



## Recovery — where is it?

"The economic recovery has begun!" So say the capitalist newspapers. But it is not something you would notice. Unemployment is still rising. Welfare rolls have grown to record highs. New taxes are eating away at the income for those who can find work. And budget cutbacks continue to decimate social programs.

The big-time news media knows this. But they are simply PR agencies for capitalism. They believe if you can create "consumer confidence" then everything will be all right. So with this "I'm-OK-

You're-OK" economics, they have banished the word "depression" — that sounds just too depressing like the 1930's — and replaced it with nicer sounding words like "recession" and "slump." And they take every slight upward blip in any economic statistic as another sign for celebration.

Of course, the corporate executives might celebrate. They are hauling in record salaries even with the economic crisis. But for the masses the situation is not good. What is needed is not more "recovery" news, not more cheerleading

for the capitalists, but rather a struggle against them.

### Double-dip recession

When the capitalists talk among themselves they are not so euphoric. Look for example at the June 24 *Business Week* survey of 20 bigshot economists.

They estimate that there may be a slight recovery, but it will be the weakest since World War II. And it will be a recovery with high unemployment, lowering incomes, increasing taxes, and more

budget cutbacks.

Some of them admit that even this prediction may be too rosy. They talk of a "double-dip" recession in which there may be slight increases in production for a few months. But these will mainly represent the rebuilding of inventories. And then the economy will again plunge into recession.

### Underlying crises not solved

Whether there is a short recovery or not, the fact is that capitalism is facing severe underlying crises and these have not been solved. The crisis of overproduction is only being dealt with by shutting down factories — which most economists predict will continue for years. Meanwhile there is the enormous debt crisis, the growing S&L and commercial bank failures, the ever-present budget crises, a trade war heating up internationally, and more.

Bush and Congress have tried to stave off these crises through temporary financial juggling and by making the masses pay. But, these chickens may come home to roost. Pushing federal expenses off onto the states, for example, has helped cause massive state and city budget crises.

What all this shows is that the working people cannot expect capitalism to heal itself and some day trickle the benefits down to the masses. Exploitation continues, whether in the depths of depression or in "recovery," and it is grinding down the workers.

Nor can the masses wait on Bush or Congress for relief. They are too busy bailing out the S&Ls and finding new ways to help out the profit picture of the capitalists.

Rather, the working class and all the oppressed must rally to defend themselves. What do we need? Not the capitalist media and its "recovery" news, but a workers' press to expose the capitalist lies and encourage mass struggle. Not the capitalist politicians and their promises of some relief some day in the future, but an independent movement of the working class which can mount a struggle against the capitalists.

## Protesters say no! MILITARISM ON PARADE

There have been "welcome home" parades across the country. In the name of "supporting our troops," the establishment has been proudly displaying its bloodstained planes and tanks. In the name of flag-waving patriotism, they are saluting the massacre of 100,000 Iraqi soldiers and civilians. And this year's fourth of July is to center on military boasting.

Millions of dollars have been pumped into the parades. In some places, fireworks were scheduled to attract crowds. And the newspapers have jumped into the act, predicting that hundreds of thousands of onlookers would come out. The biggest parades, in New York and Washington, D.C., were hyped to the skies. Newspapers and TV have tried to create an impression of a massive, united, pro-war citizenry.

Yet usually the numbers were below predictions, often absurdly so, and in a number of cities the parades have been outright flops. Such was the case in San Francisco in April and in several other cities in June. Meanwhile, from New York to Oakland, anti-war counter-protests have been a persistent thorn in the side of the militarists. In Seattle, the victory celebration couldn't even get off the ground.

After all, what was all the bloodshed in the Gulf for? So that the oil barons could keep their claws on Mideast resources? To prop up the kings of Kuwait

and Saudi Arabia, and allow kangaroo courts and mass deportations? These are not goals which can get wide support among the working people.

### "It's like a protest parade"

The army's biggest flop last month

was in Oakland, California. The parade on June 14 only drew 5,000 onlookers, a tiny fraction of the numbers predicted. And this 5,000 included over 1,000 protesters, both anti-war activists and onlookers who joined with them. One

*Continued on page 9*



Anti-war protesters denounce "victory" parade in Detroit, June 29

## Don't give any room to the masters of apartheid!

The press is telling us over and over that the white racist government in South Africa has ended apartheid. We are told that head slave master De Klerk has eliminated all the bad laws. If it just wasn't for that sectarian black on black violence, the press suggests, everything would be settled peace fully between De Klerk and the black people.

But the truth is something else. Apartheid still exists in South Africa. The black majority is still segregated into poverty-stricken shacks on the worst land. It is still without rights, without money, without land, without education.

Change is indeed coming to South Africa. But the outlines of that change are being bitterly fought over. The ruling class is trying to split up the black

masses in order to dominate that change. This is what is behind the violence in South Africa, and it is likely that things will get worse before they get better. De Klerk is fighting to guarantee that the next South African constitution will ensure that the black majority can only decide how to redivide its poverty, and the wealthy exploiters continue to dominate the rich mineral and human resources of South Africa.

### Has apartheid been abolished?

The press tells us that De Klerk has removed the apartheid laws. Newspapers carry charts of the main "pillars of apartheid," and give the day on which they were repealed. But did this end racism?

Take the Population Registration Act, one of the notorious racist laws. It required every individual to be certified by the state as either white, Indian, colored (mixed-race), or black. And it has been repealed.

But all this means is that new-born babies are no longer classified. The old classifications are still in force. Black people still can't vote. There are still separate schools. All non-white people, whether what the South Africans call black or Indian or colored (mixed-race), are still subject to a thousand and one humiliations.

It can be borne in mind that American segregationists and racists have never

*Continued on page 10*

**Health care for all**

see page 2

**Workers and U.S.-Mexico free trade**

see page 5

**Rich get richer, workers get cuts**

see page 6-7

# The Democratic plan: Is it really universal health care?

There is a crisis in health care. The Bush administration doesn't care. So far, all it has offered is a plan to lower the amount of malpractice insurance paid by doctors. As always, you have to make \$100,000 or \$200,000 before Bush even knows you exist. But don't worry, says the White House, we'll get around to the others some time soon.

Seeing a vacuum, Senator Kennedy and other Senate Democrats introduced their own plan at the beginning of June. With drum rolls and the fanfare of trumpets, this plan has been touted as the way to reform health care. A good deal of the establishment has welcomed it, from top union leaders of the AFL-CIO to the greedy businessmen of the National Association of Manufacturers, and the rich doctors of the American Medical Association (AMA).

The plan is presented to the masses as assuring universal health care, clinics, an end to insurance abuses, etc. But all these good things are to be accomplished without much money. It is business-suit liberalism, Gramm-Rudman liberalism, hocus-pocus liberalism.

## Play or pay

First let's look at the heart of the plan.

Instead of establishing a single national plan, it simply tinkers with the present hodge-podge of private insurance, employer-paid plans, government subsidies, Medicare, etc.

The heart of this program is the "play or pay" plan. The employers are supposed to either provide health benefits for their workers ("play") or pay a tax to the government ("pay"). The tax would help fund a new program, called AmeriCare. Those not working or without employer-paid programs would buy AmeriCare coverage, with subsidies for those with little income.

Doesn't this look suspiciously close to the present system? Private insurance provides the bulk, while there is Medicaid and other programs for the poor.

Whether this particular plan is of any value to anyone, would depend completely on the details. It all depends on what type of health benefits they get from their employer, what type of benefits are provided by AmeriCare, whether they can afford AmeriCare, and so forth.

All these things will be tinkered with by Congress and negotiated with Bush. Since the whole plan was developed in

conjunction with businessmen, and in the spirit of winning over the Republicans, you can well imagine that the result won't be much better than what already exists. Perhaps a bit better for some lucky ones, a bit worse for the unfortunate.

## Funding

Of course, the plan has to be funded. The employer tax won't pay for all of it. And, it turns out, the Democrats haven't figured out a way to finance it yet. It is still all smoke and mirrors.

The Democrats present it as an employer-paid plan because of the "play or pay" feature. Really? The large firms that already offer plans wouldn't be affected. Presumably they could keep on forcing co-pays and deductibles and limitations on their workers. And the bill offers new tax and other financial subsidies to small business owners to encourage them to offer medical plans.

If the businessmen endorse this plan, it is a good sign that they don't expect to be paying the tab.

## Keeping the patchwork

The bill also talks big about reducing administrative expenses.

But all its suggestions are pretty piddling. After all, since the bill preserves the present hodge-podge of private insurers, government programs, health industry providers, it can hardly do anything serious on the front of simplification.

## The new epidemics

The bill is also silent about the new epidemics sweeping America — such as occupational diseases from speed-up like repetitive stress injuries. It is silent about the huge expenditures needed right away to provide drug rehabilitation clinics and AIDS care. And it says nothing about how to provide and pay for long-term care for those with chronic illnesses or the elderly.

What a marvelous reform! What realism!

We can presume that this bill intends to let these sores fester. We can presume that all its promises are Disneyland-fantasy trips because they leave aside most of the pressing problems facing Americans.

## Let George do it

And who would determine the priori-

ties for this whole complex plan?

The bill calls for a Federal Health Expenditure Board which would be appointed by none other than George Bush.

Will wonders never cease? Bush and his millionaire friends are consigning the common people to free-market hell. (If you want health care, buy it. If you can't afford it, it's your own fault, you lazy bum.) And then Senator Kennedy prances to the rescue and specifies — that good old George should supervise the whole thing.

## A class struggle over health

These things seem incomprehensible. But they really all make sense.

Just as soon as one realizes that there are several different crises in health care. Different people face different problems.

Tens of millions of disadvantaged working and poor people receive little if any health care. They either don't have insurance, or the insurance won't cover their needs, or they can't afford the

co-pays and deductibles. In some inner cities, health care conditions resemble those in Central America.

The corporations, the federal government, and the states also have a health care crisis. But it is of quite a different nature. Their desire is to rid themselves of growing costs for health care. Their solution has been to push more costs onto the workers, to increase co-pays and deductibles, and even to eliminate whole programs.

The medical industry also faces crisis. It has been growing rich and fat from years of high living at the expense of money supposedly going to ensure the health of the people. But with the austerity in social programs, and with increasing pressure from other capitalists worried about the cost of health benefits, it has faced a bit of a shakeup. To keep up its profits, it has been squeezing health workers with wage cuts and productivity drives. And it is seeking new forms of health funding, and new ways to tax the

*Continued on page 10*  
See HEALTH CARE

## Rallies for health care

Across the country, rallies and marches were held during the first week of June calling for decent health care for workers and poor. Demonstrators denounced the insurance companies. In Los Angeles, for example, 500 people rallied on June 6 in front of the Equitable Insurance Company, shouting "Health care is our right!"

The campaign was organized by a number of trade unions and other groups. It focused on such issues as the outrageous profits of the health insurers, the attempts by employers to shift rising health coverage costs onto their workers, and the need for a national health care system. It pointed to the huge, unfilled health care needs of ordinary people. Suffice it to say that an estimated 37 million people have no health insurance, and another 50 million have inadequate coverage.

But since the rallies were sponsored mainly by the AFL-CIO bureaucrats, they supported liberal politicians and the fraudulent health care proposals of the

Democrats. The liberal politicians are only offering a drop in the health care bucket, and often at the expense of burdening the masses with extra charges and taxes. The insurance companies and health industry are to rake in billions in more business, and the businessmen and executives are to continue to see their salaries soar, while the poor are squeezed and squeezed again.

This is the line of the national AFL-CIO. It too stresses that the health care expenses are just too much of a burden on business. But with such a viewpoint, just who does the top AFL-CIO hacks think will be paying for expanded health coverage? How can the working people get a good health care system without treading on the toes of the rich? Who can pay for a national health care system except the corporations and the bourgeoisie, who have been getting a higher and higher percentage of the national income? ■

## Activists hit the AMA

200 people protested June 24 outside the convention of the American Medical Association (AMA) in Chicago. The demonstrators targeted the AMA's policies on AIDS as well as its opposition to any serious national health care program that would really provide quality treatment for the poor. Several activists tried to make their voice heard inside the meeting at the posh Chicago Hilton and

Towers Hotel, but police prevented them from entering and arrested 25 protesters.

The AMA is an elitist group, whose main purpose is to ensure the fat profits of the medical establishment. It has for decades on end taken a callous attitude to the health needs of the masses and also opposed measures that would democratize the medical establishment. ■



Chicago police arrest AIDS activist outside AMA convention

## The Workers' Advocate



Monthly Theoretical-Political Newspaper of the  
Central Committee of the Marxist-Leninist Party, USA

### Letters:

The Workers' Advocate  
P.O. Box 11942  
Ontario Street Station  
Chicago, IL 60611

### Orders and Subscriptions:

Marxist-Leninist Publications  
P.O. Box 11972  
Ontario Street Station  
Chicago, IL 60611

From distributor: 25¢

Via 1st class mail (U.S., Canada, Mexico): \$1.00 for single copy

Subscription: \$6.00 for 6 issues; \$11.00 for 12 issues

ISSN 0276-363X

## El Estandarte Obrero



Spanish supplement to THE WORKERS' ADVOCATE,  
Voice of the Marxist-Leninist Party of the USA

By mail: \$0.50 for single copy

From vendor: \$0.25

Subscription: \$3.00 for 6 issues \$6.00 for 12 ISSN 0276-4954

Order from: Marxist-Leninist Publications P.O. Box 11972  
Ontario Street Station Chicago, IL 60611



# Strikes and workplace news

## Hispanic garment workers occupy plant

For the past two months, garment workers have been on strike in El Paso, Texas.

With over 15,000 workers, El Paso is one of the largest garment-producing cities in the country. And the sweatshop conditions are horrendous. Most factories have no emergency doors, heaters or air conditioners. Cooling and ventilation are nonexistent. Wiring is broken. Sewing machines are 30 years old.

The workers slave 12-14 hours each day and are paid piecework. But the produced pieces are taken away so fast, the workers frequently don't know how much work has been done. In addition, it's been discovered that sweatshop bosses have withheld tens of thousands of dollars in back pay from the work force of mostly Hispanic women.

But the minimum wage workers have started to fight back with the help of a group called *La Mujer Obrera* (Working Women).

During the past year, workers have picketed garment shops, chained themselves to sewing machines, held hunger strikes, disrupted an IRS auction of sewing machines (held by a bankrupt owner), and demanded the workers be paid before any other banks or creditors were reimbursed.

The most recent struggle began April 29 when workers struck Sonia's garment

shop. The strike quickly spread to three other shops. All of the struck shops are owned by Andres Diaz, known locally as the "king of the sweatshops." In negotiations Diaz declared he would pay half the back wages he owes. But he didn't carry through on even this meager promise. Frustrated by all the stalling and fraud, the Sonia garment workers occupied their plant in May.

The 120 workers at Sonia's are demanding Diaz pay all back wages immediately, sign a contract, and recognize their union, the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU).

The battle in El Paso is also important for the thousands of garment workers who face even harsher conditions in the *maquiladora* plants across the Rio Grande in Mexico. It is important that the workers on both sides of the border unite to fight the garment capitalists who are pitting worker against worker to drive down the pay of both.

Unfortunately, the ILGWU leadership is blind to the needs for solidarity. It actually issued T-shirts to strikers declaring "Made in the USA" and hung banners demanding "Stop exporting our jobs!" Far from helping the strikers, this chauvinist campaign is helping the capitalists to split up the workers. Shame on the union bureaucrats!

Energy. It recycles uranium fuel from power plants for use in civilian and military nuclear reactors.

The workers are fighting against the company demand to eliminate seniority in job bidding. This would allow Martin Marietta to shift workers to jobs (some involving radioactive hazards) without the

workers' consent.

The strikers set up picket lines at all five entrances to the plant preventing many of the 1,500 nonunion employees from leaving. The company is trying to operate the dangerous facility without union workers.

## Pittsburgh grocery strike ends

After 42 days, 5,000 grocery workers ended their strike against Pittsburgh's Giant Eagle supermarket chain.

The strikers withstood harsh conditions on the picket lines and harassment by Nuckols, Inc., the notorious "private security company." And they gained solid

support of customers and other workers.

The final settlement included a wage increase and improvements in pensions, vacations and unpaid leave. They also won job transfer rights if a store is closed. But Giant Eagle retained its divisive multitiered wage structure.

## Chicago construction workers strike

15,000 laborers struck major construction projects in Chicago on June 1. The workers are angry over worsening work-

ing conditions, the use of nonunion labor, and the demand by the contractors for a wage freeze and cuts in benefits.

## Workers fight plant closing

At the end of May, workers struck the Clawson Tank Plant in a suburb of Pontiac, Michigan.

The company is demanding that workers pay a great deal toward their own health insurance. Although the company listed \$9.5 million in profits in 1990, it

claims it needs concessions because the plant is losing money. And it has threatened to shut the plant and move production to its two nonunion shops. But the workers defied the threats and are striking to defend themselves.

## Safety walkout at Baltimore GM plant

3,200 workers walked off their jobs June 24 at the General Motors Corp. minivan plant in Baltimore, Maryland.

The workers complain that recent layoffs have made the minivan plant an unsafe place to work. Since February, 400 people have been laid off. The company

has also restricted the vacations of workers who are left.

Since the layoffs occurred, 300 workers have reported injuries including back pain, wrist ailments and cuts while on the job. This is 10 times the number of injuries reported before the layoffs.

## Workers blockade nuclear plant

1,000 workers struck June 11 against

the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant. The plant is in Piketon, Ohio. It is operated by Martin Marietta Energy Systems for the U.S. Department of

### CHILDREN

Continued from page 7

sion's most expensive, nonfundable programs, you find recommendations typical of the present budget-cutting crusade.

For example, they propose cutting foster care. Of course they don't say this outright. Oh no, instead they say they will "prevent" the need for foster care by keeping troubled families intact. Sure, it's great to keep the families together when possible. But the Commission only wants to spend a minimal amount for this, about \$640 million, and it seems they plan to cut foster care to pay for it.

This looks strikingly similar to an earlier proposal by the Bush administra-

tion. It suggested spending \$450 million on such "preventive programs." But the money is to be raised by cutting \$1.7 billion from foster care at a time when the needs are ballooning. The extra \$1.25 billion saved by this juggling would presumably be used to reduce the budget deficit.

Other so-called "preventive" programs are already being carried out in various states. California, for example, just increased money to services for pregnant women and preschoolers. But it got the money by cutting AFDC benefits and housing assistance. So poor women with young children may get more services, but they may not have a house to live in or money to buy food.

## May Day in Philippines



International Workers Day march by 1,000 workers in metro Manila by unions and other organizations associated with KPRP (the Union of Proletarian Revolutionaries of the Philippines)

## IN THIS ISSUE

Is it really universal health care? . . . . .	2	<b>Defend Women's Rights!</b>	
Rallies for health care . . . . .	2	Abortion ban in Louisiana; Keeping youth ignorant; Confront OR; Polish women resist . . . . .	8
Activists hit AMA . . . . .	2		
<b>Strikes and Workplace News</b>		No to a new toxic dump near Detroit . . . . .	8
Garment workers; Baltimore GM; Nuclear plant; Pittsburgh grocery; Chicago construction; Tank plant; Aluminum workers . . . . .	3	Defend the anti-war GIs . . . . .	9
Postal contract stinks . . . . .	4	Homeless resist in Tompkins Square Park . . . . .	11
		Law and order at the Supreme Court . . . . .	11
U.S. imperialism and Mexican capitalists . . . . .	5	<b>The World in Struggle</b>	
'Free trade' heating up global trade war . . . . .	5	Cholera in Latin America, who to blame . . . . .	11
Marx on free trade . . . . .	5	Israel seized land during Gulf crisis . . . . .	12
		Workers rebel against Zaire's Mobutu . . . . .	12
		Immigrant youth fight racism in France . . . . .	12

### Make the Rich Pay for the Budget Crisis!

Corporate bosses pig out . . . . .	6
S&L bailout; Yet another bailout . . . . .	6
Lessons of 1960's welfare struggle . . . . .	7
Tears for children, but no money . . . . .	7

# THE POSTAL CONTRACT STINKS!

On June 12 an arbitration panel announced a new contract covering postal workers represented by the American Postal Workers Union and the National Association of Letter Carriers. A few major issues still remain to be settled — but the initial details give a good idea of what postal workers will be facing over the next four years.

It's not a pretty sight. This contract is a big attack on postal workers. It will allow management to speed up replacement of the career work force with lowerpaid, part-time workers with fewer rights. As well, there are takebacks in the benefits and rights of existing career

workers.

A small pay raise — which will only allow workers to break even after inflation — is supposed to be the sugar to make us swallow this poison.

We are headed towards a UPS-style work force. New hires become a third tier in an already two-tier career work force. Part-time flexible workers (PTFs) can forget about making regular. And a new type of "transitional" employee is to be added on top of existing casuals. All these lower-paid workers will face inferior wages and working conditions. This will provide management with still more incentive to eliminate full-time positions

by any means possible, especially since the work force is already being trimmed. Meanwhile, the shrinking proportion of career employees with full rights weakens the postal workers' ability to stick together and resist management's speedup, job combination, harassment and other attacks.

Our union leaders are crowing that the wages, benefits and rights of the present career workers are protected, so we should be happy. This is so much bullshit!

First of all, how can we support slicing up the work force more and more, protecting some at the expense of the oth-

ers? How can we stand for a part elite, part disadvantaged work force? What happened to labor's principle of equal pay for equal work? We all do the same work and should have equal compensation.

Secondly, it just isn't true that present workers are protected by the contract. Their situation is being eroded, for example, by taking away layoff protection for some who had it and by increasing the number of PTFs. As well, health care cuts may well be just around the corner.

## Provisions of the contract

### Divide and conquer I: New hires and PTFs get screwed

\*New hires will take a 10% wage cut. Coming on top of the two-tier wage cut already taken by those hired after January 1985, this means we now have three wage tiers in the career work force.

\*The official ratio of PTF clerks to regulars in the large facilities will increase from the present 10%-90% to 20%-80%. For carriers, it will increase from 10%-90% to 12%-88%. Of course, management routinely oversteps these guidelines as is. This means that most present PTFs can forget about making regular during the next four years.

Thus, not only will management strive to replace senior workers with the cheaper new hires, but it will also exploit the "flexibility" of the PTFs to the maximum. Postal bosses want the freedom to carry out their 1990-1995 automation program with no regard for employees' rights and working conditions.

PTFs can expect the hardships of irregular hours ranging from 20 hours/week to heavy overtime at 60 hours/week. They may also face disruptive schedule, shift, facility and assignment changes, and layoffs — all that without even the right to bid.

### Divide and conquer II: A new type of worker with fewer rights

\*The P.O. is trying to introduce a whole new category of postal workers: "non-career/automation transition employee." The details of this category are unknown, and the issue will be settled by a task force which will not report on it until October. However, it is obvious management wants some type of substandard category to avoid hiring career workers. It will probably be another type of casual worker, to be abused by management because they will have fewer rights.

Already, the P.O. abuses existing casuals right and left. In fact, NTEs (temporaries) are being put into more and more departments in the P.O. They are also worked at horrendous overtime for months on end, while very little career hiring is done. The new contract allows management to continue to extract blood, sweat and tears from this super-exploited category of workers.

### Job security cut: back

\*The no-layoff protection has been weakened. Since 1978, career workers with six years have been protected, and this is still in effect. However, contracts since then have — in memoranda of understanding — also provided protection over their duration for all those already working. The new contract does NOT protect anyone with less than six years. Anyone hired since approximately June of 1985 (depending on what date the

contract is officially settled) can now be laid off until they reach their six-year seniority date.

### Our wages stagnate

\*Career workers will get a small wage increase, consisting of 1.2% in June 1991; 1.5% in November 1991; 1.5% in November 1992 and 1.6% in November 1993. COLA is still in place. New hires, however, will be denied the first step increase as well as the first COLA raise.

The union bosses act as if this is a big victory. The truth is, when you take into account inflation, workers can at best expect to break even.

This small sweetener comes at a time when postal productivity is skyrocketing. Postmaster General Anthony Frank boasts in each *Frank Talk* propaganda letter how more mail is being moved per worker than ever before. By the end of the automation program, this ratio will be even higher and the P.O. will be raking in the gold. Who benefits from this? Management does; corporate bulk-mailers do; and even Congress raids postal funds to cover the federal budget deficit. The workers get zilch.

This piddling wage increase in no way makes up for the fact that we are moving towards a UPS-style work force.

### Health care cuts may be coming

\*The 75% health care coverage of career workers has not been cut YET, but it is being discussed by a task force until October. Given what's in the rest of this contract, you can bet workers aren't going to get anything favorable from them. Meanwhile, even without any cuts, employees' 25% share of health coverage is constantly rising, so we are taking a loss.

### Other atrocities

\*Other threats to postal jobs are also pending. For example, there is the outstanding issue of contracting out the remote video encoding jobs to non-union labor. Some 200,000 jobs are at stake with this new technology. This too will be decided by the task force.

\*The issue of interlevel bidding is also being left up to the task force. Interlevel bidding is a key right for workers trying to find a job they can perform. Job phaseout and excessing out during automation, as well as a high injury rate, are throwing many postal workers off their usual assignments. Without maximum bidding rights, they have limited options and can be forced out of a job altogether.

\*Other work rule changes have also been alluded to by postal officials, but few details have been provided.

\*This is a four-year contract which will carry the P.O. through its current automation program. Management hopes by 1995 the P.O. will be a whole different animal — highly automated, faster, more

profitable, with a smaller, more part-time work force. And it is the workers who will pay the price for this plan. By weakening us terribly during the life of this

## Don't let the union leaders off the hook

In the face of this stinking contract, our union leaders are making the excuse that "this is not what we wanted," "this is what arbitration handed down," etc. But who sang the glories of arbitration all these years? The truth is, it is the union leaders' decades-long policy of NO STRUGGLE that got us into our present bind. Let us not forget: the 1970 wildcat postal strike, and subsequent smaller wildcats during the 1970's, are the only reason postal workers today have anything.

All the postal unions have a sorry policy of: no information to the work force until it's too late; no mobilization of our strength to defend our pay or working conditions; and opposition to any rank-and-file organizing against management.

For contract after contract the P.O. has been allowed to split up the work force and weaken the work rules without any opposition being organized. For this contract, the P.O. has been broadcasting far and wide its desire for a part-time work force. So where was the nationwide mobilizations of over half a million postal workers? Where was literature widely spread? Where were the pickets and

new contract, management expects to be in a still stronger position vs. the workers by 1995 — where they can push for even more concessions.

protest activities? Where was the outreach to the public and other sectors of workers for solidarity? Why weren't there proposals for such things like work-to-rule? Why couldn't they even think of breaking off any of their collaborationist committees with management?

Instead, we are supposed to sit on our hands blindfolded for seven months while a small board of rich people decides our whole future. We don't get to vote on our own contract — a board of five rich people decides the fate of 600,000 postal workers. That's the reality of the system which deprives postal workers of the elementary right to strike and gives us arbitration instead. If this took place in Russia, where workers are ruled by state-capitalist bureaucrats, they'd call it tyranny — which it would be — but is it any different when done in the USA?

The present arbitration deal proves once again that letting some rich people decide our fate is sure-fire suicide for us. It drives home once again that without struggle there will be no progress. Postal workers need a struggle like the 1970 strike to shake things up and win anything substantial in return for our sweat and sacrifice.

## Yes, we CAN do something!

Once the law has been laid down by the arbitrators, the union leaders will of course use this as another excuse to say that "nothing can be done, the contract is settled."

Because of their past do-nothing attitude, we've been saddled with this concessions deal. But we don't have to go like sheep to the slaughter.

We should begin by loudly shouting out our protest against this contract. Let's make sure everyone — our fellow workers, management, union officials — know that we think that THIS CONTRACT STINKS! Let us not allow the bosses or union hacks to dissuade anyone into thinking that there is anything good about it.

Turn the next union meetings into platforms of protest against the contract. Discuss the sellout and how to fight its effects. Read and circulate leaflets such as this one. Write letters or articles to voice your outrage in *Workers' Voice*.

Remember some issues are still not settled yet, such as health care cuts. Voice our protest loud and clear on these issues. After all, if we don't make noise against the contract on these issues, you can surely expect them to hurt us more eagerly.

We have to prepare ourselves for

resisting the day-to-day atrocities that management will pursue under the new contract. There is much that can be done: look at the example of the injured workers' movement in Detroit.

What the P.O. has in store for us is not pretty. The PTFs in particular are in for a rough time. Workers will need to get organized to resist killer overtime, inhuman scheduling, injury-causing machine designs, lengthening of carrier routes, lengthening of carrier street time, excessing out to jobs we cannot handle, attempts to force out the higher-paid regulars, etc.

We have to use the present protest and the ongoing daily resistance to build something stronger for the future. We have to build our resistance in such a way as to expand the rank-and-file postal workers' movement. Build networks of struggle. Link up with one another. Join hands with *Workers' Voice* which is committed to the goal of building a postal workers' movement, independent of the sellout union leaders. If we do this well, the next time around, we will be in a stronger position to stand up to management's assault and the sit-on-their-hands machinery of our union bigshots.

(Based on June 16 "Detroit Workers' Voice," paper of MWP-Detroit.)

# Partners in free-trade plunder – U.S. imperialism and Mexican capitalists

Bush is pushing ahead with his free trade talks with Mexico. But the "freedom" discussed is only in the capitalist sense of the word. It is freedom for the U.S. capitalists to exploit the Mexican working people.

U.S. imperialism has long dominated Mexico. With a free trade agreement, Bush simply hopes to cement this domination and lock in the changes going on in Mexico: the driving down of Mexican wages, the opening up to U.S. investments, and the selling off of state-owned companies to private capitalists.

## U.S. monopolies in Mexico

U.S. monopolies already control a large section of the Mexican economy. According to one report, U.S. corporations controlled at least 16 of Mexico's 50 largest companies in 1980.<sup>1</sup> And since then, many other U.S. companies have flooded in to take advantage of the extra-low wages in the *maquiladora* sweatshops. Today 70% of all foreign investments in Mexico are by U.S. corporations.<sup>2</sup>

GM, with 55,000 workers, is Mexico's largest private employer. Together GM, Ford and Chrysler completely dominate Mexico's auto industry. Similarly Ralston-Purina and Anderson-Clayton dominate the animal feed industry. And now even the state-owned oil industry, which accounts for a third of Mexico's export earnings, is being opened up to U.S. companies.

In April, Mexico signed an unprecedented contract with the Houston-based Triton Production Systems Inc. to drill an exploratory well. Mexico is also waiting for final approval from the U.S. Export-Import Bank of several billion dollars in guarantees for loans that would be used to hire U.S. oil-service contractors.

## U.S. controls debt

Even more important than the direct U.S. investments is Mexico's debt to the U.S. financial magnates.

As of 1989 Mexico's foreign debt stood at \$95.1 billion. And it was paying out some \$9.4 billion yearly in interest payments alone. A large part of that money is extorted by U.S. banks.

The debt not only means huge profits for the U.S. imperialists. It also gives them tremendous leverage to dictate terms to the Mexican government.

## Mexican capital – partners in exploitation

But this doesn't mean that U.S. imperialism simply rules Mexico. The country has its own powerful capitalists who have joined with the U.S. imperialists to plunder the Mexican masses.

Take Mexico's huge foreign and domestic loans for example. While U.S. banks are making huge profits off of them, since 1981 a greater part has been paid to the domestic capitalists. By 1987 the Mexican capitalists were raking in over three-fourths of the debt service paid on the massive loans.<sup>3</sup>

Or take the program being followed in Mexico today of austerity for the masses, privatization and opening up to foreign investment. It was the Mexican capitalists who started pushing for that program in the early 1970's.

Back in 1971, when Luis Echeverria was president, Comparamex advanced a new program to deal with the economic crisis. Comparamex was the voice of the Mexican banking elite and the powerful northern faction of private capitalists. It wanted to drive up unemployment and push down wages by abolishing all land reform and by ending state subsidies to

the state-owned firms. At the same time it called for privatization, increased direct foreign investment, and new state assistance to industry, especially to transnational corporations it thought to be most capable of expanding exports.<sup>4</sup>

At the time, President Echeverria brushed aside the program, preferring his own scheme for capitalist development. But the Mexican capitalists protested. Probably most important, they began taking their money out of the country with the aim of both pressuring the government and of finding more profitable foreign investments. It is estimated that between 1971 and 1985 there was a total capital flight of some \$53.4 billion. That amounts to 60% of the increase in the foreign debt during that period.<sup>5</sup>

The huge capital flight forced the government into even heavier borrowing from the U.S. When another economic crisis hit in 1975, the U.S.-influenced International Monetary Fund backed up the demands of the Mexican capitalists. It refused further loans unless the government launched an austerity drive against the Mexican workers and farmers. From that point Mexican wages have been driven down. The official minimum wage, for example, is now about 59 cents an hour, half of what it was back in 1977.

After a short-lived oil boom, Mexico again plummeted into the depths of crisis in 1981. It was forced into even heavier borrowing and there were more strings attached. The U.S.-dominated World Bank declared that it had "become Mexico's largest single source of new money.... The Bank's strategy supported



Unemployed Mexican building trades workers seek jobs on city streets

primarily policies designed to open the economy."<sup>6</sup> In short, the World Bank came out fully for the program advanced by Comparamex back in 1971. ■

## References

1. Roderic A. Camp, *Entrepreneurs and Politics in Twentieth-Century Mexico* (Oxford University Press, 1989), Table 8-1, pp. 77-89.
2. NACLA, "Report on the Americas" (May 1991), p. 17.
3. Dwight S. Brothers and Adele E. Wick, eds., "Mexico's Search for a New Development Strategy," (Proceedings of

a conference sponsored by the Ford Foundation and the Economic Growth Center of Yale University, Westview Press, 1990), p. 366. And James M. Cypher, *State and Capital in Mexico, Development Policy Since 1940* (Westview Press, 1990), p. 174.

4. Cypher, p. 100.

5. David Barkin, *Distorted Development, Mexico in the World Economy* (Westview Press, 1990), p. 58.

6. Cypher, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 186-187.

# 'Free trade' heating up global trade war

Congress gave Bush the green light to negotiate a free trade pact with Mexico in May. And no sooner was that done than the response came in from Japan. It began talking about forming its own trade bloc in East Asia.

"If countries on the east side of the Pacific form an association, we may have to make an opposing association on the west side," declared the director-general of Japan's Economic Planning Agency, Michio Ochi.

There is presently no formal Japanese trade bloc in East Asia. But as U.S. economic power has declined, Japan has become the dominant power in the region with some \$42 billion investments and \$4 billion annual aid. The growing ties with Japan, and the stepped up international competition, has led to increasing talk of formalizing an East Asian trade zone.

In December — when international trade talks broke down in a fight between the U.S., Japan and the European Community — the Malaysian prime minister proposed an East Asia trade bloc to be led by Japan. He suggested that Australia and New Zealand, who have formed their own trade agreement, be excluded. And that the U.S. also be formally barred from the pact.

At the time, Japan brushed aside the Malaysian proposal. But since then there has been increasing pressure to form a bloc to fight against the European Community and the emerging U.S. bloc.

Many countries in East Asia are worried about losing investments and jobs to the cheaper labor in Mexico. Already some U.S. companies are shifting production from Asia to Mexico.

More than this, the protectionism surfacing in the European Community and the U.S. bloc are frightening Japan. It has followed a policy of building plants inside Europe and Mexico to get around

possible tariff barriers. But that policy is now being threatened.

The European Community Commission has already decided to limit the number of Japanese cars sold in Western Europe. It is now discussing whether this restriction will also apply to Japanese model cars that are manufactured at plants inside Europe.

Similarly, the U.S., Mexico, and Canada are discussing "rules of origin" to limit the Japanese. For example, in the U.S.-Canada trade pact there is already a rule stipulating that at least 50% of the cost of automotive products imported from Canada must be attributable to Canadian materials and manufacturing. Now, when bringing Mexico into the trade pact, they are discussing raising that level to maybe 75% in order to

make sure that Japanese cars built in Mexico cannot get around the present import tariffs.

George Bush has promised that a free trade agreement with Mexico and Canada will lead to economic growth and prosperity for the masses. But what it is creating most of all is increased international competition and a scramble by the money-grubbing imperialists to redivide markets throughout the world. And as each monopoly produces as if it alone will win the competition, we can expect more crises of overproduction to break out in this or that industry and to spread through whole national economies. The growing competition, and the splitting up of the world into trade blocs, is increasing the instability in the world capitalist economy. ■

# Marx on free trade

Back in 1848 Karl Marx published a pamphlet entitled "On Free Trade." In it he exposed the capitalist promises that free trade would benefit the working class. He also exposed the promises of protectionism. And he gave a clear orientation for the development of the class struggle worldwide.

It is now over 150 years since the pamphlet came out and much has changed in the world. At that time, for example, the protectionists were largely the old feudal landlord class and the free traders were mainly the growing capitalist class. Today it is a squabble between different capitalist interests, which can be protectionist in one situation and for free trade in another.

Despite this change, there is much in Marx's pamphlet that still rings true today. Studying it can help the working class see through the lies of the capital-

ists and union bureaucrats so it may adopt its own class policy.

## Freedom for capital to crush the workers

Marx summed up the essence of free trade in these words:

"It is the freedom of capital. When you remove the few national fetters that still trammel the advance of capital, you will have done nothing but give it entire freedom of action. As long as you allow the relation between wage-labor and capital to continue, the exchange of commodities between them will be carried on in more favorable conditions to no avail; there will always be a class which exploits and class which is exploited...all that will result from it is that the opposition between these two

Continued on page 10  
See MARX

# Capitalism: Cutbacks for the

## Corporate bosses pig out

You may not know this, but the U.S. is supposed to have become "the most egalitarian system in history." And who says this? No less an authority than our illustrious president, George Bush himself.

This was one of the pearls of wisdom dropped by Bush just before his heart started fluttering in Ann Arbor on May 4 weekend. The president had gone there to attend the commencement at the University of Michigan. He used his speech there to sing the glories of the American system.

To back up his claim that the U.S. is the most equal society in history, Bush lavishly praised the "free enterprise system" which he said was responsible for this accomplishment. He explained that this system "lets one person's fortune become everyone's gain."

Oh really? The same time that Bush was speaking, the May 6 issue of *Business Week* was on the newsstands. Its cover story asked: "ARE CEOs PAID TOO MUCH?" *Business Week* loves money, but it warned that the obscene antics of the top bosses had become an embarrassment, threatening social stability. In the course of this, the magazine exposed a situation dramatically different than Bush's ludicrous claim.

The story gave figures showing what has been happening to workers' pay, corporate profits, and the salaries of CEOs (chief executive officers) during the 1980's.

While the average pay of factory workers went up 53%, corporate profits went up by 78%, and CEO salaries shot up by 212%! But *Business Week* didn't give the full shocking details of this comparison. If you adjust these figures for inflation, workers' pay actually declined by 1.5%, while CEO pay doubled.

Let's spell out what this amounts to. Back in 1980, a CEO received on the average 42 times an ordinary factory workers' pay; ten years later he made 85 times more. Translated into dollar figures, this means that last year, a factory worker tried to make ends meet with an average wage of \$23,000, while a CEO at a typical large corporation lined his pockets with over a million dollars (\$1,214,000). The mind boggles.

And nowadays the government lets the rich keep more of that income than it used to. In 1980 the wealthy faced a maximum tax rate of 70%. But by last year, the top tax rate had fallen to 33%. Even discounting the taxes the rich have always avoided paying through loopholes and fancy accounting, the rich pay less in taxes these days.

And the corporate income figures given above are just averages. Individual details are even more scandalous. *Business Week* detailed what some of the corporate bosses made in 1990.

Donald Pels of LIN Broadcasting took a whopping \$186 million and Steven Ross of Time-Warner grabbed \$78 million, President of Microsoft John Shirley made off with \$26 million. Reebok International head Paul Fireman made \$14 million. The head of Waste Management, Dean Buntrock, made \$12 million. On and on it went.

And that's just the way it's been happening all through the decade. In 1986, Chrysler's Lee Iacocca set a record by taking \$20.5 million while the next year's record of \$60 million was taken by Toys 'R Us boss Charles Lazarus.

While the capitalist bigwigs have been

having a ball during the last ten years, misery has been mounting at the other end. Workers' wages declined, conditions of work got worse, the ranks of the jobless increased, homelessness became a national scandal, and the poor today are more ground down than ever.

And this is supposed to be the "most egalitarian system in history"? What a cruel joke.

Bush also said that in this wonderful society, "one person's fortune is everyone's gain." If that's so, why is public misery rising while the corporate bosses pig out like there's no tomorrow? In fact the reverse is true: the obscene fortunes of the few are based on the toil and sweat of the majority. You can bet that Waste Management's Buntrock carried no trash to make his \$12 million; his workers did. Reebok's Fireman made no shoes to collect his \$14 million; his superexploited workers in the Third World did the work.

Ultimately, all these fat salaries and swollen profits came from the exploitation of the workers, here and in other countries. That's the reality of capitalism. No amount of flim-flam by Bush can change that.

But the workers do not have to accept this status quo. When Bush described U.S. society as "egalitarian," he also pronounced it the "most harmonious" in history as well. That is the wealthy and their spokesmen would like: they take the big bucks, we get screwed, but let's keep everything harmonious. In other words, the workers shouldn't resent the rich but love them. Unfortunately for the workers, harmony between the classes only benefits the rich at the top.

To make any progress the working class doesn't need harmony with the

## Will the S&L bailout need a bailout?

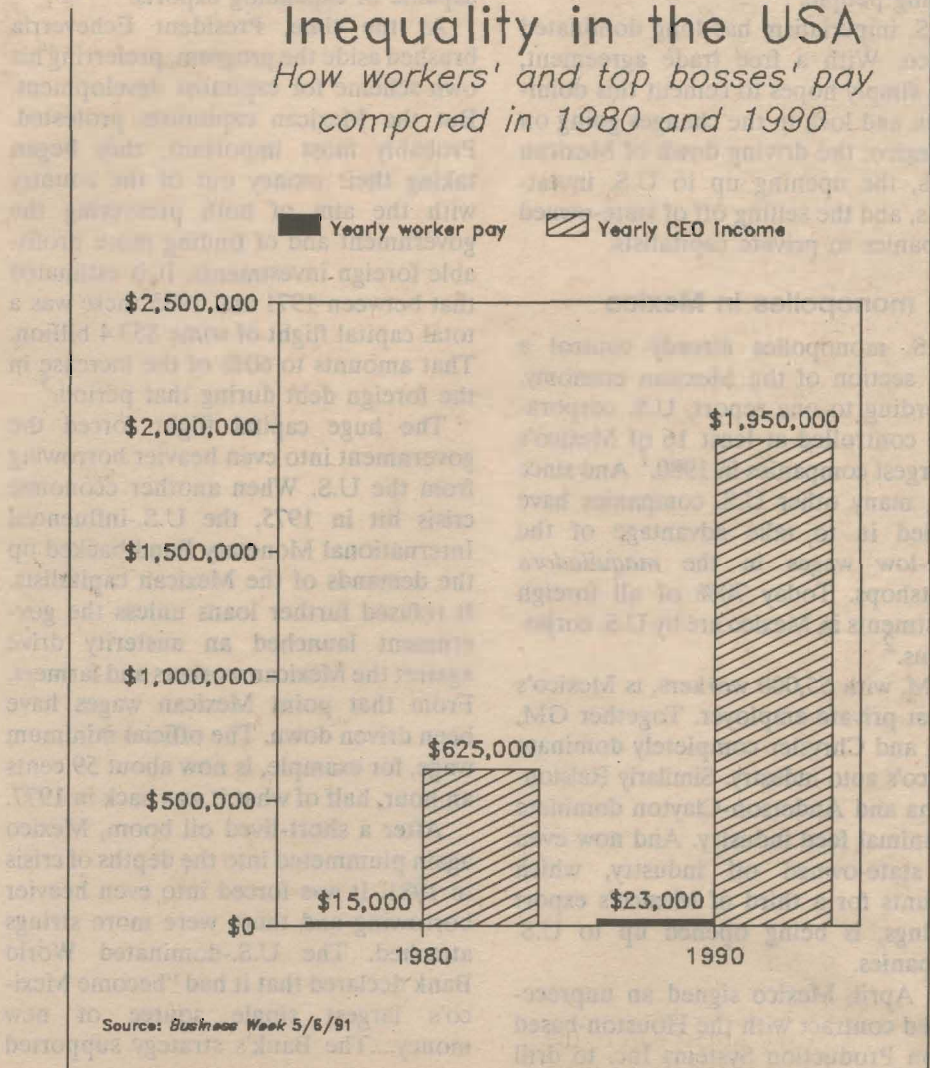
In June the head of the General Accounting Office (GAO) asked Congress to fork over another \$75 billion in 1992 to bail out the savings and loans companies.

So far the bailout has cost \$180 billion — \$80 billion from Congress and another \$100 billion borrowed from private lenders that will have to be paid back with interest. GAO head Charles Bowsher admitted that the bailout may ultimately run up to \$500 billion, and perhaps more if the economy does not pick up soon.

What is more, the GAO reported a series of problems with the Resolution Trust Corporation (RTC), which Bush set up to oversee the bailout. The GAO declared that it was unable to make an audit of the bailout because of the RTC's poor record keeping and controls.

As well, it pointed out that it was unlikely that most of the loans could be repaid by selling off the assets of the bankrupt S&Ls. So far the government has managed to unload only 21% of the \$145 billion worth of assets it has seized from the bankrupt S&Ls. And even that amount was only sold by giving huge discounts to wealthy financiers.

On top of this, the Congressional Budget Office reported that "mismanagement" has already added \$66 billion to the cost. Bankrupt S&Ls were allowed to stay in business an average of 38 months after they were declared insolvent. This allowed the executives to loot the assets



exploiters, but struggle against them. The biggest reason why the 1980's was so devastating to workers, and so good for the wealthy, is because workers' struggles were "harmonized." Strikes were attacked, workers' rights were cut back further, and to top it off, the union leaders preached the glory of class collaboration, sabotaging whatever struggles did

come up.

This must not continue. Let us organize to fight for what's just. Let us work to free ourselves from the tyranny and cruelty of a system which allows a few to live high, while the working majority suffers.

and leave an empty shell to be taken over by the government.

The swindle is enormous. S&L executives have been allowed to loot the S&Ls. Hundreds of billions are being virtually given away to Wall Street sharks to take over the bankrupt institutions. And hundreds of billions more are being given to wealthy financiers in interest payments on loans borrowed for the bailout.

Now discussion has begun in Congress to overhaul the RTC and bailout the bailout. This makes it all too clear what the priorities of the Republicans and Democrats really are. They always seem to find billions to prop up the wealthy banking tycoons. But when it comes to the growing army of laid off, poor and homeless people, well, they have to suffer cutbacks to "reduce the budget deficit."

## Yet another bailout

The S&L bailout is a scandal. But now they are talking about a similar bailout for the commercial banks.

General Accounting Office head Charles Bowsher warned in June that, "A future taxpayer bailout is quite possible."

Thirty more banks failed outright in the first quarter of this year. And the total size of banks with troubled loans increased to \$418 billion, up over \$18 billion in less than three months. In January, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. (FDIC) projected that 340 banks would fail through 1992. They now say the total will be more like 440 banks. Meanwhile, the losses to the insurance fund are expected to almost double by the end of 1992 — from \$14 billion to \$23.1 billion.

overall may be recovering, the real estate crisis is still desperate. And bank failures may still increase.

**MARXIST-LENINIST  
BOOKS AND PERIODICALS**

■ CHICAGO  
1631 West 18th Street (one block east of 18th St. 'L' on-Douglas line)  
Phone: 243-5302

■ OAKLAND  
3232 ML King Way (old Grove St.),  
Oakland, CA 94609  
Phone: 653-4840

# the workers, \$\$\$ for the rich

## Lesson from the 1960s: Defend welfare through mass struggle

As unemployment mounts and poverty spreads, more and more people are turning to the last refuge of relief — the welfare system. But their hopes for help are being dashed in the dirt as states across the country are slashing welfare benefits to the bone, adding one restriction after another to keep people off the welfare rolls, and in some cases even planning to outright eliminate General Assistance and other programs.

How can the restrictions be fought? How can the impoverished masses win relief? These questions were also asked in the 1960's. And they were answered in part by the mass struggle of hundreds of thousands of poor people who rose up in the welfare rights movement. Welfare relief was won then by mass battles of the poor themselves. It can be defended only by organizing such struggles today.

### Where did welfare come from?

The biggest welfare program, AFDC (Aid for Families with Dependent Children), was originally enacted as part of the Social Security Act of 1935. This law had been passed because of the enormous struggles of workers, unemployed and other oppressed in the 1930's.

But funding for the AFDC part of the law was quite limited, and there were innumerable restrictions to keep people off the rolls. By 1960, the urban ghettos were filled with millions of people suffering unemployment and harsh poverty. Yet due to AFDC restrictions, only 745,000 families qualified, and the total welfare payments were about \$1 billion a year.

But the winds of change were stirring. Inspired especially by the black people's movement, the poor began to take matters into their own hands to fight for relief. By 1965 the welfare rights movement had broken out in force. Using militant sit-ins and building occupations, pickets, and mass marches, they overthrew many restrictive rules — like the one barring women from receiving welfare if a man lived in their house — and

won expanded benefits. By 1972 they had forced welfare to accept some three million families onto the AFDC rolls and, in many states, to open programs like General Assistance for people without children. And they forced up the total AFDC payments to \$6 billion a year.

Welfare relief was never a gift from the wealthy capitalists and their politicians. It was wrung from them by the mass struggles of the poor.

### A simple plan of sit-ins

The welfare rights movement grew out of a simple plan. A group of women, with their children in tow, would walk into their neighborhood welfare office and refuse to leave until a particular demand for relief was granted.

The demands were simple: to allow some people on the rolls, or to eliminate this-or-that restriction, or for special grants for school clothing, or against some mistreatment by the bureaucrats.

Sometimes the sit-ins lasted for days. Sometimes all the protesters were arrested. Sometimes the actions turned into major street battles. In the summer of 1966, for example, a Cleveland welfare recipient tried to collect money for a funeral for another recipient who had died. When she was abused by police, people in the neighborhood rose to her defense and a major riot broke out. The next spring, when Boston police beat recipients who were sitting-in, the screams from the windows of the welfare office ignited three days of rioting.

Despite the repression, the actions spread from one office to another, and from one city to the next. By the fall of 1967, hundreds of sit-ins involving from 25 to 500 people had broken out at welfare offices around New York City. They became so frequent that in the spring of 1968 the department established a "war office," complete with staff and phones, to keep track of all the protests.

Faced with the angry determination of the poor, welfare officials frequently

could only stop a sit-in by handing out checks on the spot.

### Country-wide campaigns

By 1966, the local actions began to be linked together in country-wide campaigns.

On June 30, 1966 about 6,000 activists held actions in 40 cities against federal welfare restrictions. The next June, over 5,000 recipients demanded special clothing grants in a co-ordinated campaign in 35 cities. At the end of August about 15,000 people marched on Capitol Hill against a threatened "welfare freeze." On June 30, 1969 some 20,000 people demonstrated at 19 state capitols demanding a cost-of-living raise on benefits and a guaranteed annual income. And on March 25, 1972 about 50,000 people joined the Children's March for Survival in Washington, D.C.

The movement also linked up with the anti-war and women's liberation movements. For example, about 150 welfare recipients marched on a South Boston army base on October 15, 1969 demanding an end of the Viet Nam war and shifting money to the poor. The same day, 400 people sat-in for winter coats at a welfare center in Springfield, Massachusetts. Over 1,000 activists from a Viet Nam moratorium demonstration picketed outside to support them. And on April 15, 1970 nearly 100,000 people demonstrated in 50 cities combining a protest against the war with demands for ade-

quate income for the poor.

### Build an independent movement

As the movement won increasing victories, the capitalist news media and politicians launched a reactionary campaign against welfare. When Nixon took office in 1969, he pushed for various cuts and to eliminate special grants through a system of flat grants. And many Democrats supported him.

But there were other Democrats who postured in favor of the poor. And George McGovern actually promised a guaranteed annual income in his 1972 election campaign. Unfortunately the leaders of the welfare rights movement were taken in by these promises. And they turned the movement from the effective mass protests into a tail of the Democrats' election campaign. This was a major factor that undermined the welfare rights movement and brought it to an end. In the years that followed, the Democrats increasingly joined with the Republicans to attack welfare recipients and search out new programs, like workfare, to push people off the rolls.

This is another lesson to be learned from hard experience. No matter their sweet-smelling promises, the Democrats are a capitalist party just like the Republicans. For the mass movement to be effective, it must be organized independent from both of these capitalist parties. ■

## Tears for the children

Handwringing over the plight of America's children is the latest fad in the nation's capital. It's considered good politics. Why, John Jay Rockefeller, the head of the National Commission on Children, thinks it may be good enough to make him a presidential contender next year.

Of course something must be done for the children. At least 12.6 million children, one in five, live in poverty. That is 2.2 million more than a decade ago. Over 8 million children have no health insurance coverage. And more than a half million are pushed out of school every year by the deterioration in education, by poverty, and racism.

But we should not expect much help from the politicians who have been slashing to the bone the livelihood of the parents of the children. Unemployment benefits have become so restricted that only about one-third of the unemployed can even get them. Welfare is being gutted in state after state. One study showed that cash payments to low-income families have fallen some 21% in the last decade. And that's not to mention the savage wage cutting. Some two-thirds of the families with poor children have a wage-earner, but the pay is too low to lift them out of poverty. And the federal minimum wage has been allowed to drop to starvation levels.

Indeed, under the cynical politics of "balancing the budget," many programs said to be aimed at helping children are today being funded by cutting benefits to their parents. And the bottom line appears to be that the government wants

## ...but no money

to shift even its minimal support for children onto their families.

### No money for the children

Take a look at the recommendations released by the bipartisan National Commission on Children that was released in June.

It announced that at least \$52 billion needs to be spent each year to give parents a \$1,000 tax credit for each child, and to guarantee health care insurance for all children, to expand Head Start, and other good things.

But the Commission could not agree on how to pay for the "big-ticket" items. And Bush immediately declared there was no money to be found for such programs. So they are virtually a dead letter.

Of course they find hundreds of billions to bail out the S&Ls or wage war on Iraq. But don't expect more money for social programs. Indeed, the Republicans on the Commission proposed a "freeze" on all domestic (not military) spending. With the present mood in Congress, even if some smaller programs eventually end up being proposed, they are not likely to be implemented without major cuts in other social programs to pay for them.

### Cutting social programs in the name of "prevention"

Once you get beyond the Commission...  
*(Continued on page 3)*  
See CHILDREN

## High unemployment forecast for years to come

Unemployment continued to grow in May to 6.9%. That is 8.6 million people who are unemployed. But this official figure does not count the 1 million so-called "discouraged" workers who have given up looking for jobs that are not there. And it does not count the 5.9 million people forced onto part-time jobs because they can't find full time ones.

The total is 15.5 million unemployed or half-employed. And according to reports from the capitalists themselves, this high unemployment will continue at least through the mid-1990's. Even though these capitalists are assuming an economic recovery.

In June, a report was released by the Manufacturers' Alliance for Productivity & Innovation (MAPI), a policy-making research organization representing 500 major industrial companies. It declared that manufacturing employment is headed down at least through the middle of the decade. According to MAPI, outright declines in output are expected

at steel mills and foundries, electrical machinery, materials handling and metal working machinery, missiles and space vehicles, tanks and shipbuilding at least through 1994.

And even in industries where production is up, the capitalist productivity drive is expected to cut jobs. Since January 1989 the capitalists have hacked away some 1.1 million manufacturing jobs. Many of those will never return. And more will be lost. For example, MAPI points out that output of nonelectric machinery should jump by 20% by 1994, but the industry's jobs are expected to decline by 77,000.

Meanwhile the slashing of jobs in the service industries is also expected. According to the National Association of Business Economists (NABE) the downsizing, which is almost complete in the manufacturing sector, is just beginning in the service sector. They predict high unemployment at least through 1992. ■

# Defend women's rights!

## Abortion ban in Louisiana

Abortion has been virtually banned in Louisiana. On June 18, the state legislature passed anti-abortion legislation over a veto by Governor Buddy Roemer.

Under the new law, abortion is prohibited except to save the life of the pregnant woman or in cases of rape or incest. Doctors can get up to 10 years in prison and \$100,000 in fines for performing an abortion.

The bill does not punish women themselves for getting abortions or performing abortions on themselves. Of course, the fact that women will be driven to perform unsafe, illegal abortions by themselves or with the help of some back-alley butcher, is severe punishment itself. But the mutilation of living women is of no concern to the "pro-life" abortion opponents.

Indeed, the state legislature has made things as difficult as possible for rape victims. They must report the assault to a doctor within five days and to police within seven days (well before they know if they have been impregnated). But because of the unfair stigma placed on rape victims, the shoddy treatment they may get from the police, or even intimidation from the rapist (especially in cases of incest), many women find it difficult to report rapes quickly if at all. It was

more important to the legislature to prevent any possibility that some desperate women might get an abortion by claiming she was raped, than to ensure the welfare of rape victims.

In fact, Governor Roemer, himself no friend of abortion rights, vetoed the bill on the grounds that there should be a real exception for rape or incest, whereas the bill's provisions were just a mockery of women.

Only embittered cynics could take such a callous attitude as the Louisiana legislature. It is not surprising that these same legislators grudge even a penny for social services, and provide the fourth worst AFDC benefits in the country for desperate women with children. Without hesitating, the "pro-life" politicians voted down an amendment to their anti-abortion bill that would have provided a few more dollars for prenatal-care programs for pregnant women and abolished the death penalty.

The Louisiana law shows that one can expect no sympathy, no consideration for people's welfare, from the anti-abortion crusaders. When they have their way, they will make life a torture chamber for the living. If women are not to be deprived of all rights, then the masses of working women and men must be organized in their own defense. ■

## Keeping the youth ignorant

The "right-to-life" forces pushed through a parental consent law in Michigan several months ago. It restricts abortion rights by forcing unmarried women under 18 to get permission from a parent, or a waiver from a judge, before having an abortion.

Originally the law required Michigan schools to inform students about the law and the possibility for getting a waiver. A brief leaflet informing students was prepared, but school officials refused to distribute it. And this June the Michigan Senate scrapped that part of the parental consent law, and the House will probably follow suit. The politicians and school officials expect that most youth will not know how to get a waiver, or even that a waiver is possible.

The provision for a judicial waiver was put in to make the parental consent law look more reasonable. It was an

acknowledgment that not all parents would behave reasonably upon finding that their pregnant daughter wanted an abortion. But fairness and concern for youth is not on the anti-abortion agenda.

Ironically, at the same time as the pro-life forces are seeking to keep the youth ignorant and incapable of an informed decision, they are promoting an informed consent law to further harass women. This would require that women be read a pro-life lecture and then wait 24 hours before getting an abortion. It would be a severe burden for many women, because it would require two visits to a clinic instead of one. For poor women, or women who have to travel halfway across the state to a clinic, this would be a big burden. And, of course, it is an attempt to play mind games with women and make them feel guilty. ■

## Detroit area activists confront Operation Rescue

Last month, pro-choice activists in and around Detroit twice confronted the anti-abortion zealots of Operation Rescue (OR).

On June 8 OR gathered 20 followers to harass women going to a clinic in the suburb of Livonia. They were met by 40 pro-choice activists who helped women enter the clinic.

OR's tactics sank to new depths as their local leader, Lynn Mills, carried a placard condemning by name a patient coming for an appointment. Seeing this, the woman concerned confronted Mills face to face. The whole pro-choice contingent was outraged, and chanted "Lynn

Mills, go away, women's rights are here to stay!" The tactic of publicizing individual women by name appears likely to backfire on OR, exposing its disregard for people's welfare, and mobilizing people against it.

Three days later, 35 pro-choice activists picketed an OR meeting in the suburb of Southfield. Each "pro-life" zealot, upon arriving, was greeted with jeers. A group of demonstrators briefly stopped Lynn Mills' car and denounced her. There were also slogans against Michigan's "pro-life" governor, John Engler, for slashing the budget for social services for the poor. ■

## Polish women refuse to go backwards

When the Pope visited Poland last month, he sternly denounced the refusal of the country's parliament to enact a

ban on abortion.

For some time now, the local church and its supporters in the Solidarity

government had been preparing an anti-abortion law as a "gift for the Pope." This bill would have banned abortions even in cases of pregnancies resulting from rape or incest and would have imposed jail terms on doctors performing abortions. Some politicians had even considered prosecuting women who have abortions.

But there was a storm of protest from Polish women. Faced with this, parliament could not pass the anti-abortion bill. But did this mean that the Solidarity politicians became friends of women? Hardly.

The parliament passed a resolution asking the Walesa government to ban abortions by private doctors. The government has already been working in this direction. The health minister last year issued an ordinance saying that doctors and nurses have the right to refuse to assist at abortions for the sake of allowing pressure to be put on medical personnel individually.

The atmosphere against women's abortion rights is already having its disastrous effects on Polish women. In Lodz, three women who tried to perform self-abortions because they were afraid of seeing a doctor died of complications. They left behind 12 orphaned children among them. Did this make the government authorities see anything clearer? No, they tried to persuade the doctor who examined the dead women to report false causes of their deaths.

In Poland at least 500,000 abortions are carried out each year. Abortion is the main form of birth control. This is largely due to the poor availability of contraception and information about it. The previous false communist government was responsible for this state of affairs. They did not want to put any effort into sex education and making contraception widely available.

But are the forces who are influential in Poland today trying to change this situation towards one that would be more favorable for women? No, they



Polish women march against church-backed anti-abortion bill

simply want to punish women.

While trying to ban abortions, the church is also eagerly crusading against contraception. The church even organizes "patrols," usually made up of three members, who go around to drug stores to warn the owners against selling birth control devices. They threaten that those who refuse will be publicly denounced from the pulpit. Some even go as far as buying out all the condoms in stock from drug stores.

Meanwhile, the religious and political establishment in Poland are spreading a vicious atmosphere against women all down the line. Women have been the first victims of the mass layoffs which have ravaged the country. The ideology that women belong solely in the kitchen and the bedroom are strongly pushed from the top.

However, Polish women will not be pushed back so easily. Their protest forced the government to retreat on the abortion ban. While they face many more trials and battles ahead, this was an important first step in defending the essential rights of women. This bodes well for the struggle on behalf of all working people. ■

## No to a new toxic dump near Detroit!

Michigan state authorities may soon approve a major toxic waste dump for Melvindale, a suburb of Detroit. Planned for a local salt mine site, the dump has been pushed for eight years by waste entrepreneur Walter Tomy, but fought by the community.

The residents of Melvindale, southwest Detroit, and surrounding communities overwhelmingly oppose the dump. They are continuing to organize and protest against it. A march and rally are planned for August 10, between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., at the Melvindale salt mine.

The proposed dump is at a site with unacceptable risks to the people. It consists of sections of Melvindale's abandoned salt mine (which operated from 1905 to 1986) and the Ford clay mine, directly above. These mines sit right in the heart of the heavily populated Detroit downriver area. The mines are not designed or equipped for toxic waste storage. For example, they are not even lined.

A study done for the Michigan legislature found the salt mine in poor condition, with fallen roofs, missing pillars, and water damage. Old wells and drillings remain above it at unknown locations. The mine also sits on an earthquake fault which was active a few years ago. It has even been closed to tours.

Dangers posed by the dump include

leakage into the groundwater, causing contamination; chemical reactions resulting in fires or explosions; and dispersal of the wastes as they are transported on roads and railroads, especially in the event of an accident.

Toxic wastes received by hazardous dumps include organic compounds such as DDT, dioxin and benzene, and heavy metals such as lead and cadmium — all known to be poisons. To place these toxins in this heavily populated area is to show complete disregard for human health and the environment.

Michigan, and the Detroit area in particular, already host a high concentration of toxic dumps and polluting industries. The state imports more toxic waste than it exports. And in 1988 it had over 75 sites identified for the EPA National Priority list for toxic cleanup, out of 1,177 nationwide. (These are only the worst sites.)

Meanwhile, downriver Detroit is home to National Steel Corp., which was the #2 hazardous waste producer nationwide in 1987. It remains #1 locally (in general chemical pollution as well as toxic waste).

Not surprisingly, southwest Detroit and surrounding communities have a higher cancer rate than the rest of the state. This region urgently needs to be cleaned up and protected, not subjected to further unsafe dumping. ■



# Protesters say no!

## Militarism on parade

Continued from front page

staff sergeant was quoted as saying, "It ain't a welcome home, it's like a protest parade. We felt like there were more demonstrators than supporters."

Anti-war demonstrators lined the sidewalks with banners and placards. Slogans rang out: "Bush wants another war, that's what the parades are for!" and "War, war, what's it good for? Just for profit and nothing more!"

Several times activists burst into the parade, throwing themselves in front of military vehicles or climbing over them. Others engaged the GIs in discussion, panicking the officers. Along the route and near the reviewing stand one could hear "shame, shame, shame" and "murderers" directed at the military authorities. And there were slogans and banners in support of GI resisters, such as "Amnesty now for all war resisters."

Meanwhile the Oakland police tried to keep the protesters away from the march. They ticketed people who stepped off the curb for "jaywalking," and then gave up when they saw lines of people in the street. At one point some demonstrators were badly beaten by police, while onlookers shouted "LAPD, LAPD," comparing the police actions to the beating of Rodney King by the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD). In all, over 30 people were arrested, and three people were hospitalized after being attacked by police.

At Jack London Square, the military had set out a display of heavy weapons. But protesters brought slogans there too, and talked to soldiers. One marine sergeant was heard to tell his soldiers to be ready to leave because "I am not going to put up with this for another four hours." Seeing that nothing could dampen the ardor of the anti-war demonstrators, the police and military had second thoughts, and the tanks beat a hasty retreat after only 30 minutes.

While all this was going on, where was the liberal Democratic mayor of Oakland, Elihu Harris? This supposed man of peace showed up in the reviewing stand, waving the flag, and telling reporters that the war was in the "national interest." And it was his police who struck out at the anti-war demonstrators.

### Seattle

In Seattle, the celebration of the Gulf War, scheduled for June 22, was canceled.

Seattle had been the scene of many protests against the war, but there are different political trends among those who say they oppose militarism. And some liberal politicians and church leaders sought to play both sides of the fence.

Liberal Democratic Mayor Norm Rice had backed the parade. He tried to disguise the militarist nature of the "welcome home" ceremonies by bringing some church leaders, who talked about peace, onto a committee of right-wing parade organizers. The church leaders tried to convince the pro-war organizers to tone down their act a bit.

But this coalition collapsed when the right wingers refused to compromise on having a display of military hardware. As well, the coalition was worried about planned anti-war protests.

The result? No victory parade. But an anti-war demonstration, originally called to protest the parade, was scheduled to go ahead anyway.

### New York City

In New York City some \$4.7 million was spent to produce a pro-war extravaganza for June 10. Troops and tanks were paraded for a mile on Broadway, and confetti was stockpiled. And indeed this attracted a huge mob of onlookers. But then again, what would one expect for a big show put on at lunch hour on a workday in crowded Manhattan?



At NY parade, anti-war activist stands up to Rambo bully

But even here the anti-war movement made its presence felt. In the days preceding the march, activists denounced General Colin Powell and Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney at a local church. On June 10 itself groups of activists dotted the march route with anti-war slogans. As White House Secretary of Defense Cheney, Pentagon Chief of Staff Powell, and General Schwarzkopf marched past Vesey Street, they were greeted with boos. On the same day, 200 people marched against the war in Brooklyn.

The police did their best to ensure a proper, patriotic attitude among the onlookers. 3,000 cops were at hand, blocking off places where protesters had intended to gather and generally making life difficult for dissenters. The police were not just passive observers: 25 protesters were arrested, and 13 police injured in scuffles.

The media presented all this as simply a mass outpouring for the war. They let their imagination soar. At one point the media was promoting an absurd police claim that almost five million onlookers took part. But the police admitted that this estimate was made by simply calculating the number of square feet in the vicinity of the parade route, arriving at the assumption that 235,000 people lined each block on the mile-long route. Besides, the *New York Times* said, "millions more watched on television."

The media presented all this as simply a mass outpouring for the war. They let their imagination soar. At one point the media was promoting an absurd police claim that almost five million onlookers took part. But the police admitted that this estimate was made by simply calculating the number of square feet in the vicinity of the parade route, arriving at the assumption that 235,000 people lined each block on the mile-long route. Besides, the *New York Times* said, "millions more watched on television."

### UAW parade flops in Detroit

In Detroit some locals of the United Auto Workers got in on the act and sponsored their own victory parade. As usual, there were predictions that thousands would turn out for this June 23 march and rally at the Michigan state fairgrounds in Detroit. But there were a mere 50 at the rally. Trying to put a good face on it, the *Detroit Free Press* said this was the "proud few," and admitted that "the sidewalks were all but deserted, with fewer than 300 onlookers along the (mile-long) route."

A safer way to hype big numbers was to put a pro-war theme on the annual "freedom festival." A big deal was made about the huge turnout on June 28 to see the fireworks. The next day 100,000 were supposed to cheer on a march down Woodward Avenue. But only 5,000 showed up — marchers and onlookers combined, including high school marching bands and troops on duty. As well, two or three hundred protesters greeted the parade downtown with banners and slogans.

### No unity behind the war

The "welcome home" parades were not a humanitarian gesture to the soldiers, but victory parades to glorify war. The same Pentagon and militarists who stand behind these parades are involved in persecuting the conscientious soldiers

who refused to take part in slaughtering Iraqis.

The anti-war activists not only refused to take part in these parades, but organized protests against them in city after city. They punctured the fraud of unity behind imperialism.

Despite the hype, these parades met a distinct lack of enthusiasm. They fizzled

in some cities, and elsewhere merely had the numbers one would expect of any establishment-backed extravaganza. The imperialists may be patting themselves on the back and repeating "we're number one," but among those who find themselves downtrodden and facing hardship, there is a notable lack of general rejoicing. ■



Profesters at Oakland, Ca. parade -- June 14

## Defend the anti-war GIs!

Last month we reported that two anti-war marines, Erik Larsen and Kevin Sparrock, faced trumped up charges of desertion during wartime which carry a possible death sentence. Now a third marine, Tahan Jones, faces similar charges.

### Marines threaten Tahan Jones

Jones had applied for conscientious objector status in October 1990 and went AWOL rather than be shipped off to kill in a war for oil profits. Jones had put forward his views at many an anti-war rally, but the marine investigator denied him CO status on the grounds that he was supposedly "incapable of articulating any discernible thought." The racist investigator apparently wouldn't consider anything that a black man would say.

Jones turned himself in on May 15 in San Francisco. Little did he know that on the same day the marines brought new capital charges against him. In fact, another five days passed before his lawyers heard of it either. Meanwhile Jones was flown to await trial with many other GIs at Camp LeJeune, North Carolina, 3,000 miles from his legal advisors. The marines are concentrating many of the anti-war soldiers at Camp LeJeune, taking them thousands of miles away from their friends, supporters, and lawyers, although there are other trial centers.

### The railroad of Erik Larsen

Meanwhile the marines are continuing to railroad Erik Larsen. Larsen, an outspoken war critic, faces the death penalty for missing a troop deployment to Arizona.

In early May, a federal district court ruled that Larsen had been denied due process in his attempt to win CO status and that the Marines must give him a new hearing within 60 days. The marines have countered by cutting corners in order to court-martial Larsen before the

new hearing. For example, two preliminary hearings were held quickly even though Larsen's lawyers could not attend. Alternate dates suggested by Larsen's civilian lawyer were rejected. All 24 witnesses requested by the defense were rejected out of hand, without even hearing arguments by the defense, as were all the ordinary "discovery" motions to acquaint the defense lawyers with the case against Larsen.

### Long sentences

The military courts are also levying stiff sentences on the anti-war GIs they convict, harsher than what would usually be given in non-political cases. Under the heavy pressure from the marines, 18 GI resisters at Camp LeJeune have plea-bargained. But they were shown no mercy anyway, and are receiving sentences of up to two years.

Daniel Gillis is a black marine who was tied and beaten by four white marines when he refused to board a bus to be shipped out to Saudi Arabia. He was given 18 months, although the prosecution only asked for a year.

War opponent Sam Lwin was actually acquitted of desertion. It seems that his commanding officer brazenly admitted that after Lwin applied for CO status, he threatened to have Lwin beaten up. This embarrassed the military judge, and put a bad light on convicting him. Nevertheless, the judge sentenced him to four months on other charges. During the trial the prosecution demanded heavy punishment on the grounds that this would deter CO applications in future wars.

The military judges and prosecutors want to terrorize any soldier who dares to challenge the justice of a war of aggression. They want to make the youth into mindless killing machines. Anyone who really wants to support the ordinary people caught up in the military should defend the cause of the anti-war GIs. ■

# Don't give any room to the masters of apartheid!

Continued from front page

required an official government registry of each person's race. And apartheid still exists in South Africa despite the repeal of the Population Registration Act.

The repeal of one old law after another does show that a new wind is blowing in South Africa. But the government has been dragging its feet, often acting only after mass actions have all but repealed these acts in practice. It is retreating as slowly as it dares. Having committed itself to releasing all political prisoners, it still keeps thousands in jail sneering that the government regards them as violent rather than political. With respect to schools, it now says that some blacks can go to white schools, but only if 72% of the white parents at the school vote in favor of admitting them. (And it continues to fund the white schools ten or more times more than black ones.)

## Violence in South Africa

The press tells us that the De Klerk government has agreed to negotiate.

But, perhaps just for this reason, its police are inciting township violence. They are making use of the thugs of Buthelezi's Inkatha organization to organize a reign of terror in many townships and workers' hostels. A bitter struggle is taking place. The De Klerk government is seeking to pacify the black masses and dictate a new constitution. They want to keep the wealth and resources of South Africa beyond the

power of the majority to dispose of.

And if De Klerk doesn't achieve quite enough, the official opposition, the Conservative Party, is waiting in the wings. It threatens direct violence, or even civil war, against the majority and against all whites who would work with this majority.

## An end to sanctions?

And now the Bush administration, which never wanted sanctions in the first place, is saying that it intends to lift all sanctions against South Africa. The European capitalists think similarly, and they have lifted most of their sanctions. In this way, Western capitalism wants to encourage De Klerk to stand. They are telling him: "Good boy, you recognized that unless the old system is shaken up, there would have been a revolution. But we are all cheering you on in your efforts to keep the radicals in their place. Let the majority continue to toil to enrich a privileged handful, but let it be done with more modern European forms."

The liberal Democrats say that they will support sanctions for the time being.

But they say, and have always said, that they are opposed to a revolution in South Africa, which they label as "violence." As Rep. Solarz put it in 1986, arguing in favor of the Dellums anti-apartheid act: "Our interests are in preventing the radicalization of the black majority in that country and the emergence of a new government which would be hostile to our interests." (*Congressional Record*, June 18, 1986, p. 3875) And



he stated that "I think that sanctions are designed not to bring the government of South Africa to its knees, but to bring the government to its senses." (*Ibid.*, p. 3914)

This is why sanctions have always been half-hearted at best.

## Two prospects

Apartheid in South Africa is tottering. Will a radicalized majority tear out its very roots and wipe clean the political and economic institutions that backed it? Will the oppressed masses achieve equal-

ty and the best conditions for the development of a class struggle against exploitation?

Or will the remnants of apartheid continue to be a blight on the country for years to come? Will segregation and discrimination and grinding poverty continue to oppress the majority for year after year, just as the American black people have faced the curse of racism for over a century since the abolition of slavery?

Apartheid in South Africa, burn it to the ground!

## MARX

Continued from page 5

classes will stand out even more sharply....

"Gentlemen, do not allow yourselves to be impressed by the abstract word freedom. Freedom for whom? It is not the freedom of a single individual in the presence of another individual. It is the freedom which capital has to crush the worker."

## Economic growth for whom?

Marx also exposed the capitalist arguments that free trade would lead to economic growth which would eventually benefit the workers.

He pointed out that, of course, if the economy was not growing then it would "decline and in this case the worker will be the first victim." But he went on to emphasize, "And what will be the fate of the worker when capital is augmenting.... He will perish likewise."

This is because economic growth implies "the accumulation and concentration of capital. The centralization of capital leads to a greater division of labor and the great use of machines... [and] increases the competition between workers."

He also showed that "the more productive capital increases the more it is forced to produce for a market whose needs it does not know, the more production precedes consumption, the more supply seeks to increase demand and as a result crises grow in intensity and rapidity. But each crisis in its turn accelerates the centralization of capital and swells the ranks of the proletariat."

And he summed this up saying, "Thus, as productive capital increases, the competition between the workers increases in a far greater proportion. Remuneration for labor diminishes for everyone and the burden of labor increases for some."

## Freedom for one country to get rich off others

Marx also attacked the idea of the

supposed "international division of labor" and showed that free trade leads to one country getting rich off others. He said:

"We are told that free trade will give rise to the international division of labor which will assign to each country production in accordance with its natural advantages.

"Perhaps you may think, gentlemen, that the production of coffee and sugar is the natural destiny for the West Indies.

"Two centuries ago nature, which does not meddle with commerce, had not provided them with either a coffee pot or a sugar tin.

"And is it not perhaps possible that in fifty years time you will find neither coffee nor sugar there, because the East Indies by cheaper production have already victoriously combated this so-called natural destiny for the West Indies....

"Another thing which must never be overlooked is that, just as everything has become a monopoly, there are also some branches of industry in our day which dominate all others and assure to those people who exploit them most supremacy in the world market....

"We should not be surprised if the free-traders cannot understand how one country can get rich at the expense of another, because these same gentlemen also find it impossible to understand how within a single country one class can get rich at the expense of another."

## What about protectionism?

Marx also explained that protectionism would not solve the question of prosperity under capitalism through free trade.

"Do not imagine, gentlemen, that in criticizing commercial liberty we wish to defend the protective system." He pointed out, "the protectionist system is only a means of establishing industry on a large scale in a country, that is to say, making it depend on the world market, and as soon as one depends on the world market one depends to a

greater or lesser degree on free trade. Apart from this, the protective system helps to develop free competition within a country...."

And he pointed out that in one sense free trade benefits the working class — it make the class struggle stand out more sharply.

"But generally speaking," Marx summarized, "in our time the protective

## HEALTH CARE

Continued from page 2

people.

## A bill for the rich

The Democratic plan isn't designed to solve the crisis of the people.

Oh, in order to get votes, the politicians have to talk about the needs of the poor. Sometimes quite eloquently.

But if they want to stay in the government establishment, if they want the money which provides the platforms for their speeches, if they want to stay friends with the businessmen and corporations and the monied interests that run this free-market country, then they have to solve the crises facing these monied interests.

The Democratic plan speaks to the interests of the rich.

It forgets repetitive stress injury, but it provides money to entice the state legislatures to make things easier for doctors facing malpractice premiums.

It talks about "cost containment," but leaves intact the whole system of health capitalists, private insurance, and paper-shuffling bureaucrats feeding upon the people. What can such "cost containment" end up being except more restrictions on care provided to the people and more speedups and wage cuts for medi-

cal workers?

## A few crumbs

It promises a few needed reforms. For example, it promises to stop insurance companies from "regulating" (excluding) certain individuals or businesses from coverage. It promises uniform national standards for helping the poor in place of the state-by-state chaos of Medicaid. It promises to restore some community health clinics. But don't hold your breath. These things have to survive congressional tinkering, negotiations with Republican congressmen, and then negotiations with Bush himself.

## The bottom line

But the real meaning of the bill is clear:

Don't expect national health care or universal health care from the politicians. Don't wait for them to deal with occupational injuries, building more drug clinics, or solving the problems of chronic care.

There is a class struggle in health. Either the workers and the poor will be squeezed still more in the name of health care reform, or the capitalists will be made to pay for a real system of universal and effective health care. Any fine talk about health care reform that ignores the different interests of the rich and poor over health care is nothing but fantasy.

**The Workers' Advocate Supplement**

Letters: The Workers' Advocate Supplement, P.O. Box 1182, Ontario St., Chicago, IL 60611  
 Orders: Marxist-Leninist Publications, P.O. Box 1675, Ontario St., Chicago, IL 60611  
 (Order/Subscription mail U.S., Canada, Mexico) \$16.00/year  
 \*Non-union only\* (291) 0882-8386

# Cholera sweeps across Latin America

## What's to blame?

An epidemic of cholera has been sweeping across Latin America since the beginning of this year. More than 200,000 people have been hit with the disease, and nearly 2,000 have already died.

The worst hit are Peru, Ecuador, and Colombia. Each month, new cases are found — from Argentina in the south to the Dominican Republic in the Caribbean. The disease is spreading across long distances, because the bacteria which causes cholera spreads both through travel by infected people and transport of contaminated food.

No end to this plague is in sight. It is estimated that millions will become affected in the coming years, with tens of thousands expected to die.

Is the cholera epidemic one more hapless act of fate preying on the poor countries of the world? Or does it show something more tangible about the human world we live in?

### A disease of poverty and crisis

Cholera is an old infectious disease, which originated in India and has been endemic in that subcontinent. But it is both preventable and curable. Social and economic conditions, not just medical science, are the key to whether it wreaks havoc on people.

Simply put, cholera is a disease of poverty and social crisis. The bacterium *Vibrio cholerae* is a weak germ, which is hard to sustain in healthy people when

clean drinking water and good sewage systems are available. It is the desperate poor who lack these things in normal times, making them susceptible to falling victim to cholera if the bacteria is around. As well, war or natural disasters, which destroy water and sanitation facilities, can also create the conditions in which cholera thrives.

As for recovery, if you're treated fast, you can prevent death from cholera. Death usually comes from severe dehydration within 24 hours, but simple solutions of sugar and salts can ride you over the critical period. But a society has to have an elementary delivery system to reach the infected people.

### Latin America is being thrown backwards

And those are the reasons why it is hitting hard in the poorest countries of Latin America.

Take a look at Peru, the hardest hit country. The working people there live in harsh conditions. Some 12 million, half the people, are said to live in "extreme poverty." Only 40% of Peruvians have sewage facilities, and more than that lack drinkable water. The situation is terrible in the bustling shantytowns of Lima, and even worse in remote villages. And how will the poor who come down with cholera get any medical relief worth the name? The government of Peru only spends \$12 a year per Peruvian on health and education.

The lack of decent sewage facilities and drinking water, the pitiful spending on medical care — these are no acts of nature. They are the cruel results of political policy.

### Who should be blamed?

First, there's the wealthy bankers and ruling class of Europe and the U.S.

Latin America has a huge debt burden to the banks and rich governments; and the fact that so little money goes into sanitation and health is the flip side of the people having to bear the burden of repaying this debt. This debt now stands at \$422 billion for Latin America and the Caribbean. Each month's interest payments are a big, savage gash taken out of people's lives. Take Peru again. Peru pays \$45 million each month in interest payments; that's twice as much as the miserable \$22 million spent on health and education.

And it is the bankers and imperialist governments who dictate that countries like Peru must cut back even further on social spending. Only then will the International Monetary Fund and World Bank provide new loans, reschedule debts, etc. For example, Peru used to spend \$46 a year per citizen on health and education just a few years ago in 1986, but this has now fallen to a quarter as much.

If the Latin American people were free of debt slavery, they could have the resources to spend on health, sanitation, education, etc. They could make short

work of such things like the cholera epidemic.

Or could they? The callousness towards the needs of the poor majority isn't just the responsibility of the wealthy bankers and politicians abroad. The local capitalist rulers in Latin America are also culpable; they are the partners-in-crime of the imperialists.

It's not just that they agree to sell their countries in debt slavery and keep them there. They could say, to hell with the debt, our people's needs are more important. But they won't because this means breaking with world capitalism. What is more, even if the debt weren't there, these ruling classes wouldn't provide better conditions for the poor. Look at the rest of their spending priorities even now. They think nothing of spending billions in military hardware. They splurge on modernization of airports, fancy buildings and homes, playgrounds for the rich, etc. This is because these governments are run by the wealthy local capitalists, for the interests of profit and exploitation — not for the improvement of the conditions of the working people and poor.

Both imperialism and the local exploiters are to blame for the poverty of Latin America, in which the cholera epidemic is spreading. To end this poverty, the toilers and the poor need revolution against these cruel, bloodsucking monsters. Elsewise, Latin America will only fall further and further backwards. ■

## Homeless resist eviction from Tompkins Sq. Park

At 5 a.m. on June 3, over 350 police charged into New York's Lower East Side and drove over 200 homeless people out of Tompkins Square Park. A group of homeless shouted taunts and tried to organize a protest, but they were overwhelmed. The police arrested seven for refusing to leave the park, and four for resisting arrest.

A chain link fence was quickly erected around the park. Police barricades were set up around the fence. And police were massed at the barricades and spread throughout the neighborhood.

Despite the heavy police intimidation, several hundred people rallied at night in protest. They marched down the street beating garbage-can lids and carrying signs saying "Stop the war on the poor" and "S.O.S. Tompkins Square Park." Another seven people were arrested in confrontations with the police. Protests continued for several days. On June 7, hundreds of protesters again confronted police. And on June 8, a "hands-around-the-park" protest drew up to 1,000 people. They formed a circle surrounding the three square blocks of the park.

Democratic Mayor Dinkins ran for office on the pledge that he would help the downtrodden. But that apparently doesn't include the workers — he just laid off 10,000 city workers. And it doesn't include the homeless.

His budget makes huge cuts in assistance for the homeless. Nine women's shelters are to be phased out. Caseloads for city workers will expand from 50 clients to 60. An anti-eviction legal services program and a program providing people with housing court assistance are to be eliminated. And a special program for homeless men with AIDS will be eliminated.

While claiming he can find no money to help the poor, Dinkins has not spared a cent to hound them. Police patrols have been stepped up to drive homeless people out of Grand Central Station,

Pennsylvania Station, and other public sites. And while cutting the parks budget almost in half, Dinkins has come up with \$2.3 million for a year-long renovation of Tompkins Square Park with the sole aim of driving out the homeless and militant youth.

In justifying this attack on the homeless, Dinkins declared, "Tompkins Square Park is the only city park without a curfew. It is the only city park that has become a concentrated tent city for homeless people. It is the only city park that cannot be used by the public as a park — the atmosphere is disturbing,

disruptive and dangerous."

Yes, "dangerous" because Tompkins Square Park had become one of the centers of protest in New York City. Along with the homeless protests, there have been actions against the gentrification of the community and marches against police brutality. And the park was also a staging area for many protests against the U.S. war in the Gulf. Indeed, police closed the park only a short time before it was to be the staging area for protests against the mayor's shameful "victory" parade celebrating the U.S. imperialists' slaughter of some 100,000

Iraqis.

Dinkins has been determined to put an end to this dangerous center. But the police have attempted to shut down the park numerous times since the summer of 1988. Each time they have been confronted with big demonstrations. And each time homeless people were able to quickly resume their occupation of a section of the park. The mayor believes he has finally brought the park under control. But the struggle is not yet over. ■

## Law and order at the Supreme Court

The Supreme Court is passing one decision after another that endorses police state tactics. One after another of the rights that school children are taught about are being trampled on. The appointment of David Souter to the Supreme Court established a stable core of law-and-order fanatics on the Court. And with the resignation of Thurgood Marshall, and the likely appointment of another hack, this majority is likely to remain for a long time to come.

But in fact the rights of the working people have always depended first and foremost on their own resistance to tyranny. Let them see the Supreme Court in all its ugliness. Let them see the justices prove that the Bill of Rights is only a scrap of paper. It will prove the necessity to develop their own organization, based not on belief in the constitution, but in the class struggle.

### A hatchet against the working people

Look at only a few of the Supreme Court's recent decisions.

■ On June 17 the Supreme Court handed down a 5-4 decision that makes

it harder for prisoners to challenge inhuman and degrading conditions in prisons. In 38 states, there are prisons subject to orders from federal courts to clean up brutal conditions. So the Supreme Court takes action — to make it harder to sue.

■ The Supreme Court held on June 20 that police officers could board buses, or any form of public transit, and ask passengers to consent to a search. They did not need either probable cause, or a warrant. This amounts to a blank check for police intimidation.

■ On May 30 the Supreme Court voted 6 to 3 to allow police to search a closed container in a car without a warrant. And what's the big deal, said Scalia in his individual opinion on the case. The requirement to get a warrant before searching private property has "become so riddled with exceptions that it was basically unrecognizable."

■ On March 26 the Supreme Court shrugged at the use of confessions obtained by torture or abuse. If the police beat a confession out of someone, the Court said, it didn't necessarily taint a trial to use it in court. The Court asked

only that that there be other evidence that might reasonably have led to a conviction.

### But it doesn't apply to Oliver North

■ But on May 28 the Supreme Court let Oliver North off the hook. It let stand an appeals court ruling that said that a line-by-line scrutiny had to be made to see that not a single witness at North's trial had been influenced by North's testimony to Congress, since North had immunity when he gave it. So goodbye to the criterion that there only had to be some other evidence that reasonably could have led to a conviction.

For, you see, North had waged war covertly on Nicaragua. So everything is forgiven him and his contra network, from taking part in the drug trade to lying to Congress.

That's law and order. It doesn't mean depriving everyone of their rights. Instead it means all rights to the rich and powerful, the militarists and the corporations, to do what they please. And no rights to the people to resist. ■



# The World in Struggle

## Israel seizes land during Gulf crisis

When he went on his crusade against Iraq's "illegal occupation" of Kuwait, President Bush conveniently forgot about Israel's occupation of Palestinian lands. For Israel, there was no "line in the sand," no threats of American force against them. On the contrary. Aid from the U.S. was increased, as Bush relied on Israel to back him politically and militarily in the Gulf crisis.

The American media dutifully praised Israel for its "restraint" during the Gulf war. They also conveniently overlooked what Israel was doing to the people inside their own occupied lands — keeping hundreds of thousands of Palestinian people under house arrest during the war. Now, it turns out, the press also overlooked Israel's escalating seizure of Arab lands.

During the war, while Palestinians on the West Bank were locked in their homes in round-the-clock curfews, the Israeli army seized thousands of acres of Palestinian land. The Israeli government declared some 7,500 acres of land ownerless and then proceeded to nationalize it. (Another 10,000 acres is still being processed.) (See *The Washington Post National Weekly Edition*, May 27-June 2, 1991, p. 17.)

The land in question is actually communal land, owned by Palestinian villages

and farmed by the residents. But because it has not been registered to any individual owner, the Israelis insist that it is ownerless, and reverts to the state (Israel). Of course, Israel has also not allowed any Palestinians to register ownership of land since the Israeli occupation began over 20 years ago. And of course the Israeli state wasn't going to protect the land, but transferred it to new occupiers.

Government lawyers use legalistic mumbo-jumbo from the Ottoman Empire days to justify their land seizures. But what it comes down to is this: the Israelis used the opportunity of the Gulf crisis to seal up the Palestinians in their homes and to steal thousands of acres of land from them. The army is now carving up the land, building roads, and preparing to plant Israeli settlements on them in a pattern of strategic hamlets surrounding Palestinian villages.

Another unjust invasion and occupation! And what does George Bush, the crusader for international law and order, have to say about this? Bush's Secretary of State, James Baker, whines that the new settlements make it difficult to forge an international peace process. But the Israeli army stays in place, the construction of settlements goes on apace, and American aid flows on as before to Israel. ■

## Workers rebel against Zaire's Mobutu

Rebellion rocked the capital city of Zaire, Kinshasa, on June 5. Poor workers, fed up with the corrupt dictatorship in this central African country, smashed windows and looted shops. Police arrested trade union leaders to try and suppress the actions, and one union leader was killed in prison.

President Mobutu Sese Seko seized power 26 years ago. And his regime has become synonymous with mass poverty on one hand, and fantastic corruption and extravagant living on the part of the tyrant and his cronies on the other. Mobutu has also long been the U.S. government's favorite African dictator.

But times are changing in Africa, where in country after country, strikes and protests are emerging against the local bourgeois tyrants. In recent months strikes and protests have shaken the regimes in countries neighboring Zaire — Cameroon, Gabon, Congo. Mobutu's dictatorship is not immune from the virus of popular discontent. Since last year, protests have also been growing in Zaire.

### Rampant corruption

Zaire is a large country, one-fourth the size of the U.S., with a population of 36 million. And it is blessed with many natural resources, especially minerals. But under Mobutu the country's wealth has been reserved for his bourgeois cronies, while the masses suffered. Mobutu collected houses, jets, and bank accounts worth hundreds of millions while the masses starved.

For some time now, the economy has gone bust. The government is bankrupt.

Unemployment and starvation are rapidly spreading. Hyperinflation undercuts workers' wages.

Dissatisfaction blossomed into strikes and protests last year. At that time Mobutu allowed some opposition political parties to be formed. And he promised to allow free elections. At the same time, he clamped down on those opponents who took organizing seriously. Last year students in their dormitories in the city of Lubumbashi were set upon by police with bayonets; scores were killed. And in April police attacked a meeting of opposition politicians in the city of Mbuji Mayi; in the ensuing violence some 29 were killed.

### A staunch ally of imperialism

Mobutu's regime has for decades been one of the biggest recipients of U.S. foreign aid. In return Mobutu has stood as one of U.S. imperialism's staunchest allies. The CIA used Zaire as a base for intelligence gathering and weapons shipments into southern Africa. During the recent Gulf war, Mobutu provided the U.S. with diplomatic support in the UN Security Council. In a move that scandalized those who looked for U.S. help against Mobutu, President Bush sent Mobutu a letter after the war thanking him for his support and praising him.

Zaire's liberal dissidents would like to see the U.S. cut Mobutu loose and support a milder bourgeois regime, one that would not torture and kill quite as many people. But the workers and poor cannot be satisfied with that. To rid themselves of starvation and bourgeois

corruption the workers of Zaire must rid themselves of the whole status quo. They have to oust the bourgeois upper crust who have enriched themselves at the

expense of the masses, as well as the imperialists in Europe and the U.S. who have propped up this corrupt, blood-stained order. ■

## Immigrant youth fight racism in France



Paris riot cops prepare for tear gas assault on minority youth

Early in June, the Paris suburb of Mantes-la-Jolie was the scene of rioting for more than a week. Stores were looted and cars burned. Two people were killed — one police officer and one French-Arab youth. Mantes-la-Jolie has the largest concentration of public housing in France. Unemployment among young people is over 20%.

There have been almost no riots in France for a decade. But suddenly, this summer, there is a surge of violence in immigrant ghettos. The youths, many of them of French-Arab background, are fed up with lingering unemployment.

Prime Minister Edith Cresson confronted this crisis as the first emergency in her month-old administration. Cresson announced emergency measures to take youths out of the suburbs and send them to the country for the summer. But youths in Mantes-la-Jolie ridiculed the program, saying "What happens when we come back?"

The riots were concentrated among residents of the huge public housing project in the center of Mantes-la-Jolie. Some 24,000 people live squeezed into concrete high-rise apartment buildings. Most of the people there are of Moroccan, Tunisian, Algerian, or Portuguese extraction. Many of them are now second or third generation residents of France. But they remain isolated in public housing ghettos, victimized by the welfare system, vegetating in substandard schools. In fact the first riot this year began as a demonstration for more adequate funding for the schools where immigrants go. Half of the residents are under 20, most of them seeking employment.

### Rising racist attacks across Europe

The immigrant ghettos are turning into cauldrons of anger as the immigrant workers and unemployed see how they are discriminated against. This is intensified by the rising tide of racism in France as well as in other European countries.

Murderous physical attacks on Arabs have become fairly common in France. Such attacks are encouraged by the extreme right-wing party, the National Front, led by fascist Jean-Marie Le Pen. Le Pen calls on the government to send all immigrants "back where they came from." And he organizes demonstrations in support of the police who are sent in to repress rioting youths. Le Pen criticizes social-democratic President Francois Mitterrand as "soft on immigrants," but in fact Mitterrand too praised the police for their murderous work in repressing the youths of Mantes-la-Jolie.

The police themselves have organized demonstrations demanding that the government "get tough with the immigrants." And they are putting out rumors that the riots in Mantes-la-Jolie are the work of organized, crazed, Algerian Muslim fundamentalists.

The French case is one example of rising discrimination and racial attacks in Europe. Neo-nazis are on the rise in Germany, glorying in their hateful past, attacking immigrants from Turkey and Africa, and also going after workers from Eastern Europe. Terror against immigrants is also reported from elsewhere in Europe — from Italy to Scandinavia.

There are eight million immigrant workers in Europe. The capitalists of Europe are happy to bring them in as "guest workers" to exploit their labor. But this is some hospitality! The rich rulers want them kept in backward conditions, so they have a section of workers they can super-exploit. So while using the immigrants' labor they organize repressive campaigns against the immigrants. They spread racism to divide the workers among native and immigrant. Meanwhile the capitalists laugh all the way to the bank. ■

## STRUGGLE

A Magazine of Proletarian Revolutionary Literature

Vol. 7, No. 2 Spring 1991



\$1

### Fiction Essays Poetry Songs

Struggle is a literary journal of the Detroit Branch of the Marxist-Leninist Party, USA \$1.50 by mail

Order from:

Struggle  
Harper Station  
P.O. Box 13261  
Detroit, MI 48213