against Milosevic in order to lay the basis for seizing him and conducting a trial to further U.S. aims in the region.

The UN indictment contained "a conspicuous change," a July 3 *New York Times* article noted. "Any mention of the NATO bombing of Kosovo has been relegated to the penultimate page in a section called 'additional facts.' The original indictment, two years ago, noted at the beginning that NATO had begun 'launching air strikes' on March 24, 1999—before the occurrence of almost all the crimes with which Mr. Milosevic is charged."

Capitalist politicians pleased with arrest

U.S. capitalist politicians in the United States were jubilant at Milosevic's extradition. President George Bush described it as a "very important step."

Payoff for the Belgrade politicians came the next day, when a number of imperialist governments pledged a total of \$1.28 billion in aid at a "donors' conference" in Brussels. Washington promised around \$180 million, after spending months threatening to boycott the gathering unless Milosevic was extradited.

The federal Yugoslav government, which groups politicians from the republics of Serbia and the less populous Montenegro, virtually collapsed in the controversy surrounding the move.

Yugoslav president Vojislav Kostunica

called Milosevic's transfer "illegal and unconstitutional," and protested that Serbian prime minister Zoran Djindjic had not informed him of the decision. Kostunica pointed to a June 28 decision of Yugoslavia's Constitutional Court opposing an extradition order. Both had until recently insisted that Milosevic be tried in Yugoslavia.

Dismissing the judges' ruling, Djindjic ordered and organized the handover, asserting that the government had been forced to take a "difficult but morally correct" decision. "To stop the cooperation with the Hague tribunal...would have had major negative consequences for the present and future of our country," he said.

U.S. officials had brought heavy pressure on the Serbian regime to hand over Milosevic, wielding U.S. economic aid as a club.

Pro-Milosevic forces organized several protests against the extradition, including one of 10,000 on June 29.

Most Yugoslav working people interviewed in the big-business media have voiced little sympathy for the chauvinist politician. On the other hand, many have also expressed misgivings at his extradition.

Some of those interviewed remarked that Milosevic had been sold for the promise of \$1 billion in international funds. "There is a lot of truth in that," said Milodrag Pesic, 75, a resident in Pozarevac quoted by the *New York Times*. "They are going to give us some money. But it is nothing."

Natasa Popovic, a young woman working at a newsstand in Pozarevac, said Milosevic should be judged by Serbs for any war crimes, not an international tribunal in the Netherlands. At the same time, she expressed concern about the threat of continuing imperialist sanctions.

Milosevic's refusal to acknowledge his defeat in last year's elections sparked widespread opposition that had been building over time among working people. It led to a general political strike and mass protests led by miners and other industrial workers last October. Milosevic was forced to step down after more than a decade of rule marked by disastrous wars throughout Yugoslavia, repressive police-state methods in Serbia, and brutal imperialist military intervention spearheaded by the U.S. armed forces.

Washington has wielded both the carrot and the stick in its dealings with the new government. In October, after Milosevic was ousted, President William Clinton lifted an oil embargo and flight ban, and Congress voted to supply \$100 million to Serbia, with the proviso that the government cooperate

in the apprehension of those deemed war criminals by U.S. officials. To date, Belgrade has extradited only Milosevic, the most prominent political figure on the list.

Imperialists dangle 'aid'

Lawrence Napper, U.S. ambassador to Brussels and Washington's coordinator for East European assistance, said the money pledged would support "Serbia and Montenegro in their bid to break with the past and build a democracy and market economy," according to Reuters news agency.

"Democracy and market economy" are the terms used by imperialist spokespeople to refer to the effort to integrate Yugoslavia more deeply into the world capitalist market.

The *Financial Times* of London noted the "ambitious programme for reform" touted by the Belgrade government, including "privatisation, restructuring of banking...and development of the private sector."

The deputy prime minister in the federal government, Miroljub Labus, said that, in addition to the \$1 billion already offered, a further \$3 billion assistance will be required over the next four years. He reported that the country's foreign debt stands at more than \$12 billion dollars, or 80 percent of the gross domestic product. "We need a period of stability, of at least six months, to press ahead with reforms," he said.

The long-term goal of Washington and its imperialist allies is to weaken and ultimately overthrow the workers state in Yugoslavia. Overturning the noncapitalist property relations and the working-class solidarity that are a product of the Yugoslav revolution of the 1940s, however, is an objective that the imperialist powers would only be able to achieve by direct military intervention. That goal has been the driving force of the U.S.-NATO interventions in Yugoslavia over the past decade, first in Bosnia—where U.S. occupation troops also remain stationed—then in Kosova, and now in Macedonia.

U.S. troops intervene in Macedonia

Washington stepped up its intervention in Macedonia June 25, when its troops escorted several hundred Albanian National Liberation Army (NLA) guerrilla forces from the town of Aracinovo. A 31-vehicle U.S. convoy took the guerrillas, who retained their arms, to villages near the Kosova border. The soldiers were deployed from among the 700 U.S. troops, which form part of a 3,000-strong force stationed in Macedonia as backup for NATO's "KFOR" occupation force in Kosova.

The Macedonian government agreed to suspend its bombardment of the village to allow the operation. Its three-day offensive, using tanks, artillery, and helicopter gunships, splintered a cease-fire agreed with the NLA a couple of weeks before.

This was the first active involvement by U.S. forces inside Macedonia since clashes between the NLA forces and the Macedonian government broke out in February. Troops from NATO's "KFOR" occupation force in Kosova, with U.S. forces in the fore, have backed up the actions of the Macedonian military by clamping down on rebel activity in border areas.

The action sparked a large protest by Slav nationalist forces in Skopje that evening. Army reservists, active duty soldiers, and paramilitary forces were among the thousands who gathered. Some brandished arms as they condemned European Union officials, NATO, and Macedonian president Boris Trajkovski, who had publicly defended the operation. Leaders of the protest opposed negotiations with representatives of Albanian-led parties over the status of the Albanian nationality.

In reality, the U.S. troops achieved what the Macedonian government offensive had failed to do—to dislodge the NLA forces from the town, which lies on the outskirts of the capital, Skopje.

The guerrilla leaders agreed to the evacuation after negotiations led by Javier Solana, the chief foreign policy and security representative of the European Union. Spokespeople for the NLA have declared support for the intervention of NATO forces in the Macedonian conflict.

The events also illustrated the tactical disagreements between the Macedonian gov-

Continued on Page 14

—CALENDAR—

NEW YORK Manhattan

Celebrate the 48th anniversary of the July 26, 1953, attack on the Moncada barracks in Cuba, led by Fidel Castro—the launching of the revolutionary struggle for power that triumphed in 1959. Sat., July 21, 8:00 p.m. 33 East 14 Street. Donation: \$10. Sponsored by Casa de las Américas.

Syracuse

Rally against Coyne Laundry's union busting and in solidarity with laundry workers in London, Kentucky, who are fighting to organize a union. Wed., July 11, 4:00 p.m. at Coyne Textile Services, 140 Cortland. Sponsored by Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Defense of Immigrant Rights: A Necessary Fight For All Workers. Fri., July 13, 7:30 p.m. 4229 S. Central Tel: (323) 233-9372.

FLORIDA

Miami

Jail Killer Cops! The Fight against Police Brutality Today. Speakers: Lavarice Gaudin, Veye Yo, Haitian rights organization; Frances Sesler, from Brooksville, Florida, whose son was killed by Minneapolis police; Michael Italie, garment worker in Miami; Max Rameau, Coalition Against Police Brutality and Harassment. Sat., July 14, 7:30 p.m. 28 NE 54th St., Tel: (305) 899-8161.

GEORGIA

Atlanta

The Cuban Revolution and the Fight to Feed the World. Speaker: Karl Butts, Florida farmer and representative of Socialist Workers Party Sat., July 14, 7:00 p.m. 465 Boulevard, Suite 214. Donation: \$4. Tel: (404) 622-8917.

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

Socialist Voice in the Elections. Hear John Staggs, meat packer and Socialist Workers Party candidate for District Attorney, and John Crysedale, garment worker, member of the Young Socialists, and SWP candidate for Controller. Sat., July 7, 7:30 p.m. Dinner at 6:30 p.m. Donation: \$5 dinner, \$5 program. 5237 N. Street. Tel: (215) 324-7020.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

Following the Lines of Working-Class Resistance: Expanding Opportunities for Communists Today. International panel of speakers. Sat., July 14, 7:30 p.m. Conference Centre, Otahuhu Town Hall, 10 High Street, Otahuhu. Donation: \$5. Tel: (09) 276-8885.

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“Yo, anybody got a match?”—The Federal Aviation Authority may impose a \$1 million fine on American Airlines. The huge company



Harry Ring

had permitted a jetliner to fly 198 flights after it was found to have potentially faulty batteries for floor lights that guide passengers to emergency exits. At the company battery shop, the feds found battery chargers that were broken or set

incorrectly. The possible \$1 million fine is deemed stiff. The slap-on-the-wrist is often less than \$100,000.

People might think it a business—Tightening the purse strings, the Church of England told its bishops there would be no more chauffeur-driven cars or first-class travel. A report commissioned by the Archbishop of Canterbury and York said the bishops should be trained in office management and computers.

Oh dear!—Rep. Earl Hilliard, an Alabama Democrat, was caught using campaign contributions to pay personal loans and to pay the salaries of people who worked for the companies run by Hilliard and

his family. Added funds were used to pay the rent and utility tabs of the companies. The House Ethics [?] committee sent Hilliard a “letter of reproof.”

The well society—One woman in 10 experiences depression during the period after childbirth, according to *USA Today*. But, the paper assures, “only one in 1,000 deteriorates to the point where they could endanger their child, experts say.”

Friendly Sam—The U.S. Equal Opportunity Commission has taken two court cases against the huge Wal-Mart chain. In one Wal-Mart store, a disabled employee was fired for being unable to sit down while working as a people greeter. In the

other case, an ex-employee of British origin charged that her Sam’s Club supervisor called her a “stupid limey” and told other workers she shouldn’t have a job in this country.

Philosophical—High schoolers are finding it harder to get a summer job this year. Observed federal economist Ron Bird, “Most people find a job eventually.”

Check it out—In California’s San Diego County, an eight-bedroom house, with 10 baths, is on the market. Features include a tennis court, a king-sized pool, cherry wood paneled library, and a 5,000 bottle wine cellar. It’s been on and off the market since 1995 when the asking price

was \$11 million. Currently, you can snap it up for \$10.5 million.

Obviously can use practice—Training on the island of Hokkaido, a Japanese military jet mistakenly attacked a parking lot. The strafing, fortunately, netted a smashed car window and a damaged garage roof.

Not as dumb as he looks—We thought it was a bad joke when a member of the Massachusetts legislature introduced a bill to define prisons as “low-income” housing. The apparent aim was to clear the way for more funding. But, it’s pointed out, it would also help “snob” areas like Cape Cod to further ignore a state statute calling on communities to provide at least 10 percent affordable housing.

Leon Trotsky discusses proletarian military policy

Printed below is an excerpt from *Writings of Leon Trotsky (1939–40)*, one of the recently reprinted Pathfinder titles featured in July as one of the “Books of the Month.” (see ad below for special offer). The piece quoted below, titled “On Conscription,” takes up aspects of the communist movement’s proletarian military policy. It is a letter dated July 9, 1940, to Albert Goldman, a Socialist Workers Party leader who was writing articles about conscription for the *Socialist Appeal*, later renamed the *Militant*. This letter originally appeared in the October 1940 issue of the Marxist maga-

break of World War II and Washington’s preparations to enter the imperialist slaughter; the fight to build proletarian parties around the world in face of the war challenge; the Stalinists’ attempts to assassinate Trotsky, who was finally murdered by an agent of Moscow in August 1940.



BY LEON TROTSKY

I believe that we agree with you on all the points of a principled character as they are formulated in your letter of July 6.

It is very important to understand that the war does not nullify or diminish the importance of our transitional program. Just the contrary is true. The transitional program is a bridge between the present situation and the proletarian revolution. War is a continuation of politics by other means. The characteristic of war is that it accelerates the development. It signifies that our transitional revolutionary slogans will become more and more actual, effective, important with every new month of the war. We have only of course to concretize and adapt them to the conditions. That is why in your first paragraph I would eliminate the word “to modify” because it can produce the impression that we must modify something of a

principled character.

We are absolutely in favor of compulsory military training and in the same way for conscription. Conscription? Yes. By the bourgeois state? No. We cannot entrust this work, as any other, to the state of the exploiters. In our propaganda and agitation we must very strongly differentiate these two questions. That is, not to fight against the necessity of the workers being good soldiers and of building up an army based on discipline, science, strong bodies, and so on, including conscription, but against the capitalist state which abuses the army for the advantage of the exploiting class. In your paragraph four you say: “Once conscription is made into law, we cease to struggle against it but continue our struggle for military training under workers’ control, etc.” I would prefer to say: “Once conscription is made into law we, without ceasing to struggle against the capitalist state, concentrate our struggle for military training and so on.”

We can’t oppose compulsory military training by the bourgeois state just as we can’t oppose compulsory education by the bourgeois state. Military training in our eyes is a part of education. We must struggle against the bourgeois state; its abuses in this field as in others.

We must of course fight against the war not only “until the very last moment” but during the war itself when it begins. We must however give our fight against the war its fully revolutionary sense, opposing and pitilessly denouncing pacifism. The very simple and very great idea of our fight against the war is: we are against the war but we will have the war if we are incapable of overthrowing the capitalists.

I don’t see any reason why we should renounce the slogan of a people’s referendum on the war. It is a very good slogan to unmask the futility of their democracy in such a vital question as the war.

I don’t believe that the demand for workers’ defense guards will be eliminated by the demand for universal military training. The approach of the war and the war itself with the rise of chauvinistic moods will inevitably provoke pogroms against the trade unions, revolutionary organizations, and papers. We can’t give up defending ourselves. Universal training can only facilitate for us the creation of workers’ defense guards.

“Government ownership...of all war industries” should be replaced by “national” or by “state ownership.” Such are the remarks I can make in relation to your letter.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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This book, part of a 14-volume series, contains writings by Trotsky during the last 13 months of his life. They cover the out-

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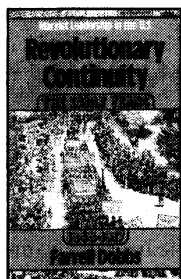
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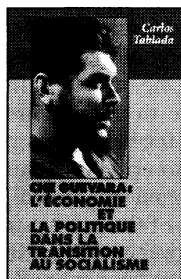
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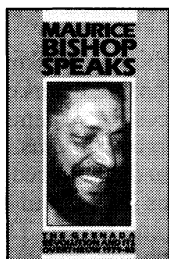
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—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

THE MILITANT

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

July 16, 1976

NEW YORK, July 7—Some 40,000 members of District 1199, National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees, struck voluntary (private) hospitals in this city at 6:00 a.m. today.

Immediately affected are thirty-four hospitals. On July 10, the strike is scheduled to be extended to thirteen nursing homes employing 3,000 union members and to 1,500 workers at nine municipal hospitals who fall under 1199 jurisdiction. About 60 percent of the city’s hospital capacity will be affected.

The union represents technical, clerical, and maintenance workers at the struck hospitals—virtually all employees except doctors and nurses. Despite the obvious danger to patients that is involved, the hospitals plan to maintain operations at near-normal levels. A hospital official put it this way: “We’re very conscious that every time we have an empty bed we have lost income. We have to practice sound business as well as sound medicine.”

Dr. Jay Dobkin, head of the Committee of Interns and Residents, the doctors union at the hospitals, blasted the attitude of the administrators. “We think it irresponsible and dangerous to patients for the hospitals to maintain business as usual to break the strike. “The strike is one that the union did not want, but had forced on it by the employers association, the League of Voluntary Hospitals and Homes of New York. The league represents twenty-eight of the thirty-four struck hospitals and the nursing homes.

District 1199 is one of the largest unions in the city. It has taken relatively good positions on important social issues. About 70 percent of the membership is Black or Puerto Rican, and more than half are women.

THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

July 16, 1951

United Labor Policy Committee representatives of the CIO, AFL and independent unions meeting this week in Washington complain that the Defense Mobilization Act now in the process of enactment by the House and Senate will “raise the cost of living a dollar a day for each American family.” They are, no doubt right.

But all the labor bureaucrats have done to express what they call their “grave dissatisfaction” with Congress’ failure to stabilize the cost of living is to urge people to write or wire their congressmen. The Big Business-controlled Congress has so disgusted the workers that they feel this pressure-by-mail campaign is useless.

The workers would like to see some real action to control prices. They agree with the statement made by the three labor members when they withdrew from the Wage Stabilization Board last Feb. 16: “The Stabilization Program is a cynical hoax on the American people.” It was a hoax in February and it is still a hoax.

When the ULPC pulled all labor representatives out of government boards last Feb. 28, it proposed the establishment of local consumer committees of housewives, unionists, farmers and small businessmen in a fight against high prices. This program died aborning. Not a single top labor leader moved a finger to bring it to life.

Now the ULPC has delayed withdrawing from the government boards again, as proposed by CIO representative Emil Rieve, until the Defense Mobilization Act is passed.

It was an excellent idea last February to organize consumers committees to fight high prices. Had this proposal been put into effect, labor would not be getting the short end of the stick today.

The biggest war criminals

The extradition of former Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic and his upcoming trial by the United Nations "war crimes" tribunal have nothing to do with justice and human rights. On the contrary, they only provide a justification for the war aims of Washington, London, and other imperialist powers that seek to strengthen their foothold in the Balkans.

Many working people in Yugoslavia are rightly suspicious about the "humanitarian" pretensions of Washington, which in 1999 unleashed a savage 11-week bombing campaign against Serbia. In the name of going after the chauvinist Milosevic regime for its brutal repression against the Albanian population in Kosova, the U.S. and British warplanes targeted Serbia's industry and infrastructure, with devastating effects on workers.

The U.S. rulers are using economic and political blackmail—sanctions along with a \$1 billion carrot of "aid"—to pressure the Yugoslav regime to bow to their dictates, from turning over Milosevic for a political show trial in The Hague, to accepting more and more dependence on the capitalist market. Those who will be affected by the U.S. and other imperialists' demands for economic "reforms"—and the resulting mass layoffs and economic dislocation—will be workers and farmers.

But the imperialist powers cannot reform capitalism back into existence. Their biggest obstacle is not the regime—which speaks for would-be capitalists—but Yugoslavia's working people, who will resist the onslaught on their social and political rights. That is why Washington's long-term aim is to weaken and eventually overthrow the workers state in Yugoslavia, which can only be done by direct military force.

From the early 1990s, Washington and other imperialist powers seized on the warfare between rival bureaucratic gangs in Yugoslavia to intervene militarily, first in

Bosnia, then in Kosova, where the chauvinist Serb regime unleashed a brutal assault on the Albanian population and its aspirations for national self-determination. Wrapping itself falsely in the banner of defending the Albanians from repression, the U.S. government used military power in Kosova and Serbia to try to assert its domination over its European imperialist rivals and to assault the working people of Yugoslavia. Today, U.S. occupation troops in the region are exploiting the unfolding conflict in Macedonia to flex their muscles and crack down on anyone who gets in the way, whether Albanians, Macedonians, Serbs, Croats, or others.

The increased U.S. reliance on military might, brutality, and trampling of national sovereignty is not an aberration. It is how imperialism works—what the imperialist rulers have in store for working people around the world.

Milosevic deserves to be judged for his crimes against working people. But only by the workers and farmers of Yugoslavia, not by the imperialist powers—the world's biggest war criminals. Washington—which is responsible for the brutal bombing of Serbia, the slaughter of 150,000 soldiers and civilians in Iraq in 1991, and the incineration of the civilian populations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945—has no right to sit in judgment of anyone.

It was workers and farmers in Serbia—not Washington and its cohorts—who brought down Milosevic's government last year through massive protests and strikes. It was the workers and farmers of Yugoslavia who carried out a deep-going socialist revolution in the 1940s. It is only working people in Yugoslavia who can confront and resolve the problems they face today. The job of working people in the United States is to answer Washington's lies and hypocrisy, and to explain their warmongering aims in the Balkans and worldwide.

Predatory U.S. aims in Europe

U.S. president George Bush's trip to Europe marked another step in Washington's drive to consolidate and reinforce its dominant position among the imperialist powers. The U.S. president made unambiguous the bipartisan course Washington will pursue to develop a missile defense system, set aside the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, rapidly expand the NATO military alliance to the east, and offer Russia inclusion in the European Union as the carrot to accept these goals.

The greatest danger for working people is to fall prey to the U.S. president's theme that there is a "we" of the United States or a "we" of Europe who have common interests against "them"—"dark forces" in unruly lands that are a threat to the prosperity and peace of the great powers. The aim of both the Republican White House and Democratic Congresspeople is to take the eyes of workers and farmers off our real enemy: the wealthy capitalists and bankers and their predatory imperialist government in Washington.

Working people have nothing in common with Bush and the superwealthy families the Democrats and Republicans represent. Our common interests lie with workers and farmers, not only in Europe and Japan, but also in Russia and other workers states and in the semicolonial countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The resistance these fellow toilers are mounting to the impact of the world crisis of capitalism strengthens our common battles.

In harnessing its military power and seeking to deploy an antimissile shield, Washington aims to use nuclear blackmail against any nation on earth. Although professing to offer its "allies" coverage with an antimissile system, there is no doubt who will control and run the opera-

tion. While it is part of the U.S. rulers' drive to reconquer Russia and other states where capitalism has been overthrown, the weapons system, if deployed, will also be aimed at the imperialist powers of Europe and Japan.

By offering Russia integration into the European Union, Washington is pressing the EU powers to "bear the burden" of integration and do a better job at imposing capitalism on Eastern Europe and the countries of the former Soviet Union. "Hug the bear" is Bush's message to the EU. It is this, not "negotiations" with Russia, that Washington is offering to an increasingly receptive layer of the ruling stratum and wannabe capitalists in Russia.

The European Union is ultimately aimed at confronting U.S. imperialism as competition sharpens on a world scale. But the push to strengthen the EU's centralized power and position of the biggest imperialist countries within it will only bring greater destabilization and deepening class struggle across the continent. Working people will more and more resist austerity measures and cutbacks demanded to increase productivity and competitiveness for the bosses, as can be seen in the strikes, rallies, and mobilizations by working people in many countries in Europe today. Surprises, such as the rejection in Ireland of the Nice Treaty, will continue to upset the plans of the imperialists as smaller countries and oppressed peoples decide not to bow to the interests of the great powers.

Working people will face growing opportunities in the years ahead to set a course different from what the imperialists offer the world. It is only by fighting—in country after country—to replace the capitalist government with one of our own, that workers and farmers can bring an end to the assaults, brutalities, fascism, and war that will more and more mark world politics.

Back Canada health-care workers

Working people everywhere should rally behind the thousands of hospital workers and nurses in Canada who are confronting antiunion legislation decreed by the provincial governments of Nova Scotia and British Columbia. When nurses in Nova Scotia exercised their decision to strike, the provincial legislature quickly passed a law barring hospital workers' strikes and empowering the capitalist government to impose the terms of a rejected contract. On the other end of the country, the British Columbia government imposed a 60-day "cooling off" period denying health-care workers the right to strike and refuse overtime.

These measures, which have become a pattern in the health-care system in Canada, are an attack on the whole working-class movement. If the wealthy rulers of Canada get away with this assault, they will target other groups of workers. The British Columbia government is already threatening to take similar measures against teachers, who will begin contract negotiations in the fall.

From the standpoint of working people, what jeopardizes the health-care system is not the struggle by nurses

and hospital workers for better conditions, but rather the federal cuts in health-care funds, staff reductions, and hospital closings implemented by the provincial governments in the 1990s. Since the mid-1960s, when Medicare was established, the federal government's share of public health-care funding has fallen from 50 percent to 13 percent, with the difference being shouldered by provincial governments.

Today all this translates into inhuman working conditions for overworked nurses and hospital workers, and a significant deterioration of services for patients—fewer available beds, overcrowded emergency rooms, and long waiting lists for more and more medical procedures.

Working people and their unions should join the ongoing fight by health-care workers and nurses. Their fight for improved working conditions, wages, and union rights is also part of the struggle for decent health-care services for all. The solidarity offered by striking workers at Purdy's Chocolate in Vancouver, who have joined demonstrations and rallies organized by the nurses and hospital workers, sets a good example.

New Zealand military plans

Continued from Page 16

Bosnia, Somalia, and elsewhere.

While there are some sharp tactical disagreements among the capitalist parties around selling off the combat aircraft, the Labour-Alliance initiative is based on general agreement in the ruling class that the equipment used by the New Zealand armed forces is outdated, making their participation in imperialist interventions abroad ineffectual.

Most of the criticism of the government's policy focuses on the weakening of New Zealand's defense alliances with Washington, Canberra, and London. Four former defense chiefs, two former defense secretaries, and a former deputy of defense wrote an open letter in April arguing that the direction of the government posed a serious risk to New Zealand's future security. Bradford, the National Party's defense spokesperson, said, "This will be the week remembered as the point when the Labour-Alliance government made bludging [sponging] off others an integral part of our defense policy. But the plan is not only bludging, it is dangerous given the Asia-Pacific region's arc of instability above Australia."

A May 9 editorial in the *Otago Daily Times* said, "So Australia is to be our bludger's option, apparently. But the decision to disband the air combat force also means abandoning the most useful continuing working defence link with Australia, the Skyhawk squadron based at Nowra."

The *Dominion* editorialized May 9: "The new defence policy is based on a naive belief that the big conflicts in the world are all over, or that they'll be fought by other countries. New Zealand, at its paternalistic best, will be available for 'peacekeeping roles....' With yesterday's decisions New Zealand is not prepared for many possible eventualities. And neither should the country assume it can rely on its allies, just as they have discovered they cannot rely on New Zealand."

Supporting the military reorganization announced by the government, the May 9 *Press* wrote, "The security framework outlined yesterday does mark a major shift in defence policy, but this shift has the twin virtues of coherency and realism." Pointing to the New Zealand rulers' closest defense ally, Australia, the *Press* continued, "The greatest trans-Tasman military cooperation in half a century has been in East Timor. Central to that are not New Zealand combat aircraft, submarine detectors, or frigates, but our soldiers on the ground. This week's decisions will enhance their effectiveness and their ability to work with the forces of other nations."

Many liberal forces have not only supported but campaigned for the government's military reorganization. For example, the Peace Foundation, a non-government organization, issued an appeal calling for support for the planned defense changes, saying if they succeed, "it will be a useful example to other countries of less militaristic policies being adopted by a traditional U.S. ally." They "support reorienting the New Zealand military into a peacekeeping and South Pacific resource protection force."

The Green Party, which has seven members of parliament, has also come out in support of the government's military policies. The party's defense spokesperson Keith Locke described it as a major step towards "nationhood." Party co-leader Rod Donald said the government's moves, including focusing the six Orion aircraft on fishing zones, was a step in the right direction. "The real threats are to our economic sovereignty in terms of ripping off our fish stocks," he said.

Annalucia Vermunt is a member of the Meat Workers Union.

Milosevic trial

Continued from Page 12

ernment and diplomats for the imperialist powers over how to counter Albanian demands. In Macedonia, Kosova, and Serbia, Albanians face discrimination in many facets of society. While backing up and assisting the Macedonian regime's military campaign, the imperialists have demanded the government undercut support for the guerrillas by drawing official Albanian figures into ongoing negotiations and holding out a promise of action against inequality.

Albanian political parties in Macedonia have joined a coalition cabinet where they are pressing their Slavic-majority partners to agree to carry out some reforms benefiting the Albanian population. So far, however, Prime Minister Ljubco Georgievski has sought to crush the guerrillas by relying overwhelmingly on force.

On June 20 the NATO command approved a plan to send a force of up to 5,000 troops to Macedonia with the task of disarming the guerrillas in the event of a more lasting cease-fire. "The European NATO members, probably led by the United Kingdom, are expected to make up the bulk of the force," reported the June 21 *Wall Street Journal*. The governments of Spain and Germany have offered troops.

The U.S. government joined in the unanimous decision. The troops will be engaged in "setting up points where [the guerrillas'] weapons can be received," said Secretary of State Colin Powell. While Washington has not committed any troops at this stage, President George Bush said, "I take no option off the table in terms of the troops. We're a participant in NATO." On June 28 Bush banned fund-raising for the NLA in the United States.

Lenin on electrification and fight for alliance of workers, farmers

Below are excerpts from two 1920 reports by V.I. Lenin, the central leader of the October 1917 Bolshevik-led Russian Revolution and Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars in the new Soviet government. In these talks Lenin addresses one of the key tasks of the revolution in its early years: the electrification of all parts of the country and the social and political consequences of such a measure in strengthening the alliance of workers and farmers, the foundation of the revolution.

The first excerpt is from a report on the work of the Council of People's Commissars and the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies. The speech was delivered at the first session of the executive committee's meeting on Feb. 2, 1920. The second excerpt is from a Dec. 22, 1920, report on the work of the Council of People's Commissars given to the Eighth All-Russian Congress of Soviets.

The soviets—the Russian word for councils—were class organizations formed by workers, farmers, and soldiers during the Russian Revolution. The October 1917 insurrection overthrew the capitalist regime and put political power in the hands of the soviets, establishing a government of workers and peasants. At the time of these 1920 reports, the revolutionary government had recently emerged victorious from a war against counterrevolutionary forces backed by invading imperialist armies, and was turning its efforts to the pressing needs of economic development. The documents can be found in Lenin's *Collected Works*, Vols. 30 and 31.

I hope the Central Executive Committee will adopt this resolution which, in the name of the Central Executive Committee, instructs the Supreme Economic Council and the People's Commissariat of Agriculture to work out in the course of the next few months—our practical tasks during this period will be different—with the aid of scientists and engineers a broad and complete plan for the electrification of Russia. The author of this pamphlet is absolutely correct in choosing as its motto the saying: "The age of steam is the age of the bourgeoisie, the age of electricity is the age of socialism."

We must have a new technical foundation for the new economic development. This new technical foundation is electricity, and everything will have to be built on this foundation, but it will take many long years. We shall not be afraid of working ten

or twenty years, but we must prove to the peasants that in place of the old separation of industry from agriculture, this very deep contradiction on which capitalism thrived and which sowed dissension between the industrial and agricultural workers, we set ourselves the task of returning to the peasant the loan we received from him in the form of grain, for we know that paper money, of course, is not the equivalent of bread.

We must repay this loan by organizing industry and supplying the peasants with its products. We must show the peasants that the organization of industry on the basis of modern, advanced technology, on electrification which will provide a link between town and country, will put an end to the division between town and country, will make it possible to raise the level of culture in the countryside and to overcome, even in the most remote corners of the land, backwardness, ignorance, poverty, disease, and barbarism.

We shall tackle the problem as soon as we have dealt with our current, basic task, and we shall not allow ourselves to be deflected for a single moment from the fundamental practical task.

Anyone who has carefully observed life in the countryside, as compared with life in the cities, knows that we have not torn up the roots of capitalism and have not undermined the foundation, the basis, of the internal enemy. The latter depends on small-scale production, and there is only one way of undermining it, namely, to place the economy of the country, including agriculture, on a new technical basis, that of modern large-scale production. Only electricity provides that basis.

Communism is Soviet power plus the electrification of the whole country. Otherwise the country will remain a small-peasant country, and we must clearly realize that. We are weaker than capitalism, not only on the world scale, but also within the country. That is common knowledge. We have realized it, and we shall see to it that the economic basis is transformed from a small-peasant basis into a large-scale industrial basis. Only when the country has been electrified, and industry, agriculture, and transport have been placed on the technical basis of modern large-scale industry, only then shall we be fully victorious.

We have already drawn up a preliminary plan for the electrification of the country; two hundred of our best scientific and technical men have worked on it. We have a plan which gives us estimates of materials and

Mexican workers in New York protest against 'guest worker' program for agribusiness



Anastacia Vidal

Workers protest in New York June 19 against plans being discussed by U.S. and Mexican governments to restart a large-scale "guest worker" program, similar to the "bracero" plan that existed from 1942 to 1964, that will benefit agribusiness interests at the expense of workers on both sides of the border. The protest was initiated by the Tepeyac Association of New York. Under the bracero program, workers were brought into the country on a temporary basis with low pay, long hours, poor working conditions, no right to change jobs, and no union rights.

finances covering a long period of years, not less than a decade. This plan indicates how many million barrels of cement and how many million bricks we shall require for the purpose of electrification.

To accomplish the task of electrification from the financial point of view, the estimates are between 1,000 and 1,200 million gold rubles. You know that we are far from being able to meet this sum from our gold reserves. Our stock of foodstuffs is not very large either. We must therefore meet the expenditure indicated in these estimates by means of concessions, in accordance with the plan I have mentioned. You will see the calculation showing how the restoration of our industry and our transport is being planned on this basis.

I recently had occasion to attend a peasant festival held in Volokolamsk Uyezd, a remote part of Moscow Gubernia, where the peasants have electric lighting. A meeting was arranged in the street, and one of the peasants came forward and began to make a speech welcoming this new event in the lives of the peasants. "We peasants were unenlightened," he said, "and now light has appeared among us, an 'unnatural light, which will light up our peasant darkness.'" For my part, these words did not surprise

me. Of course, to the non-Party peasant masses electric light is an "unnatural" light; but what we consider unnatural is that the peasants and workers should have lived for hundreds and thousands of years in such backwardness, poverty, and oppression under the yoke of the landowners and the capitalists.

You cannot emerge from this darkness very rapidly. What we must now try is to convert every electric power station we build into a stronghold of enlightenment to be used to make the masses electricity-conscious, so to speak. All should be made aware of the reason why these small electric power stations, whose numbers run into the dozens, are linked up with the restoration of industry. We have an established plan of electrification, but the fulfillment of this plan is designed to cover a number of years. We must fulfill this plan at all costs, and the period of its fulfillment must be reduced....

To carry out the electrification plan we may need a period of ten or twenty years to effect the changes that will preclude any return to capitalism. This will be an example of rapid social development without precedent anywhere in the world. The plan must be carried out at all costs, and its deadline brought nearer.

LETTERS

Workers resist overtime

I work at the meat packaging center of the Provigo supermarket chain, which provides packaged meat to more than 40 grocery stores.

About 50 of us work on the afternoon shift, which runs 2:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. Tuesday to Friday and from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday. We are members of the United Food and Commercial Workers union.

During the weekend of May 26-27 we learned that the company was going to change the Saturday hours to 11:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. We would be working both Friday and Saturday night. The announcement was to be made at a meeting in the cafeteria the following Wednesday.

When the plant manager came to the cafeteria on Wednesday, backed by all his supervisors, he found that almost every one of us was wearing sunglasses. We were showing our united opposition to the new hours.

The boss asked for "our support" for his move to extend the work week and get out "more kilos" of meat. Workers would be brought in

to work before 11:00 a.m. thus extending Saturday work to at least 12 hours.

After his announcement workers didn't hesitate to speak out. We pointed out that this was one more step to a seven-day operation, which previously existed in the plant: that we should be working Monday to Friday with voluntary overtime on weekends; that the wages were too low. Since the announcement the company has put more pressure on the union by using butchers and packers from a temporary agency on weekends.

While we have not yet forced the company to change its plans we showed that we can stick together. *Al Cappe*
Montreal, Quebec

Nazi-era compensation pay

A recent newspaper article reported that compensation payments are soon to begin for some of those forced to work as slaves in capitalist factories during the Nazi regime. Allegedly, they are initially to receive a payment of \$4,400 for what was in some cases years of slave labor. These former workers ex-

pressed some rancor at the settlement. This is not surprising, since these former slaves are not the real intended beneficiaries of this suit.

The primary beneficiary of this theater was the U.S. government, which manipulated it to fraudulently present itself as a defender of human rights and to use it as a public relations club against its capitalist competitors in Germany. That the U.S. government—the worst violator of human rights in the 20th and early 21st century—should be allowed to pose as a defender of human rights is truly grotesque!

The secondary beneficiaries of this lawsuit were the 51 lawyers who organized it and will rake in an average of more than 1 million dollars each for the public relations work they did for the U.S. government. The former slaves will be tossed a few pennies for the use of their names. *Robert Dees*
Palo Alto, California

Protectionist policies

In the July 2 *Militant*, Brian Williams reported the support by lead-

ing officials of the International Association of Machinists for the U.S. government's plans to develop and deploy an antiballistic missile system which could give Washington a first-strike nuclear capacity for the first time in decades.

Reporting on a recent IAM aerospace conference in St. Louis, the IAM journal argued that one of the union's objectives must be "reducing or eliminating so-called offset levels in aerospace sales agreements."

"Offset levels occur, for example, when a country orders a fleet of 777s from Boeing—or a few regional jets from Canadair—and requires that a major part of the work be performed by workers in the purchasing country. This, of course, results in a reduction in the amount of work performed by union members in North American shops. It also means that aerospace technology is sold to the offshore customer who thus becomes an industry competitor."

It was from this protectionist perspective of counterposing the interests of its members to those of workers in other countries, that the

IAM in Quebec mobilized its members to join recent protests at the Summit of the Americas in Quebec City. It then completely abstained from participating in the annual Montreal May Day march that featured workers on strike or in struggle.

Jim Upton
Montreal, Quebec

Questions on U.S. bases

In reading the June 18 issue, I noticed the small note about increased U.S. troops in Ecuador. It raised a question in my mind. How many other countries have U.S. military bases in them? How many military bases does the U.S. have in other countries?

Marty Anderson
Staten Island, New York

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people.

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.

New Zealand government prepares for new military interventions abroad

BY ANNALUCIA VERMUNT

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand—The New Zealand government announced June 3 it will send another battalion to East Timor on a six month rotation, keeping New Zealand troops there until at least November 2002. The government had previously said the troops would return by May 2002. Australian and New Zealand troops have been the cornerstone of an imperialist occupation force in East Timor since September 1999 under the banner of the United Nations. It is the largest military deployment by New Zealand since the Korean War.

The new rotation will be New Zealand's sixth to East Timor, meaning that most of the 4,300 regular army personnel and many territorial reservists will have served at least once in the country, some up to three times. The minister of defense in the Labour-Alliance government, Mark Burton, justified the decision by saying there is continuing volatility in East Timor. It "reinforces our reputation as a valued contributor to multilateral peace building and regional security," he said. Maxwell Bradford, defense spokesperson for the opposition National Party, welcomed the decision to extend the involvement of New Zealand troops in East Timor.

The extension of the troop deployment comes on the heels of a May 8 government announcement of plans to reorganize and upgrade the New Zealand Defense Forces (NZDF). The government said it will "disband the air combat arm" of the Air Force, limiting it to "maritime patrol and air transport"; curtail expansion of the navy; and focus on fielding a "modernized army with new equipment placing it in the first tiers of forces internationally," Prime Minister Helen Clark said.

Defense chief Burton said New Zealand "cannot afford modern combat aircraft and the weaponry needed to equip them, and also maintain adequate army and navy capabilities," adding the new army will be "suited to a potential future theater of war."

The Christchurch Press noted that "New Zealand's decision to end its air combat operations in favor of building a stronger, more capable army could have long-term benefits for Australia" since the country "will acquire new armoured vehicles and communications gear, making them better able to operate alongside the Australian Defense Force (ADF)." New Zealand's decision to "upgrade or replace its dated Iroquois helicopters and C-130 Hercules transport aircraft" will help underpin "the ADF's own stretched transport capabilities."

'Combat soldiers for service offshore'

Ian Bostock, Australian correspondent for *Jane's Defense Weekly*, wrote in the May 16 Press, "The Clark government has been able to see through the background clutter of competing security demands and come to terms with what the NZDF can and can't do well. For New Zealand, it's providing well-trained, well equipped, and highly professional combat soldiers for service offshore. These will mostly be deployed as part of a coalition and be suitable for a range of scenarios—from peacekeeping/peace enforcement through to low and medium intensity conflicts where troops on the ground count."

Recognizing their weaknesses as a junior imperialist power, the wealthy ruling class in New Zealand is offering to sacrifice workers and farmers in uniform as the combat ground troops in future imperialist wars and occupations around the world, and especially in the Pacific.

To carry out this military program the Labour-Alliance coalition plans to increase funding for the armed forces over the next five years by NZ\$300 million, in addition to the estimated NZ\$400 million the government will save over that period by disbanding the Air Combat Force (NZ\$1 = US

41 cents). It is estimated that total capital investment over the next 10 years will exceed NZ\$2 billion. Boasting about the increased spending, Defense Minister Burton said the previous government "cut defense operational and personnel spending by 17.7 percent in real terms between 1991 and 1997.... Spending will actually increase to make up for past neglect."

As part of the May 8 announcement, the government said it would limit the upgrade of the fleet of Orion antisubmarine aircraft and would not purchase a third frigate for the New Zealand navy. Instead, a smaller multipurpose naval vessel would be purchased, equipped with a helicopter and light armaments. These are considered more useful in the South Pacific—the New Zealand Navy's main sphere of operations.

The government plan envisions selling off its 17 Skyhawk fighter planes and 17 Italian Aermacchi jet trainers. Currently the Skyhawk fighter-bombers and the infrastructure that keeps them in the air make up 14 percent of the entire military budget.

New Zealand's military functions in close collaboration with Australia as the two imperialist powers situated in the South Pacific. In 1991 a Closer Defense Relationship was signed to enhance the "interoperability" of the two military forces. The last two frigates bought by the New Zealand Navy were built in Australia. Half of the New Zealand Skyhawk fleet has been permanently posted to Nowra in New South Wales to exercise with the Australian Navy and test its air defense systems.

In addition to East Timor, New Zealand military forces have been deployed in the past year in Bougainville and the Solomon Islands. Over the past decade New Zealand troops have been sent to the Middle East,

Continued on Page 14



Imperialist troops in East Timor. Australian and New Zealand troops have been the cornerstone of an imperialist occupation force in East Timor since September 1999.

Protesters in Australia demand freeing of detained asylum seekers

BY LINDA HARRIS

SYDNEY, Australia—More than 500 people marched to the Villawood Detention Centre June 3 as part of a day of national protests against the Australian government's denial of rights to refugees. The government currently holds 3,000 refugees throughout the country in jails that it calls "detention centers."

Chanting, "Say it loud, say it clear, refugees are welcome here!" demonstrators massed outside the front gates of the center. Participants wore stickers saying, "Close the camps, open the borders, free the refugees!" There were banners representing the National Union of Students and the New South Wales Teachers Federation. A large number of the protesters were immigrants from the Middle East. A group of immigrants from Aceh, where an independence struggle is challenging the Indonesian government, joined the action.

During the protest 100 cops lined the fence in front of the detention center and a police helicopter hovered overhead. From behind barbed wire fences refugees chanted back their support for the demonstrators. Organizers held a phone hookup with a detainee at Curtin, in Western Australia, who thanked demonstrators for their support and called on the government to "close the detention centers and to stop demonizing us to the Australian people."

Protesters observed a minute of silence to commemorate Shahrzad Kayani, who died after setting himself alight outside Parliament House to protest the authorities' refusal to allow his wife and three children in Pakistan to join him in Australia.

Secretary-elect of the New South Wales

Labor Council John Robertson told the crowd that a number of unions were supporting the actions and the Labor Council backed the campaign to close down the detention centers, which he called "a national disgrace and an international embarrassment." He added, "Innocent people, struggling for a better life, are being treated worse than convicted criminals."

Two thousand people turned out for a demonstration in Melbourne the same day and smaller rallies took place in other cities across Australia. The protests called for an end to the mandatory detention of asylum seekers and the racist scapegoating of those who come as refugees.

The actions also pledged support for detainees who have been protesting the conditions they are subjected to and mistreatment by the guards inside these remote prisons. For example, 150 people held a protest June 1 at the Curtin Detention Centre in Western Australia after 57 men, women, and children were told they would be sent home without being given a chance to apply to stay in Australia. The action was broken up by guards using tear gas. Four detainees suffered minor injuries.

In a pre-dawn raid May 26, some 170 federal and state police occupied the Port Hedland Detention Centre in Western Australia for six hours. They arrested 22 asylum seekers and took them to the local police station to be interviewed and charged over a protest that had taken place at the center on May 11. So far this year inmates have organized three protests and a strike at the jail. Involved in the raid were cops from Australasian Correctional Management,

which runs the center along with five others under contract with the government.

After the arrests, Philip Ruddock, federal minister of immigration, slandered those who remained jailed at the center, saying some would continue to "misbehave" as a tactic to get themselves released. The federal government has a policy of imprisoning all refugees arriving without valid visas. Those who come by boat are held for long periods in prisons in isolated desert regions in South or Western Australia.

Ruddock claimed that many of the detainees are illegal immigrants trying to get into Australia by claiming to be refugees. "We're told a lot of people go to very extensive preparations before they come," he said, "even in some cases going into Afghanistan to see some of the areas which they'd be able to claim [they're] from."

A parliamentary committee report released on June 18 criticized the running of the detention centers and recommended a maximum of 14 weeks detention. Ruddock and Prime Minister John Howard rejected the report as naive. "The best signal we can send to would-be illegal immigrants is, 'don't come in the first place, we are not a soft touch,'" Howard said.

Only 4,174 asylum seekers reached Australia last year compared to 300,000 who made their way to Europe. Of the 1.2 million refugees from the war in Afghanistan currently in Pakistan fewer than 5,000 were referred for resettlement by the UN last year and only 450 to Australia.

Linda Harris is a member of the Australasian Meat Industry Employees' Union.