

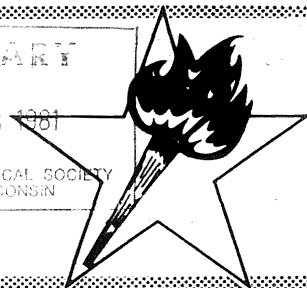
# TORCH

NEWSPAPER OF THE REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST LEAGUE

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AUGUST 15-SEPTEMBER 14, 1981

VOLUME 8, NUMBER 7 / 25¢

## Reagan & Labor Face Off

### Youth Rebellions Sweep Britain



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### RML/Jamaica RSL/U.S. Fuse

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### 3 Anti-Klan Militants Arrested in Connecticut



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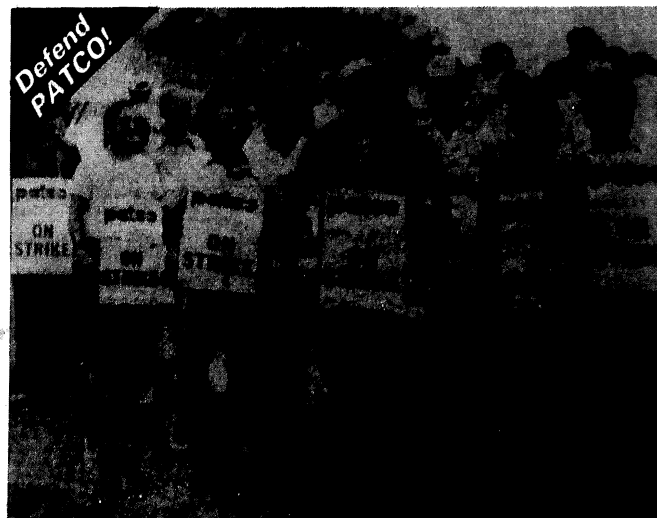
## • 12,000 Striking Controllers Fired • Gov't Opens Union-Busting Drive

By WILLIAM FALK

The strike by 12,000 air traffic controllers has become one of the most important labor battles of the past 10 years. On the surface, the strike is a trade union dispute between the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization (PATCO) over wages, hours and working conditions.

But much more is at stake. Reagan and his lieutenants are going all out to bust the controllers' union and crush their struggle.

(Continued on page 3) Flight controllers set up mass picket lines as strike began on August 3.



## All Out for AFL-CIO 'Jobs & Justice' March, September 19!

The American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) is calling a mass Solidarity Day demonstration in Washington, D.C., on September 19. According to AFL-CIO spokesperson Charles Hayes, the labor federation is planning to bring thousands of working people to Washington to demand "jobs and justice" and to protest "the Reagan administration's assault on vital social programs." While making no public predictions about the size of the turnout, AFL-CIO leaders are privately saying they will be disappointed if less than 100,000 people show up for Solidarity Day. Some hope to match the 300,000 demonstrators who joined the 1963 civil rights march on Washington.

Over 200 labor unions, Black and Latin organizations, women's organizations and

community groups are working together to build Solidarity Day. Within the labor movement, for instance, AFSCME District Council 37 in New York hopes to bring 300 busloads of demonstrators to Washington. In the Midwest, District 31 of the United Steel Workers union is sending at least 2,500 of its members to the march. West Coast labor leaders are sending symbolic contingents, while planning a West Coast Solidarity Day in Los Angeles on September 19.

The march is also drawing broad support from outside the organized labor movement. Black groups like the NAACP and PUSH, and women's organizations, such as NOW, are endorsing Solidarity Day. In Texas the state AFL-CIO is working with the NAACP and the Council of United Latin American Citizens to mobilize for September 19. In

New Haven, Connecticut, the Central Labor Council is inviting representatives from local Black community groups to its planning sessions for Solidarity Day.

The march can be an important step in building a militant working class defense against the capitalist offensive led by the Reagan administration. Working and oppressed people are under attack. Wages are being cut, plants closed and democratic rights taken away. The unions are facing sophisticated union-busting campaigns and a host of proposed anti-labor laws in Congress. The administration's recent firing of 12,000 striking flight controllers in the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization (PATCO) shows how far the capitalists are prepared to go to smash any resistance to their program

(Continued on page 10)

**our  
readers  
write...**

Send letters to:  
TORCH, PO Box 1288  
New York, NY 10116

## South African militants arrested

25 June 1981  
Comrades,

This is to acknowledge the arrest of our Comrade and President Mr. Khotso Seatholo (22). Comrade Seatholo was arrested on the 17th June while executing his duties inside South Africa, his birth country. He was shot on the leg before he was arrested. With him were some people resident in the country, and not executive members of the organization as alleged by the fascist police.

The names of the people arrested by the South African police with our President are as follows: Walter Sisulu, a banned journalist and President of MWASA, a Press Union. One other person detained with our President is Miss Masabata Loeate, an executive member of the Azania National Youth Union (AZANYU), and Mr. Thami Mazwai, also a journalist working for *The Sowetan*. Also detained is the President of the Congress of South African Students (COSAS), and former member of the Soweto Students Representative Council (SSRC), Mr. Wantu Zenzile and Thabo Ndabeni, also a former member of the SSRC. He is also in COSAS. Two teenage girls have also been arrested by the names

Patricia Shoyo Mncube (20) and Thandi Mábaso (19).

Comrade Seatholo took over the leadership of the South African Youth Revolutionary Council upon its inception on April of 1979. He was also a Chairman of the Soweto Students Representative Council while still in the country. He then fled the country after being pursued by the police and shot on the arm. Ever since, Mr. Seatholo has been a dedicated leader and revolutionary. As we have mentioned above, he was arrested while executing his duties as a President. We are presently awaiting the developments in the country and we would appreciate it if you give the matter as much and constant publicity as possible.

**Yours in the struggle,  
(Signed by the  
Financial Secretary and the  
Liaison Officer of the  
South African Youth  
Revolutionary Council)**

**Editor's note**—Any readers who would like to contribute money to the South African Youth Revolutionary Council to aid in the defense of those people who were arrested, please contact the RSL National Office. We will make sure that all donations reach the council.

## Lois's death a real blow

To the Editors:

I am profoundly saddened to learn of the tragic death of Lois Zimmerman. I knew Lois only a short time, unfortunately, for a few years in the early 1970s. Despite deep political differences that resulted in our being in separate organizations after 1973, I have always remembered the enormous dedication and emotional commitment which she brought to the revolutionary movement.

One moment which will always stand out in my mind was the first time Lois spoke in a debate at a political convention (in 1970). She was, at that time, very new to politics and extremely nervous about public speaking. Giving that

brief talk, in a highly charged atmosphere, required an almost superhuman effort from which it took her literally hours to recover. Everyone who saw it was very moved. Having witnessed what she went through, I think I have some understanding of the struggle she had to go through to become an effective, confident and outspoken public spokesperson.

This memory, as much as anything, makes the news of her death a real blow. It is a bitter reminder of the appalling toll which capitalist society takes from all of us every day.

**Fraternally,  
David Finkel**

## Worker reports on job action at NYC hospital

Dear Friends,

A job action took place at Mt. Sinai hospital in New York City on Monday, 6th April, after much planning and many setbacks. We took a vote to have a sit-in starting at lunch time on the above mentioned date. As a matter of fact, Joe Ferrantino of labor relations assured management after the lunch period that the people would return to work. That was his first mistake. Ironically, our union leadership also shared the same opinion, and it would have been a good excuse for them to say we asked you all to come out to fight the sick policy and you all failed to respond.

However, the workers for the very first time showed management and the union leadership their power. So they decided after the hour passed to remain put in the cafeteria. At that time there was approximately 500 angry people to deal with. The vice presidents and organizers had no other choice but to continue with the job action. At this stage the delegates started going around to the various departments and pulling out the reluctant members with 90 percent success.

By that time management really began to worry because they were not prepared for such an action, as the sit-in took momentum from shift to shift and day to day. About 2 p.m. the vice presidents and organizers were called by management to discuss the matter with Metzger, the VP for labor relations. They refused meeting with them unless the delegates were invited to sit in on any discussion. About two-and-a-half hours later they decided to meet with all of us. We met them and they told us to return to work. We all refused and the struggle continued and the workers were more angry and determined.

That ended day one of the sit-in and theater show between union and management.

The sit-in proved to be successful because we were all assembled in one place and the men did not leave as they would have to go to the bars. That proved to be very advantageous.

At this stage an injunction was filed against the union for an illegal strike action, but the whole of Tuesday the action continued. On Thursday the 9th a few of us were selected to go to the court hearing and if possible to give evidence in the court. The union lawyers asked for a further 24 hours to prepare their brief to defend the vice presidents and Co. of the charges concerning the sit-in. That ended Thursday but I could sense the defeat coming.

We were back in court on Friday the 10th. The judge had already made up his mind, so about 2 p.m. he made his summing up and these are his words: The union must pay \$625,000 for the three days already gone, plus the union will be charged \$10,000 per hour until the strike ended.

We had some disappointing news for the workers. But the people still refused going back to work. Jessie Olsen, an 1199 VP, was booed—as a matter of fact all the speakers were booed for joining with the leadership of the union. That went on until 6 p.m. Friday before they returned to work. That ended our strike.

However, management was not finished because there were several reprisals: A few delegates have been suspended, two were terminated. The suspensions were meant to frighten the workers so that they will be scared to take part in any

action in the near future. Now is the time the union leaders should grasp the opportunity to have the people more united but they are not doing anything. I personally believe the union should pay the people who are suspended their wages until the matter has been resolved by the grievance procedure.

The strike was over. We lost the battle but in my opinion the people had won a victory against management. They had a taste of unity, they have learned they are the union and they have the ability to withdraw their labor. Of course, there are still many problems. What the workers need more than ever now is to prepare for the bigger battles ahead. If the union fails to support the workers' needs, it will also be a breaking point for the union.

**A Mt. Sinai worker**

## 'RSL has kept flame of gay militancy alive'

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

I am enclosing a \$20 contribution to the RSL as a token of my appreciation for the work you have done in the Gay and Lesbian movement here in Chicago and also for your work spreading your vision of socialist freedom within the left.

While other Gay and Lesbian radicals have receded into obscurity, allowing conservative Gay Democrats to dominate our movement, the RSL has kept the flame of Gay militancy alive against great odds in Chicago.

Your work within the left is another reason for my support. One of the main tenets of your organization, which is: "you cannot have Socialism without Freedom and Freedom without Socialism," will win over radicals who have been turned off by the policies of the repressive phony "socialist" State Capitalist regimes and their repressive apologists in this country.

I believe that the majority of workers and oppressed throughout the world want socialism, but it must be true Socialism, which means a society where we workers (actually workers) have the freedom to organize and run society for our wellbeing and benefit. This is where the RSL comes in because you believe that the workers should rule, not the Kremlin, Inc., Castro, Ltd., or the East European subsidiaries of Kremlin, Inc.

Although I will not be attending the National Convention this year you can count on my continuing support for the RSL in the struggle for Socialism and Freedom.  
**For Gay & Lesbian Liberation  
through Socialist Revolution!!!!  
PCS**

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# Government & PATCO Face Off

(Continued from page 1)

The government has fired all striking workers, is operating the air traffic system with scabs, supervisors and military personnel, and claims it will rebuild the system over the next three years with new hires. The PATCO strike has become a struggle over the very right of unions to exist and fight for their members' needs. By the same token, it is a fight for the survival of any organization that represents people targeted by Reagan for attack.

## High rate of forced retirement

The air traffic controllers are on strike for higher pay and better working conditions, but mostly for better working conditions. Nearly 90 percent of all controllers end their careers with forced retirement—that is, they are declared medically unfit for duty by an FAA doctor. The controllers blame the stress of the job for this high rate of deterioration.

Under their previous contract, controllers were eligible for a pension either after they had worked 25 years or had turned 50 years old with at least 20 years in. In the negotiations leading up to the current strike the controllers demanded eligibility after 20 years, regardless of age. They are also demanding a 32-hour workweek to lessen the wear-and-tear, a demand already won by controllers throughout Europe.

The controllers also point to the high rate of involuntary early retirement as a reason for raising their wages. Their current pension is a little less than one-half their last year's earnings. The controllers are also demanding more sick days, pointing out that unlike other federal workers (all of whom get 14 days), air controllers cannot take medication, such as cold pills, while on the job and so use up their sick time rapidly. Finally, the controllers are demanding more, and more modern, equipment in the control centers along with more say-so in setting up working procedures.

Until recently, the controllers thought they had the full backing of the Reagan administration in their press for better working conditions. Only last fall, candidate Ronald Reagan met with PATCO official (and now president) Robert Poli to discuss the air controllers' problems. He then wrote the union a letter calling the state of the air traffic control system "deplorable," the hours the controllers worked "unreasonable," and the equipment "obsolete." He promised that, if elected president, he would "take whatever steps are necessary to provide our air traffic controllers with the most modern equipment available and to adjust staff levels and workdays so they are commensurate with achieving a maximum degree of public safety."

As a result of this letter, PATCO endorsed Reagan and, it seems, many PATCO members voted for him. "We could be accused of miscalculation," Poli said recently.

And that is surely the truth! This spring, when negotiations were supposed to be well underway, the FAA showed no signs of meeting PATCO's demands even half-way. Despite this, the union agreed to a three-month contract extension as the March 15 expiration date approached. PATCO leaders attended over 35 bargaining sessions during which the FAA mostly stalled.

Then, just before the revised deadline, the FAA made a "final offer": a \$2,300 a year raise with no shortened workweek. Poli accepted the offer, but the membership voted it down. When Poli went back for negotiations, with a full 95 percent of the workers voting No, the FAA dug in its heels. They claimed their final offer would cost them \$40 million more than the present contract and



PATCO militants replied "Take this job and shove it!" after Reagan threatened to fire strikers who did not return to work.

said while they were willing to rearrange this amount, they would not even discuss giving a penny more. With over 80 percent of the union approving, Poli called a strike and the controllers walked out on Monday, August 3.

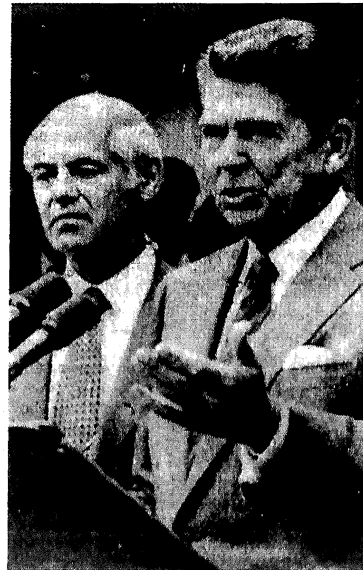
## Reagan wheels out the cannons

Skipping over an attempt to get an injunction, or trying to renew negotiations, Reagan announced on the first day of the strike that he would fire any controller not back at work by Wednesday. He ordered the Justice Department to go to court and push for contempt of court arrests and fines against PATCO. The fines leveled against the controllers' union (which included one to be paid directly to the airlines!) soon reached hundreds of thousands of dollars a day. This was far beyond what PATCO could afford. Meanwhile, five union leaders were jailed in the first few days of the strike.

All indications are that Reagan expected the controllers to come crawling back to work with PATCO chastened and ready to sign anything he offered. What he hadn't counted on was the deep bitterness toward the FAA that had built up among the controllers over the years as they watched themselves and their friends begin to suffer from ulcers, alcoholism, high blood pressure, strokes and heart attacks.

To Reagan's chagrin, the controllers remained firm and only 1,000 out of 13,000 PATCO members returned to work. These scabs joined with the 4,000 controllers (mostly from the South and Southwest) who don't belong to the union, FAA supervisors and several hundred army and air force troops to try to operate the air traffic control system. Although Secretary of Transportation Drew Lewis has kept claiming that 70 percent of the system is running, at the major air traffic centers—Atlanta, Chicago, New York and a few others—a full 50 percent of all flights have been canceled because of the strike.

Since the strike began the FAA has coerced people who had been transferred or retired for medical reasons to come back and work. In one case in the Southwest, a controller temporarily disqualified for a heart condition was certified fit for duty, taken off medication, and put to work. He worked five



days, took a sick day, worked the next day—and died that night of a heart attack.

It has not only been the health and safety of the controllers the FAA has been toying with. PATCO has repeatedly charged that despite the slowdown in air traffic, the patched-together system is not safe, especially as time goes on.

From all reports, the situation in the air control centers is grim. Several PATCO members from different cities who scabbed on the strike for a day or two, soon walked out because things were so bad.

One of these men told the New York Daily News about his day in the tower. "There are normally 14 people there, that day there were only six. There was less traffic but they were still working four hours at the screens without a break. The men were grumbling about how much longer they could stand the 12-hour days, and this was only the second day of the strike. Everyone was pale and nervous. They didn't want me to come back. My supervisor told me, 'If you lose, we lose.'"

At the end of the first week of the strike, Lewis announced that none of the 12,000 fired air controllers would be rehired or allowed back under any circumstances. The traffic control system, he claimed, would be rebuilt over three years with new hires, and in the meantime limp along.

There could be little doubt at this point that busting the union—not saving money—was the administration's goal. The FAA's own estimate is that it costs up to \$175,000 to train one air traffic controller. This puts the cost of replacing the 12,000 controllers in the neighborhood of \$1.5-2 billion over three years. Compare this to the FAA's final offer of \$40 million a year over the previous contract! It was fiscally irresponsible to offer

anything above that, the administration claims, but the same people are ready to spend \$2 billion to break a union of 13,000 members.

On Sunday, August 9, Lewis smugly claimed he had already busted the union. Speaking on Issues and Answers he said: "There's even a question now whether PATCO even exists, because with 12,000 people gone we're likely to have more non-union members in the bargaining unit than we do union members... presently working." The next day, however, when all air flights to Europe had to be canceled because of a sympathy action in Canada, Secretary Lewis was reminded that whatever he would like, PATCO still exists.

## A warning to all workers

Why is President Reagan willing to spend so much money and go to such lengths to bust a tiny union? First of all, Reagan sees it as a warning to all the victims of his economic policies not to protest or they'll have their heads chopped off. Reagan sees any serious fightback, and particularly one by a union, as a threat to his program. From the perspective of Reagan supporters, he was forced into union-busting because PATCO "has put itself in the position of trying to bust the Reagan administration." (Wall Street Journal editorial, August 6.)

The union-busting offensive is also designed to be a special warning to public workers. While only around 20 percent of the U.S. workforce is unionized, 65 percent of government workers are in unions. In order to successfully carry out his budget cuts, tax breaks for the rich and military buildup,

Reagan wants to defeat any effort on the part of government workers to fight for their needs.

The PATCO strike is also a warmup for some possibly big battles with organized labor next year. A partially hidden part of Reagan economics is a direct attack on wages. For instance, next spring the administration is likely to attempt to lower and modify the minimum wage. The harsh anti-union stand Reagan is taking now is designed to help him win that and other future battles.

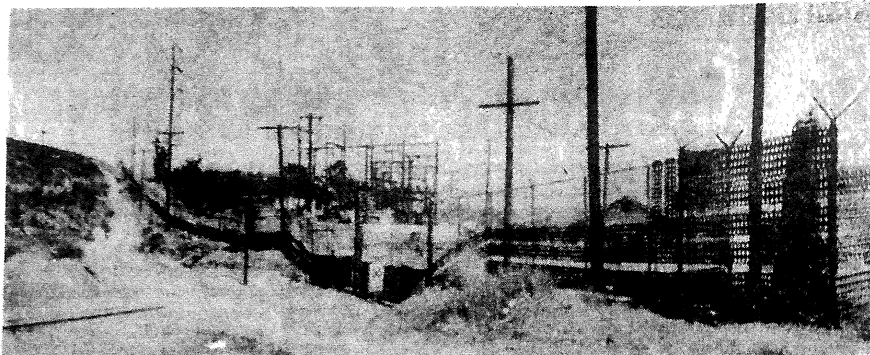
Reagan also wants to set an example for private industry. He is legitimizing the increase in union-busting attempts that have occurred in the

past few years, and encouraging private companies to break unions when they can.

## Can PATCO win?

As we go to press, the prospects for the strike appear mixed. On the negative side, the strike simply hasn't shut down air traffic to the extent that the strikers thought it would. Although there is a lot of dishonesty in the "all is well" bulletins from the FAA, the careful planning by the government has

(Continued on page 16)



Although the U.S. government has set up fences along the Mexican border to keep out undocumented workers, U.S. agribusiness and other industries want cheap immigrant labor. Reagan's proposed immigration policy would increase the oppression faced by both undocumented workers and "guest workers."

# Reagan Calls for a Return to Reactionary 'Bracero' Program

A proposal for major changes in U.S. immigration policy was announced July 30 by the Reagan administration. The changes are based on recommendations of a high-level advisory committee, with modifications by the Cabinet and White House staff members. They promise limited legal recognition—a supposed "amnesty"—for an estimated four million undocumented workers currently living in the U.S., while reinstating the old, discredited bracero ("guest worker") program and tightening enforcement of immigration laws. The plan contains five main points:

1) Temporary work permits for undocumented workers who can prove they have been in the U.S. since before January 1, 1980. These permits would be renewable at three-year intervals, at the government's discretion, for up to 10 years. At the end of 10 years, such "temporary" immigrants could apply for "permanent resident status." During the 10 year wait, immigrants would be prohibited from bringing their spouses or children to the U.S. They would have access to medical services, but not welfare, food stamps or unemployment benefits. (They would, however, have to pay taxes.) This policy would affect an estimated four million people.

Those immigrants (except Cubans and Haitians) who arrived in the U.S. after January 1, 1980, would remain "illegal" and subject to immediate deportation. Cuban and Haitian refugees who arrived prior to January 1, 1981, would be given work permits for five years, after which they may apply for permanent resident status.

2) A two-year experimental "guest worker" program to bring in 50,000 Mexican workers each year to take jobs which are difficult to fill from the U.S. labor force (in most cases because of low wages and intolerable working conditions). Unlike the old bracero program, which operated from 1942 to 1964, this program would allow workers access to public schools and hospitals. But they would be denied food stamps, welfare or unemployment benefits.

3) Stricter enforcement of current immigration laws, including a 13

percent increase in the budget of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), with a projected increase of 400,000 INS arrests each year. Also proposed is a policy to turn back boats from Haiti and Cuba carrying undocumented immigrants to the U.S. In addition, the proposal includes the construction of more prisons to hold arrested immigrants and a speedup in the deportation proceedings.

4) Civil and criminal penalties against employers who "knowingly hire four or more undocumented workers." The committee retreated from an earlier proposal for "counterfeit proof." Social Security cards, which would be a form of national ID card for employment purposes. The final report left this question open for Congress to decide, thus shielding Reagan from direct responsibility for this unpopular idea.

5) Issuance of 100,000 extra visas

per year, to be divided among all countries that have waiting lists for immigration to the U.S. The number of visas available to Mexicans will be increased to 50,000 a year.

## Proposals a boon to big business

With the exception of the "guest worker" aspect, this proposal is very similar to ex-President Carter's defeated "amnesty plan" of 1977. The same left-labor-Latino coalition which beat back Carter's fraudulent "amnesty" is now gearing up to stop Reagan's plan as well.

The Reagan administration is claiming that the changes represent a step forward for Mexican and immigrant workers. But, in fact, the proposal is a brutal attack on immigrant workers and a serious

threat to the U.S. labor movement. Not surprisingly, its biggest backers are the giant agribusiness capitalists of the Southwest and their political representatives. Republican senators from California, Nevada, Arizona and New Mexico and the governor of Texas have applauded the return of a "guest worker" system and want it quickly expanded to bring in as many as 600,000 Mexicans annually.

White House policy analyst Joseph Ghougassian admits that the earlier bracero program (on which the guest worker plan is modeled) was based on sheer exploitation. "It was really the Old South concept of those big cottonfields," said Ghougassian, as quoted in the *Christian Science Monitor*. "The employer has the upper hand throughout." Nevertheless, Ghougassian recommended that this program be brought back under a new name ("guest workers") in the hopes that "a sound public relations program could deal effectively with any initial opposition."

Like all such capitalist-sponsored temporary immigrant worker programs, it means significantly higher profits for the companies that use this oppressed labor pool. While the earlier braceros were largely limited to agricultural work, Reagan's "guest workers" will be placed in a variety of jobs, including urban manufacturing and services. This broadens the program's base of support among capitalists in the Southwest.

Labor leaders oppose the program, in part for its effect in lowering wages and working conditions in areas and industries where the "guest workers" are employed. Temporary immigrant workers can be forced to work at lower wages and in worse conditions because they know they face deportation if they lose their jobs. Attempts to organize or struggle against their bosses may result in immediate deportation.

## Mexico to be scapegoated

Much of Reagan's public motivation for the proposal has focused on the severe economic conditions in Mexico, where an unemployment

rate of over 30 percent has driven millions of workers to seek jobs in the U.S. It is estimated that one-quarter of Mexico's entire adult workforce is now working inside the U.S. and at least 800,000 Mexican immigrants (most undocumented) enter each year. The U.S., increasingly dependent on Mexico's oil, is willing to allow a controlled flow of immigration as a safety valve to prevent social upheaval in Mexico. At the same time, this line of reasoning covers the U.S. capitalists' back. When U.S. public opinion moves to protest decaying cities, fewer jobs and more social turmoil here, the capitalists can scapegoat Mexico and immigrant Mexicans as the source of all our problems. Reagan and his agribusiness friends prefer not to mention the high rate of profit to be made off the low-wage labor of immigrant Mexicans.

Currently, undocumented immigration into the U.S. is totally out of the government's control. The Census Bureau estimates that six million undocumented immigrants live in the U.S. Other estimates go as high as 12 million. Reagan's plan seeks to limit and control this immigration and, most importantly, to profit from it. If passed by Congress, it will mean government lists of undocumented workers, unprotected by U.S. law and subject to deportation at the government's discretion. It will mean more INS raids, more harassment at the border and no more Haitian and Cuban refugees. It will mean the return of semi-slavery for thousands of Mexican "guest workers" and probably some kind of national ID card for everyone. This plan is poison! It won't protect or benefit a single undocumented immigrant. Only a few big capitalists will gain.

Mexican, Cuban, Haitian and all other oppressed workers have a right to travel wherever they want to find jobs. After centuries of stealing the wealth and labor of other countries around the world, the imperialist U.S. government has no right to close the door in the face of these political and economic refugees. Workers don't need borders to separate them. They need jobs, housing, food and freedom. But as long as capitalism survives, those things will be nearly impossible to find for the majority of people in the world. □

## Death by Deportation

In July, the U.S. government decided not to accept the claims of 4,000 El Salvadoran refugees for political asylum status in this country. According to a government spokesperson, there is no serious danger to the lives of these refugees if they are returned to El Salvador! This despite the fact that the El Salvadoran people, especially youth, peasants and trade unionists, are being killed at the rate of 1,000 per month by the Salvadoran army and right-wing death squads.

Immediately after the government's decision, mass deportations began. Over 400 El Salvadorans were deported from Los Angeles in July. Another 200 were returned to Guatemala, which is itself in the early stages of a bloody civil war similar to that in El Salvador.

The average cost of these deportation flights, paid for by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), is a quarter million dollars per month. At the same time, the Los Angeles INS office, pleading poverty, recently disconnected its only telephone line offering public information on the whereabouts and condition of arrested refugees. When a group of volunteers offered to staff the information line at no cost, it was rejected. "We don't want these people going around passing out cards," explained one INS official in the office. The "cards" that concerned him are simple instructions on immigrant rights which advise arrested immigrants to demand a lawyer and a formal deportation hearing, but to otherwise remain silent. Most undocumented immigrants are unaware that they have even these limited rights. If no legal protest is entered, a Salvadoran refugee arrested at the border in the morning can be on a plane back to El Salvador by 7:00 that night. This is the kind of speedy "justice" the INS prefers.

The Los Angeles INS office was picketed July 23 to protest these policies and to demand political asylum for all Salvadoran refugees. Participants in the demonstration included supporters of CISPEs, the RSL, and several independent activists. □

## Cops in Meriden

## Thru

Three anti-Klan demonstrators were arrested July 11 in Meriden, Connecticut, as over 100 people gathered to stop the Klan rally in that town in two months.

The Klan canceled its march but 21 robed men in five-minute rallies on the American Legion hall. The cops, armed with rifles, and dogs, protected the town. The police force included 100 militia troops as well as a team.

One of those arrested was Steve Rose, an RSL member who went to Meriden as a contingent from the 100 Anti-Klan Network.

MERIDEN First became a target for Klan organizers on March 21. On that day, Bill Wilkinson's Knights of the Ku Klux Klan held a rally in support of duty white Meriden police who had shot and killed a Black man suspected of shoplifting. The rally drew about 200 onlookers sympathetic to the Klan, but was disrupted by an even larger number of anti-Klan demonstrators, including a sizable contingent from Progressive Labor Party/International Committee Against Racism (PLP/InCAR).

After the rally, as the Klan attempted to walk to their waiting cars, all hell broke loose. The crowd of anti-racists, by this time

## Can South Tear

AUGUST 7—A campaign team from white-ruled South Carolina won a major victory in the election of Edward Koch, the arrogant mayor of New York, after he canceled his okay for the use of the Springboks, to use the city's own stadium on September 10. Koch's announcement came in the face of broad-based opposition against the Springboks' use of the stadium by the Stop the Apartheid Rugby Tour (SART) coalition. RSL is a member organization.

IN recent years the South government has attempted

## Cops in Meriden, Connecticut, Meet Klan Demands

# Three Anti-Racists Arrested at KKK Rally

Three anti-Klan demonstrators were arrested July 11 in Meriden, Connecticut, as over 100 anti-racists gathered to stop the second KKK rally in that town in the last six months.

The Klan canceled its planned march but 21 robed members held a five-minute rally on the steps of the American Legion hall. Nearly 200 cops, armed with rifles, riot batons and dogs, protected the Klan rally. The police force included Pennsylvania troopers as well as a SWAT team.

One of those arrested on July 11 was Steve Rose, an RSL supporter who went to Meriden as part of a contingent from the New York Anti-Klan Network.

MERIDEN first became a public target for Klan organizing last March 21. On that day, members of Bill Wilkinson's Knights of the Invisible Empire of the Ku Klux Klan held a rally in support of an off-duty white Meriden policeman who had shot and killed a Black man suspected of shoplifting. The rally drew about 200 onlookers sympathetic to the Klan, but was disrupted by an even larger number of anti-Klan demonstrators, including a sizable contingent from Progressive Labor Party/International Committee Against Racism (PLP/InCAR).

After the rally, as the Klan attempted to walk to their waiting cars, all hell broke loose. The crowd of anti-racists, by this

time almost entirely made up of Black, Latin and white Meriden residents without any organizational affiliation, chanted: "Death to the Klan" and pelted the fascists with rocks, bottles and cans. Eight Klan members and 16 cops were injured.

Local police have been bitter about the March events and have been especially vocal about the failure of state police to give them assistance. Meanwhile, individual state troopers let it be known that they had been more than ready to mix it up with the anti-Klan crowd. The resulting stink was big enough that Governor William O'Neill kicked the head of the state troopers upstairs and gave day-to-day leadership of the force to someone new.

With this as the background, the Klan held its rally July 11 to demand that warrants be issued against anti-racists active on March 21.

**THE Meriden police wasted little time in carrying out the arrests the**



State police drag RSL supporter Steve Rose to jail.

Klan was demanding. On July 11 they used any pretext to handcuff and cart away militants. This should be no surprise—informed Meriden sources say there are a number of Klansmen on the police force.

Just under 100 people sympathetic to the Klan gathered at the rally site on the morning of the rally; 60 or so people hostile to the Klan gathered at a gas station on an opposite corner. The Klan came out of an alley and the two crowds watched while 30-35 people from PLP/InCAR, who had arrived a few minutes earlier and had set up their own gathering point, chanted and threw stuff at the racists. The

entire area was surrounded by cops, some with rifles positioned on the nearby roofs.

**THE New York Anti-Klan Network** group and supporters of the Committee for Education in Defense Against Racism of New Haven joined the crowd of anti-fascists at the gas station and helped lead chants against the Klan and the cops. The Klan soon retreated and the cops forced the two gatherings of anti-racists to leave the area. At this point, two PLP/InCAR supporters, Heidi Winston and Keith Hersh, and RSL supporter Steve Rose were arrested. All were charged with inciting to riot. Rose appeared in court for

arraignment on August 5. Minutes after he arrived at the courthouse, Meriden police re-arrested him in the hallway. The Klan's demands were now fully satisfied: Rose was charged with inciting to riot and reckless endangerment during the events of March 21. Later that day Rose was arraigned on all three charges and a pre-trial hearing was set for September 10. As we go to press, we do not know whether Winston and Hersh have also been hit with additional charges.

Legal expenses for Rose's defense are already high. Those who are able to should send contributions to: **Rod Miller, Box 1288, GPO, New York, NY 10116.** □

## 'Get the Guy in the Red Shirt'

The night before Steve Rose's first court appearance (and re-arrest) he spoke to the **Torch/La Antorcha** about the July 11 anti-Klan demonstration in Meriden.

**Why did you go to the Meriden demonstration?**

Well, I used to live in Connecticut. I was active in the gay movement there, was a founding member of the Connecticut Gay Task Force. I feel very strongly about racism and feel the Klan is an enemy of not only racial minorities but of working people and gays, and that any opportunity to demonstrate and stop the Klan is important. I've been very politically active in New York City and have been involved in the anti-Klan movement in New York.

**What were you doing just before you were arrested?**

We had been chanting against the Klan in the town square, and the police forced us to march down the street, around a corner and into a side street. At that point they wouldn't let us march any further. We were standing around and I was speaking to a woman, a Latina, from Meriden. My mouth was dry from

chanting, you see, and I reached into my shoulder bag for some gum. I was standing at the back of the crowd just talking. The police had to go through a crowd of people to reach me.

**Why do you think you were arrested?**

Well, a person from the New York Anti-Klan Network said she saw the police point me out a number of times as I was walking down the street. And just before I was arrested she heard the police say: "Get the guy in the red shirt." So, I think they recognized me from the March 21 demonstration, which I was at. The reason the Klan was demonstrating, after all, was to demand arrest of people from the March rally.

**What has been the reaction from people you know back in New York, people at work, etc.?**

People at work—I'm a nurse at Harlem Hospital—have been very supportive. They were very surprised that the Klan was in Connecticut. One co-worker, when she heard what happened, said to me: "Honey, they don't want to let no one fight back." □

# Campaign Against South African Rugby Team Scores Victory

**AUGUST 7**—A campaign against the planned U.S. tour of a rugby team from white-ruled South Africa won a major victory today. Edward Koch, the arrogantly racist mayor of New York, ate crow and canceled his okay for the team, called the Springboks, to use a city-owned stadium on September 26. Koch's announcement came in the face of broad-based organizing against the Springboks' use of the stadium by the Stop the Apartheid Rugby Tour (SART) coalition. The RSL is a member organization of SART.

In recent years the South African government has attempted to use

tours of sports teams, many of them integrated with a token Black person or two, as a public relations tool to show that "South Africa is changing." The Springboks, for instance, include a coach and a player who are classified as "Coloured." But all over the world, anti-apartheid activists have turned the tables and used the tours as occasions to expose and protest the racist apartheid system of South Africa.

Koch reversed himself after getting a report from his police chief on massive demonstrations in New Zealand, where the Springboks are

currently playing. Over 70,000 people demonstrated at one game, over 50,000 at another, with crowds battling the police dozens of times. Demonstrators have broken into the offices of both the New Zealand Rugby Union and New Zealand Air, which is flying the team around. The demonstrations have forced cancellation of at least one game, and provoked a minor crisis in the government.

**IN LIGHT** of these events and the good response SART was getting in its organizing for demonstrations in New York, Police Commissioner Robert McGuire told Koch he

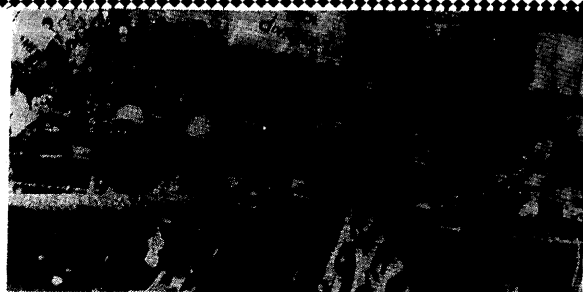
needed at least 2,000 cops and a budget of \$400,000 to protect the representatives of racism—and even then there was a "strong possibility" that the rugby game would be disrupted and forced to stop.

In making his decision, Koch was probably not unmindful that SART was becoming a focal point for a wide variety of anti-Koch forces in the Black community. There is a seething hatred of Koch in New York and by giving the okay to the South African team Koch provided a way the hatred could be focused and start a fire. The withdrawal of the stadium permit, then, while

definitely a victory for anti-apartheid forces, must also be seen as an astute political move by Koch.

The Springboks have announced they are looking for another East Coast site, including possibly a private site in New York, for their September 26 game. SART is watching developments closely.

**IN addition, the team is scheduled to play in Chicago on September 19 and in Albany, New York, on September 22.** Initial planning for protests in Chicago is now underway; readers can call or write the Chicago RSL branch for details as they are worked out. □



Anti-apartheid demonstrators in New Zealand broke through fence and forced cancellation of rugby game with Springboks.



## Abu Ein extradition fight continues

On August 21, it will be two years since the FBI arrested Ziad Abu Ein, a 22-year-old Palestinian, on the basis of dubious Israeli claims that he planted a bomb in an Israeli town. Abu Ein has been held without bail ever since his arrest while he fights extradition to Israel. This fall, the Supreme Court is expected to announce whether they will hear his appeal of the decisions by a federal magistrate and federal district and appeals courts that his extradition should be carried out.

The arrest warrant for Abu Ein is based on a confession made by a Yamil Yassin while he was imprisoned in an Israeli jail. The confession states that Yassin recruited Abu Ein to Al Fatah, a prominent faction of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), on May 11, 1979. Three days later, it states, Yassin assigned Abu Ein to bomb a crowded street in Tiberias and gave him the necessary explosives along with a few minutes' instruction. But Yassin has now twice repudiated this confession, saying he only named Abu Ein because he was in Chicago, safe, Yassin figured, from the Israeli authorities. On top of this, the confession is written in Hebrew, which Yassin doesn't understand, and is signed in Arabic. To refute this "confession" further, Abu Ein has 14 separate affidavits stating he was 120 miles from Tiberias, in his home town of Ramallah, on May 14. The day was particularly memorable to Abu Ein's family and friends because Abu Ein's sister-in-law gave birth to a baby.

The kind of evidence being used against Abu Ein is similar to that presented in other extradition requests that have been denied by U.S. courts for lack of showing "probable cause." But so far, the political weight and importance of Israel has been more important to the judges than the facts of the case. Abu Ein's lawyers are also arguing that if it is true he is a member of Fatah, and did the bombing under its instructions, then it was a political act and therefore not covered by the Israeli-U.S. extradition treaty. In a similar case, a U.S. judge in California ruled in May of 1979 that since the Irish Republican Army (IRA) was a political organization engaged in a military campaign, an IRA supporter the British wanted for bombing was wanted for a political crime and thus not extraditable. There has been some speculation that the Abu Ein case has been pursued with extra vigor by the Justice and State departments in the hopes of overturning this precedent in a higher court.

## Plowshares 8 sentenced

On July 28, Judge Samuel Salus of Montgomery County (Pennsylvania) Court of Common Pleas sentenced eight pacifist anti-war/anti-nuke activists to prison for their protest action last year at General Electric's arms plant in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania. In the early morning of September 9, 1980, the eight, who are now known as the Plowshares 8, walked past a guard at the factory gate and entered the plant. Once inside, several of them beat two nuclear missile nose cones with hammers, apparently inflicting significant damage. Meanwhile, others poured bottles of their own blood on blueprints lying about the shop. Involved in the King of Prussia action were Father Daniel and Philip Berrigan, Dean Hammer, Father Carl Kabat, Elmer Maas, Sister Anne Montgomery, Molly Rush and John Schuchardt.

The Plowshares 8 are all members of a radical Roman Catholic tendency that became well known during the 1960s and early '70s. The group gets its name from the Biblical injunction to "beat swords into plowshares." In a statement explaining their action, the Plowshares 8 say, in part, that "in confronting GE we choose to obey God's law of life, rather than a corporate summons to death." The radical Catholics, including several of the individuals who are part of the Plowshares 8, were a prominent part of the anti-Vietnam War movement. The most famous action by this trend was that of the Catonsville 9, who destroyed draft board records by dousing them with blood. On another occasion, a group called the M-14 (Milwaukee 14) napalmed draft board files.

Judge Salus, who also presided at the Plowshares 8 trial that ended last March 6 with convictions on burglary, criminal conspiracy and criminal mischief, doled out stiff sentences. The Berrigan brothers, Schuchardt and Kabat were sentenced to three to 10 years in prison, Rush to two to five years and Hammer, Maas and Montgomery to one and a half to five years, all on the burglary convictions. All eight also received five to 10 years' probation for the criminal conspiracy conviction and suspended sentences for the criminal mischief. After sentencing, Salus revoked bail and the eight were led away by sheriff's officers.

A series of rulings by Salus during last spring's trial prevented the Plowshares 8 from presenting a political defense in the courtroom. However, a movie presenting such a statement was filmed during the trial. For information on it, or on the expected appeal of the prison sentences, write: Plowshares 8 Support Committee, 168 West 100th Street, New York, NY 10025.

# Rally at Michigan Prison Protests Lockdown

By LISA GASHEN

Since the rebellions in Jackson prison in Michigan last May, the prison has been on lockdown. Except for short and infrequent periods of time, prisoners are locked in their cells. There are no classes and no religious services, and only occasional cold water showers and an occasional meal eaten out of the cell. Toilets that have gotten blocked are not fixed. Roaches have been mixed in with food. Visitation rights are severely restricted.

In addition, the guards are trying to get back at prisoners through beatings and throwing people in the hole. The hole is full of blood.

**AT IONIA, where prisoners also rose up in May, conditions are just as bad and there have been threats from guards on prisoners' lives.**

On July 11, 80 people marched through Jackson to the prison to demand an end to the lockdown and complete information about the charges related to the rebellions. The march was initiated by the Coalition to End Police Brutality of Battle Creek, Michigan. Other groups and individuals participated from several cities in Michigan and Ohio. They included the Lesbian/Gay Community Services of Ann Arbor, the Republic of New Afrika, Peoples Anti-War Mobilization, the Revolutionary Workers League and the Revolutionary Socialist League.

When the march reached the prison, we demanded to speak to the warden. His representatives came out to tell us the lockdown was slowly being lifted—that is,



RSL contingent at demonstration outside Jackson prison.

men were allowed showers. When questioned further they admitted these showers were once a week. When questioned about their own lives, the representatives refused to answer if they took a shower more than once a week.

**THESE officials kept repeating "we are doing everything possible to secure the safety of the inmates and employees," including rebuilding housing and completely dividing the north complex off from the rest of the prison. Prisoners at Ionia have been told that if they are transferred to the north complex at Jackson they will lose their lives. Of the \$9 million that has been appropriated for repair, \$5 million is going to pay the guards overtime. Soon after this exchange with the**

officials, prisoners inside saw the demonstration. Through the barbed wire fence, parking lot and prison walls, we could hear them yelling and banging. We got as close as we could and yelled back. In the distance a small group of Black and white prisoners on the minimum security prison farm stood with raised fists. Prisoners have written saying the demonstration has given them hope.

Charges are coming down against prisoners for the rebellion and a defense is being put together. This was the first time these groups have worked together and the demonstration was an important step forward. More publicity, demonstrations and other organizing are being planned. □

## Westchester Jail Explodes

**OVERCROWDING** at New York's city and state prisons is reaching crisis proportions. Figures released on July 29 show that New York state prisons now hold 23,700 prisoners, up 3,000 from a year ago and 1,000 over capacity. New York City prisons hold 9,546 prisoners in a system with a maximum capacity of 8,700. In the words of Kevin McNiff, chairman of the State Commission of Corrections: "The general trend all over the state is to put people in jail, and for real minor offenses."

This severe overcrowding was the cause of a rebellion on July 10 at Westchester County Jail in Valhalla, New York. New York county and city jails hold prisoners doing less than a year's time, as well as arrested persons awaiting trial. Westchester has a capacity of 263, but held over 400 prisoners. Many prisoners were forced to sleep on cots in the dayroom or in the basement of the women's unit. Tension among prisoners had been high for some time prior to the rebellion; fights were common, there were hunger strikes, and the keepers had cut back recreation and visiting

time. Guard brutality against prisoners was also increasing. One guard reportedly broke a prisoner's arm after a captain told him "to keep clicking the wrist until you hear the full combination."

On July 10 it all exploded. The prisoners staged a spontaneous rebellion—there was no identifiable leadership—to protest the overcrowding and the extreme heat. The demands focused on establishing a bail review system to allow more prisoners awaiting trial to be on the streets instead of in jail. The prisoners held the prison for two days and did an estimated \$500,000 in damages.

The state called out more than 400 cops, armed with shotguns and using guard dogs. Ninety cops were from the Corrections Emergency Response Team (CERT), the same unit used at Attica. The prisoners surrendered peacefully after negotiations with Westchester County District Attorney Carl Vergari, who agreed to meet some of the prisoners' demands. The CERT team then entered the prison and reportedly launched a savage attack on the

prisoners, stripping them and making them "run the gauntlet" and destroying personal property in a search for supposed contraband.

On July 16, three state Supreme Court judges set up court in the jail's gym to begin bail review. On the first day, 27 prisoners either had bail set for the first time or had their existing bail lowered. The hearings were to continue for another week. Such hearings will take place on a monthly basis from now on as part of the agreement reached with the prisoners.

**IN a related development, on July 31, Judge Morris Lasker in New York City ordered that 500 prisoners currently being held pending trial or on short (less than one year) sentences at Rikers' Island be transferred to state custody to eliminate overcrowding at Rikers' Island. State officials had admitted that the prisoners were "their responsibility" but claimed there was no room in the state prisons for them. Benjamin Ward, New York City Commissioner of Corrections, termed Lasker's decision a matter of deciding "where the next riot will take place." □**

Over the weekend of members and supporters country, and a delegation tionary Marxist League Indies, sister organizat gathered at a retreat on our fifth national convention opened with a presentation by comrade Patsy C on the state of the class s the course of the week discussed RSL tasks and coming period, as well Black liberation and Mex in the Southwest. The weekend came on Su Thomas, on behalf of the Committee, and Ron Tab RSL Political Committe tion and then declaratio two tendencies into a s centralist international te Below we are printi ments from the conventi interest to our readers: fusion of the RML/RSL; RSL Tasks and Persp outlining our view of the n list or social democrati ers in Jamaica that was

## \*\*\*\*\* Statement

Today, the capitalist production, galloping social instability. Today, to protect its wage sla In order just to survi the world have been f conditions of existence toiling masses have re

In spite of these her misleaders of the wor otherwise frustrated the through socialist revol historical crisis of m leadership."

The RML/RSL is ful the construction of an can lead the working an emancipation.

Based on this convicti and our revolutionary Jamaica, the RML and single democratic cent revolutionary traditions first major step toward party—the World Part

—Adopted at the Fif  
June 21, 1981

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## Tasks and

... IN the coming period, and places, and in different risings of workers and people will definitely occur. started to happen: Iran, Ni South Africa and El Salvado these will not go away; on t will occur with increasing f over, such uprisings will not so-called semi-developed oped countries. There will mass movements, general st the imperialist countries— far more massive than anyt ries have experienced in de

The question that is posed be the outcome of these strug uprisings be isolated and disc will allow the ruling class struggles and subject the wo oppressed people to mass r these movements remain und reformist social democrats prevented from building strength and revolutiona needed to win? Will they c control of state-capitalist which either play the sam reformists or utilize the move

# Prison own



Prison prison.

Prisoners inside saw the... Through the... fence, parking lot and... we could hear them... banging. We got as... could and yelled back... a small group of... white prisoners on the... security prison farm... raised fists. Prisoners... saying the demonstra-... ven them hope... are coming down against... or the rebellion and a... being put together. This... t time these groups have... together and the demon-... an important step... fore publicity, demon-... d other organizing are... ed. □

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ripping them and mak-... run the gauntlet" and... personal property in a... opposed contraband... 6, three state Supreme... s set up court in the... begin bail review. On... 27 prisoners either had... the first time or had... g bail lowered. The... re to continue for... k. Such hearings will... a monthly basis from... part of the agreement... the prisoners... d development, on July... forris Lasker in New... dered that 500 prison-... being held pending... rt (less than one year)... Rikers' Island be trans-... e custody to eliminate... at Rikers' Island... had admitted that the... re "their responsibility... there was no room... : prisons for them... ard, New York City... er of Corrections... er's decision a matter... "where the next riot... ce." □

Over the weekend of June 19-21, RSL members and supporters from around the country, and a delegation from the Revolutionary Marxist League of Jamaica, West Indies, sister organization to the RSL, gathered at a retreat on the East Coast for our fifth national convention. The convention opened with a presentation and slide show by comrade Patsy Christie of the RML on the state of the class struggle there. Over the course of the weekend, delegates also discussed RSL tasks and perspectives for the coming period, as well as resolutions on Black liberation and Mexicans and Chicanos in the Southwest. The high point of the weekend came on Sunday, when Jon Thomas, on behalf of the RML Executive Committee, and Ron Taber, on behalf of the RSL Political Committee, presented a motion and then declaration of fusion of our two tendencies into a single, democratic-centralist international tendency.

Below we are printing several documents from the convention that might be of interest to our readers: the statement of fusion of the RML/RSL; an excerpt from the RSL Tasks and Perspectives document, outlining our view of the nature and purpose of the revolutionary party, in opposition to a Stalinist or social democratic approach; and a message of solidarity to striking Housecraft workers in Jamaica that was passed unanimously by the convention.

### \*\*\*\*\* Statement of Fusion of the RML/RSL \*\*\*\*\*

Today, the capitalist order worldwide is again experiencing crisis conditions—falling production, galloping inflation, large scale unemployment, trade wars, political and social instability. Today, this system of capitalist bondage is everywhere plainly unable to protect its wage slaves from starvation and total poverty.

In order just to survive as human beings, working and oppressed people throughout the world have been forced to launch tremendous struggles against their miserable conditions of existence. From Iran to El Salvador, from Nicaragua to Poland, the toiling masses have rebelled, revolted and resisted their exploiters.

In spite of these heroic and courageous actions by the working people, the existing misleaders of the workers' movement have everywhere held back, side-tracked or otherwise frustrated the workers' struggle from achieving final victory—total liberation through socialist revolution. Time after time it is tragically demonstrated that: "The historical crisis of mankind is now reduced to the crisis of the revolutionary leadership."

The RML/RSL is fully committed to the resolution of this leadership crisis through the construction of an international revolutionary communist workers' party, which can lead the working and oppressed people of the world in a successful struggle for their emancipation.

Based on this conviction, our common world-view and history of close collaboration, and our revolutionary intervention in the working class struggles in the U.S. and Jamaica, the RML and RSL now declare the fusion of our two organizations into a single democratic centralist, international revolutionary tendency resting on the revolutionary traditions of Marxism, Leninism and Trotskyism. We project this as the first major step toward the construction of an international revolutionary workers' party—the World Party of Socialist Revolution.

—Adopted at the Fifth National Convention of the Revolutionary Socialist League  
June 21, 1981

### Excerpts From the Tasks and Perspectives Document

... IN the coming period, in different times and places, and in different forms, mass uprisings of workers and other oppressed people will definitely occur. This has already started to happen: Iran, Nicaragua, Poland, South Africa and El Salvador. Struggles like these will not go away; on the contrary, they will occur with increasing frequency. Moreover, such uprisings will not just occur in the so-called semi-developed and underdeveloped countries. There will also be upsurges, mass movements, general strikes and riots in the imperialist countries—social upheavals far more massive than anything these countries have experienced in decades.

The question that is posed is: What will be the outcome of these struggles? Will these uprisings be isolated and disorganized, which will allow the ruling class to smash the struggles and subject the workers and other oppressed people to mass repression? Will these movements remain under the control of reformist social democrats and thus be prevented from building the militancy, strength and revolutionary orientation needed to win? Will they come under the control of state-capitalist organizations which either play the same role as the reformists or utilize the movements to create

state-capitalist societies? Or will mass movements be organized and united under revolutionary working class leadership and lead to successful working class revolutions? The point is that mass movements and uprisings by themselves are not enough. In Iran, for example, a popular uprising led to the seizure of political power by an unstable coalition of Islamic reactionaries and Western-style pro-capitalist moderates who, while fighting among themselves, are trying to eliminate the workers' committees (shoras) and other mass institutions, and consolidate a bourgeois state....

IN the coming years, world capitalism will experience a deep, long-term, devastating global crisis, which will involve deep economic stagnation and social upheavals, including mass fascist movements and proletarian uprisings. Will the result of all this be fascist dictatorships, leading to a new world war and total destruction? State-capitalist transformations that lead to the same end? The re-establishment of the present state of affairs at the price of famine, mass economic dislocation and destruction, but short of a world war? Or an international socialist revolution that puts all the capitalist garbage behind us and puts us on the road to a truly

## RML/Jamaica and RSL/U.S. Launch Joint International Tendency

humane, cooperative society?

In our view, which of these outcomes actually comes to pass depends first and foremost on whether or not there are revolutionary working class parties that can provide political leadership to the broader layers of people in struggle and fight to prevent the movements/upsurges from coming or staying under the control of those forces that are enemies of the socialist revolution. Of course, the existence of such organizations does not guarantee victory. But if no organization of working class revolutionaries exists, the chance of mass upheavals leading to the victory of workers and oppressed people rather than to the victory of the fascists, state capitalists and other pro-capitalist forces will be greatly reduced if not eliminated.

The role of such a party is not to use any and all means to seize power for itself, behind the backs of the workers and oppressed people, and establish a one-party dictatorship that outlaws every other party, suppresses workers' councils and other mass organizations and does away with political rights for the workers, etc. This is a travesty of the Marxist-Leninist program that Stalinists (and for different purposes, the social democrats and bourgeois ideologues) have tried to palm off as the real thing.

THE true purpose of a revolutionary party is to provide clear leadership to broader layers of workers and other oppressed people. Its role will be to work within the workers' councils, factory committees and other mass, democratic organizations to increase the class consciousness, militancy and unity of the working class, to strengthen the mass institutions of the revolution, and lead the workers forward in the total overthrow of the state and the ruling class. After the seizure of state power, the party would organize to preserve and defend the power of the organs of workers' rule, fighting within them for its policies, uniting with those forces whose conceptions and policies most approximate its own, to extend the revolution internationally, etc. In short, the role of the party is to do everything in its power to increase the possibility that working and oppressed people seize political power and rule-society directly.

If the party is to play such a role effectively, it has to be as strong, ideologically unified, trained, democratic and based in the working class as possible. Revolutions are intense things. They are chaotic and violent. They tear apart old institutions, loyalties and organizations. During such times organizations are subject to gigantic pressures, not the least of which is the violence and oppression of the forces defending the old order. Only an organization that is politically unified, strong, decisive, organizationally efficient and firmly rooted in the working class, can survive and grow as an effective organization in revolutionary conditions.

THIS type of party must, to the greatest degree possible, be constructed before society is fully in the throes of a real crisis. A firm, politically and organizationally unified

organization can grow rapidly in periods of social crisis and mass upheaval without losing too much of its political and organizational solidarity. But this is not the case with a weak and undisciplined organization, which will fly apart in a revolutionary situation.

In other words, a party can grow in struggle, but it cannot be built from scratch in struggle. If we wait until mass struggle breaks out to begin to build a strong, democratic-centralist organization based in the working class, it will be too late; the organization will be diffuse rather than united, flabby rather than firm, based too much on middle class people and more moderate working class people rather than on the more oppressed and (when they struggle) more militant and revolutionary sections of the workers. If we want to have the party we need, in other words, we cannot do what many others advocate: build a mushy network/milieu of intellectuals who are united by little but platitudes and generalities, who say they are for a revolutionary party in the future but are not for a "sect" (meaning a small but truly revolutionary organization) in the present, and who proclaim the intention of "converting" their hodge-podge into a revolutionary party "when the time is ripe."

IN sum, we must begin the task of building such a party now by building an organization that, as closely as it can given its size and resources, approximates the revolutionary party we want. Only in this way can we all be trained to think and act like members of such a party. Only in this way can an organization be built that can grow into a truly revolutionary party as the struggle develops. □

### Message of Solidarity to the Striking Housecraft Workers

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

The Fifth National Convention of the Revolutionary Socialist League meeting here today extends to you our firm solidarity in your struggle for decent wages and working conditions and in the defense of those of your fellow workers who have been unjustly victimized by Housecraft Manufacturing management.

We have learned of your struggle in the pages of *Forward*, the newspaper of our sister organization, the Revolutionary Marxist League, and through a report given to the convention by our comrade Patsy Christie.

Here in the U.S., we are active in many struggles by working people to win justice and dignity from the brutally exploitative capitalist class. We have been particularly involved in the struggles of garment workers who toil in sweatshops at low wages and miserable working conditions—often without any union rights or recognition. The heroic struggles of garment workers, whether in Los Angeles, New York or Kingston, are part of the battle by the entire international working class and all oppressed people to win socialism and freedom.

We in the Revolutionary Socialist League, U.S., along with our comrades in the Revolutionary Marxist League, Jamaica, stand by you in your determined struggle for what rightly belongs to you. As part of our support we are today, as we adopt this resolution, taking up a collection to provide you with whatever funds we can. We hope that this money will be helpful to you in your struggle.

Victory to the striking  
Housecraft Manufacturing workers!  
Victory to the worldwide struggle  
for socialism and freedom!  
(Adopted unanimously; \$200 collected.)

# Postal Workers Take Beating in New Contract

By a POSTAL WORKER  
CORRESPONDENT

As we go to press, members of the two major unions of U.S. postal workers are voting on one of their worst contract settlements in years. Final agreement was reached late in

the afternoon of July 21. This was about 16 hours after the union leadership "stopped the clock," ignored union constitutional mandates of "No Contract, No Work," and refused to call a strike.

Ratification by members of the American Postal Workers Union

(APWU) and the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) seems likely, although major opposition to the sellout has developed within the bureaucracy of the APWU. Two smaller postal unions, the Mailhandlers Division of the Laborers union, and the National Rural Letter Carriers Association, sent most of their contracts to arbitration.

For rank and file postal workers, the contract is a disaster. Base pay will rise only a tiny 1.5 percent a year for the next three years. In addition, postal workers will get yearly 1.5 percent bonuses, but

these will not become part of base pay. The formula for the cost-of-living allowance (COLA) will remain the same, compensating postal workers only 0.7 percent for every 1 percent rise in prices.

The contract also provides no substantial improvements in work rules or the grievance procedure to protect workers from harassment. It also recognizes, for the first time, the concept of "productivity bonuses." Moreover, the settlement fails to gain amnesty for the 119 postal workers still fired from the 1978 contract struggle.

Perhaps the most insidious part

of the contract is the exclusion of \$3,600 a year of past COLA payments from base pay until October 1984. This exclusion will throw the pension fund into a serious financial crisis. The fund will lose up to \$760 million because contributions to the fund are calculated on base pay, which will be virtually frozen, while pension claims will continue to rise much faster.

This exclusion can only lead to massive attacks on all retirees. Moreover, the exclusion lasts until after the next round of bargaining in 1984; management can therefore easily reopen the whole question at that time.

## Workers Fight Harassment at NY's Cathedral Station

In April a worker wrote to the *Torch/La Antorcha* about harassment at Cathedral Post Office in New York. Since then the harassment has gotten worse, but the workers have begun to organize.

What set things off was an incident in June. At that time station superintendent Nolan and his assistant, Blumen, took a carrier's radio from an admittedly private box in a building where he delivered mail. Several months earlier the New York postmaster had issued a directive banning most workers from playing or possessing radios at work. However, when Nolan and Blumen took the radio, the carrier, Robert Dudley, was neither playing nor possessing it. In fact, he was back at the station sorting mail!

Nolan and Blumen demanded that Dudley write a statement admitting it was his radio. Otherwise, Nolan and Blumen said, they would send the radio downtown to be auctioned off with other unclaimed postal merchandise.

Dudley would have none of this garbage. Instead of writing the statement, he sued Nolan and Blumen in Small Claims Court to get back his radio. So far there have been three hearings. It is not clear how the court will finally rule, but the case has served as a spark to organize the workers. At the last hearing five other workers—clerks, carriers and mailhandlers—went to the court to support Dudley. Although small, this can be an important first step in the workers organizing to defend themselves against harassment and other management attacks.

It can also be a first step to strengthen our unions. Our unions should be strong enough so that workers don't have to use the courts in the first place. If rank and file workers controlled our unions, we would be much better able to defend ourselves. □



NALC President Vincent Sombrotto and Postmaster General William Bölger celebrate new pact.

## Union leaders add to the problem

The union leaders are trying to paint this sellout as a "good contract." They point to the current economic crisis, the right-wing political climate, and the demoralized mood of most of the workforce and claim that the settlement was the best they could get.

Although many workers are disoriented by the wave of capitalist economic, political and social attacks, the union bureaucracy itself disorganized postal workers even more. For example, Moe Biller and Vincent Sombrotto, the presidents of the APWU and NALC, have repeatedly threatened strikes for years. However, this year they changed the official union slogan of "No Contract, No Work" to a timid and empty "Postal Solidar- (Continued on page 16)

## LABOR IN STRUGGLE

### Baseball strike settled

Major league baseball resumed on August 10 following an unprecedented 50-day midseason strike lasting from June 12 to July 31. Many working people who are baseball fans are incorrectly blaming the players as well as the owners for the strike. The highly-publicized contracts won by free agents in recent years have misled these fans about the real issues of the walkout.

Until a few years ago, professional ballplayers were totally owned by their clubs and had no control over their careers. In the 1970s, court suits gave players the right to sell their skills on the open market for the first time. Meanwhile, the Major League Players Association (MLPA) won substantial gains for the players, the majority of whom last less than five years in the majors. These gains included higher minimum salaries and the right to send contract disputes into arbitration. Then in 1976, the union and the owners reached agreement on a free agency system that allowed players who had been with the same club for at least six years to become free agents, and gave clubs that lost free agents compensation through the annual amateur draft.

However, the multi-millionaire Neanderthals who control professional baseball never really accepted either the existence of the MLPA or the right of individual ballplayers to have any control over their careers. Thus, during the contract negotiations last year, the owners demanded a new system that would have forced any club that signed a free agent to give up one of its major league players as well as an amateur draft choice in return. Since most clubs would be reluctant to part with a proven player, this system, if adopted, would have wrecked the free agency system and enabled the owners to regain their control over the players. When players opposed the plan, the issue was sent to a player-management committee for

further study. After the committee failed to work out a compromise, the owners unilaterally put their plan into effect in February. Further talks this spring got nowhere.

Throughout the negotiations the owners tried to gain public support for their stand by claiming that "inflated" player salaries were destroying baseball. But at the bargaining table they argued that the only issue was player compensation, not money, and refused to open their books to the union. This two-faced attitude blocked any serious negotiations and left the players with no choice but to strike.

In the final settlement, the players forced the owners to back down. The owners did win the right to be compensated for the loss of free agents with professional ballplayers (as well as amateurs) for the first time. But the settlement also allows owners who sign a free agent to protect up to 24 players on their major and minor league rosters. Since most clubs will willingly give up a fringe player or minor league prospect for an established star, the agreement maintains the essentials of the free agency system. Moreover, players will retain their salaries and pension rights for the games lost during the strike. Above all the owners failed to smash the MLPA, which has come out of the strike even stronger than before.

### Public workers strike in 3 states

In July public workers walked off their jobs in three major strikes around the country. In Minnesota, 14,000 AFSCME workers struck on July 20 to enforce demands for pay raises ranging from 10 to 15 percent, depending on their job categories. It was the first statewide public workers' strike in Minnesota history. The workers won legislation granting them the right to strike over contract demands last year. The strike ended on August 10 when

workers approved a settlement giving them wage hikes of 9 to 13 percent and a cost-of-living raise in 1983.

In Massachusetts, 22,000 state workers left their jobs on July 10 after receiving no paychecks for the previous two weeks. The state is facing a financial crisis following last year's passage of a referendum to drastically cut property taxes. Consequently, the state legislature was forced to freeze state funds when the fiscal year ended on July 1 while lawmakers wrangled over provisions of an emergency budget. Governor Edward King called out the National Guard in an effort to break the strike. But the workers refused to return to their jobs until their paychecks were mailed out on July 14.

City workers in Providence, Rhode Island, who staged a general strike from July 21 to August 4 did not fare so well. Mayor Vincent Cianci provoked the strike by cancelling guaranteed overtime pay for sewage and sanitation workers on July 20. The workers walked out as soon as they heard the announcement. Cianci immediately reacted by firing 44 sanitation workers and contracting garbage collection out to a private non-union firm, the United Sanitation Corporation. Leaders of Local 1033 of the Laborers International Union, which represents the city workers, responded by calling the general strike.

Although both the union and Cianci are claiming victory, the August 4 settlement actually contains only a few concessions to the workers. The union agreed not to challenge the city's contract with United Sanitation. In return, the company agreed to hire the 44 fired workers at the same wages they were paid by the city. The sewage workers lost their fight for guaranteed overtime pay. Although Local 1033 President Joseph Virgilio claimed they would get compensatory raises, Cianci has denied this. Finally, the union agreed to drop dozens of grievances in return for a promise of no reprisals against workers who joined the strike.

—PB

## 900 Demonstrations Warren

ON July 22, workers at the Chrysler Corporation Warren Tank Arsenal (UAW Local 1200) outside Detroit held a mass protest march in front of UAW international headquarters in Detroit. Workers called in sick or failed to report for work on that day to protest Chrysler's recent announcement of a 1 percent pay increase to their top engineers. And over 900 workers showed up at UAW Solidarity House to demand that Chrysler give back COLA to defense workers. They were also protesting the fact that some workers would be losing their jobs through layoffs or so-called attritional openings. This means that Chrysler can fire tank plant workers and fill their jobs with laid-off autoworkers.

The company and the union international have back-pedaled a little in response to the protest. Management canceled the engineers' payhike, while the international promised to renegotiate the language on attritional openings. At the same time, the company put 750 workers on notice of possible disciplinary action for the sickout. But sentiment for another walkout if management disciplines any workers is strong. So far, no workers have been disciplined.

THE tank plant makes a profit for Chrysler, so the workers there are overwhelmingly opposed to the wage concessions. But these workers are not eligible for TRA benefits when laid off. As a result, since it takes 10 years seniority to qualify for SUB, younger tank plant workers are hit very hard by layoffs. This is what makes the attritional openings such a hot issue. Chrysler can fire tank plant workers and replace them with very high seniority workers from closed auto plants. When future layoffs hit, these workers will hold on to their jobs as a result of companywide seniority, while tank plant workers will be on the street with no benefits.

## DEFEND JEARL WOOD

Markham, IL—On Tuesday, September 8, Jearl Wood goes on trial. Wood is a Black autoworker, 551 and a Vietnam veteran. He faced armed violence and aggravated battery in August 1980 shooting of Cecil Harrell, Motor Company's Chicago Assembly Plant. Harrell, who is white, had a job at Wood. On August 22, 1980, he sent Harrell a letter with a job on the Trim line office for his committeeman, and "You can't stay down here," Wood said. "Take your Black ass up to the Trim line." Harrell had Wood thrown out of the plant for a test as an excuse. Wood had no job after that. These events led to the formation of the Jearl Wood Defense Fund.

Thirty-five supporters of Jearl Wood are holding a picket line in front of the RSL—held a spirited picket line in front of the RSL on August 8, 1981, the day Wood's trial was held. This was the latest in a series of support actions for Wood. Wood was probably helped Wood win a three-year contract. Supporters of Jearl Wood are urged to participate. The picket line is held at the Markham Courthouse, 163rd and 164th Streets, Markham, Illinois. For more information, call: (312) 226-5915.



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## 900 Demonstrate Against Layoffs & Givebacks

# Warren Tank Workers Stage Sickout

ON July 22, workers at the Chrysler Corporation Warren Tank Arsenal (UAW Local 1200) outside Detroit held a mass protest march in front of UAW international headquarters in Detroit. Workers called in sick or failed to report for work on that day to protest Chrysler's recent announcement of a 12 percent pay increase to their top engineers. And over 900 workers showed up at UAW Solidarity House to demand that Chrysler give back COLA to defense workers. They were also protesting the fact that some workers would be losing their jobs through layoffs or so-called attritional openings. This means that Chrysler can fire tank plant workers and fill their jobs with laid-off autoworkers.

The company and the union international have back-pedaled a little in response to the protest. Management canceled the engineers' payhike, while the international promised to renegotiate the language on attritional openings. At the same time, the company put 750 workers on notice of possible disciplinary action for the sickout. But sentiment for another walkout if management disciplines any workers is strong. So far, no workers have been disciplined.

**THE tank plant makes a profit** for Chrysler, so the workers there are overwhelmingly opposed to the wage concessions. But these workers are not eligible for TRA benefits when laid off. As a result, since it takes 10 years seniority to qualify for SUB, younger tank plant workers are hit very hard by layoffs. This is what makes the attritional openings such a hot issue. Chrysler can fire tank plant workers and replace them with very high seniority workers from closed auto plants. When future layoffs hit, these workers will hold on to their jobs as a result of companywide seniority, while tank plant workers will be on the street with no benefits.



Warren Tank plant workers demand restoration of COLA benefits at July 22 protest.

**THE situation works to Chrysler's advantage** in several ways. First, the company has a large pool of workers ready to replace anyone the company wants to fire. The pool consists of older workers who tend to be less militant. Also, the company and the international union have plenty of room to use favoritism in selecting people to get into the tank plant. Second, the situation divides the workers in the plant. More conservative defense

workers blame the former autoworkers for "threatening their jobs" and want to keep them out of the plants. Many workers also feel that companywide seniority should not be used for layoffs, so that the workers new to the plant would be laid off first. The international union's refusal to fight the layoffs and plant closings has thus led to younger workers blaming older workers, defense workers blaming autoworkers, and so on.

The Solidarity House protest was organized by a rank and file caucus in Local 1200. This caucus grew out of the struggle against the concessions in the local. Local 1200 has voted against all three rounds of concessions, the last time by a 90 percent margin. The local organized a demonstration of 250 against the third round concessions in March. Tank plant workers also voted down their proposed local contract by a 2-1 margin. Unfortunately, much of the anti-concessions sentiment in the local has taken the form of wanting to separate defense workers from autoworkers. For example, an attempt was made to decertify the UAW after the third round of concessions. Even now, a lot of sentiment exists for a separate defense workers department of the UAW. Unfortunately, the leadership of the rank and file caucus in the local shares much of this narrow outlook, which in fact would isolate defense workers and weaken them. The president of Local 1200, James Coakley, was recently elected because of the workers' desire for more of a fight against the company and the international. Although the rank and file forced Coakley to passively sup-

port the protest, the local's leadership did not build the action and is blocking further struggles. For example, Coakley refused to call for a strike vote, even though 750 people were put on notice and the local has been without a local contract since 1979. He has also done nothing to reach out to other locals to strengthen the struggle.

Supporters of the Revolutionary Autoworkers Committee of the RSL have fought for a strategy of building unity between defense workers and autoworkers. They are organizing for the local to reach out to autoworker locals for support. And they have tried to link the struggles against the concessions to the fight to rehire workers fired for organizing against speedup occurring in the plant. These workers include Comer McNeil and Brian Detloff, a supporter of the RSL.

**THE protest of the Warren Tank** workers is one of a growing series of actions by Chrysler workers. Workers shut down a Belvidere, Illinois, plant for a day in June, protesting the elimination of COLA. Workers at the Vernor Tool and Die plant in Detroit also walked out for a day in early July to fight against Chrysler's subcontracting out their work. □

## Rehire McNeil and Detloff! Stop the Government Witch-Hunting!

The following is reprinted from the July Warren Tank Organizer, a rank and file newsletter.

In April, two workers were fired by the Chrysler Detroit Tank plant for organizing against the speedup

at the plant and health and safety problems brought on by this speedup. Comer McNeil and Brian Detloff were both discharged shortly after circulating a petition to the Local 1200 union leadership demanding action against the speedup. Management has been attempting to eliminate resistance to the speedup through a campaign of firings and intimidation which pose a serious threat to the strength and the very existence of the union itself. **Your support is urgently needed now to win back the jobs of McNeil and Detloff, and to back management down from its campaign of sowing divisions and intimidation.**

In early April, Chrysler management attempted to arbitrarily raise production on the hull line in department 4940 by 25 percent. Detloff and McNeil immediately began organizing against the speedup: calling in union officials, talking to workers on the line, circulating the petition. When management discovered this they first tried to break up the organizing by tell McNeil (a Black worker) that Detloff (a white worker) was a Ku Klux Klansman or a Nazi. McNeil didn't back off. Two days later he was fired for "refusing a direct order." The direct order was to do a job which his light duty medical exception ruled out. That is, he was set up.

**TWO weeks later, Detloff was** framed and fired for "sleeping on

the job." Management waited until just before lunch when no witnesses were around and Detloff was sitting down, then came in with four foremen and general foremen to act as "witnesses" and accused him of sleeping.

**CHRYSLER management wants** to get rid of Detloff because he is a militant and a socialist. (Detloff has been openly supporting the Revolutionary Autoworkers Committee and the Revolutionary Socialist League for the past several years.) Over the past few years, Detloff has been unjustly fired several times. Last year he was fired for distributing leaflets calling for resistance to the first round of contract concessions and layoffs being forced on Chrysler workers. Each time management's scheme has been exposed and they have been forced to back down. Management will be out to get anyone who resists concessions and speedup. This is especially true of socialists because of their record as militant unionists.

But more is involved this time than just another attempt by management to get Detloff. Chrysler management is gearing up for production of the XM-1. Tank production is one extremely profitable area for the Chrysler bosses. They are investing a lot of capital in new robots and n.c. machinery. And they need very much to have a passive workforce. So management is trying to run militant workers,

like McNeil and Detloff, out of the plant. They are beginning the campaign by attacking people who they think other workers won't defend—a Black worker in a largely white plant, and a socialist. **If management is successful in pushing these firings, they will have a green light for further harassment and firings of anyone who stands up for their rights, opposes concessions, etc.**

Chrysler management is getting help in pushing this campaign from the FBI. Two days before Detloff was fired, the FBI came into the

(Continued on page 16)

## DEFEND JEARL WOOD!

**Markham, IL**—On Tuesday, September 8, Jearl "Lucky" Wood goes on trial. Wood is a Black autoworker, a member of UAW Local 551 and a Vietnam veteran. He faces charges of attempted murder, armed violence and aggravated battery. These charges stem from the August 1980 shooting of Cecil Harrell, a general foreman at Ford Motor Company's Chicago Assembly plant.

Harrell, who is white, had a two-year history of harassing Wood. On August 22, 1980, he sent Wood to the office after Wood had trouble with a job on the Trim line. Wood waited one hour in the office for his committeeman, and then returned to his work area. "You can't stay down here," Wood reports Harrell as saying. "Take your Black ass up to the Trim office." Later in the evening Harrell had Wood thrown out of the plant, using a phoned Breatherizer test as an excuse. Wood had no union representation at the time he was thrown out. These events led up to the shooting.

Thirty-five supporters of Jearl Wood—including Vietnam Veterans Against the War and over a dozen members and friends of the RSL—held a spirited picket line in front of the courthouse on June 8, 1981, the day Wood's trial was originally scheduled to begin. As the latest in a series of support activities, the demonstration probably helped Wood win a three-month delay in court that day.

Supporters of Jearl Wood are having a picket line Tuesday, September 8, when Wood's trial resumes. All friends and supporters are urged to participate. The picket line is from 12 noon until 1 p.m. at the Markham Courthouse, 163rd and Kedzie. For more information, call: (312) 226-5915.

### "STOP GOVERNMENT UNION BUSTING"

A joint forum sponsored by:  
Communist Workers Party  
Revolutionary Socialist League  
Socialist Workers Party

#### Speakers:

- Brian Detloff,  
fired Chrysler Defense Plant worker
- Rodney Johnson,  
NASSCO 3 defendant
- A fired Lockheed worker

August 16th - 7:00 p.m.

Militant Labor Forum  
6404 Woodward Avenue  
Detroit, Michigan

For more information call: (313) 921-8398

# All Out for September 19 'Jobs and Justice' March!

(Continued from page 1)  
on the part of organized labor. At the same time the administration is slashing social service programs vital for the very survival of millions of unemployed and unorganized workers. Solidarity Day provides a focus for all who want to fight back against these wholesale attacks.

It is particularly noteworthy that the AFL-CIO is going beyond its own ranks and building a broad coalition around the march. Such action can help bridge the long-standing divisions between organized labor and the rest of the working class. The trade unions, which presently include less than one out of five workers in the U.S., represent a narrow section of the working class as a whole. In the past the AFL-CIO bureaucrats have ignored the needs of millions of specially oppressed Latin, Black and women workers, as well as white men, who are not in the trade unions. Now it is beginning to reach out to them. By doing so, it is creating a basis for uniting the trade unions with unemployed and unorganized workers in a common struggle against the capitalists.

However, we have real questions

as to how serious the AFL-CIO leadership is about organizing a militant mass campaign against the capitalist attacks. AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland called the Solidarity Day action only because he was forced to. It took months of pressure from rank and file workers and the lower levels of the AFL-CIO bureaucracy before Kirkland agreed to organize even a one-day protest against Reagan's policies.

To launch a serious fight, the AFL-CIO must follow up Solidarity Day with concrete measures to defend the unions and to extend its alliance with unorganized workers and the Latin and Black communities. For starters, the AFL-CIO could take the lead in organizing mass pickets to support PATCO and other striking workers. It could also mount a nationwide campaign to unionize unorganized workers. And it could mobilize demonstrations against the Klan, the Nazis and racist cops in alliance with Black and Latin communities. Steps like these would begin to build a militant mass movement of working people against the attacks coming down on them. But we doubt that conservative leaders like Kirkland or NAACP President

Benjamin Hooks or their allies have much interest in organizing this kind of struggle.

INSTEAD, we expect they will try to channel working class opposition to the capitalist attacks into an effort to rebuild the mass base of the Democratic Party. The Democrats need a peaceful, well-policed mass movement as a springboard for their campaigns in the 1982 congressional elections, and the 1984 presidential race. Kirkland and Hooks want to give them this movement. Kirkland himself stressed in a speech in June that one of the AFL-CIO's main objectives after Solidarity Day is to "do everything in our power before the next election to see that our friends are returned to Capitol Hill."

This strategy of rebuilding the Democratic Party can only lead working people into a dead end. The capitalist offensive is supported by all sections of the ruling class, including the Democratic Party. During the last session of Congress the Democrats competed with the Republicans to cut social programs in their so-called alternative budget. Then they competed with the Republicans all over again to see who could give more tax breaks to the



Hospital workers contingent in 1975 jobs march in Washington, D.C.

capitalists.

For all its promises to defend working people—and we will hear many of these in coming months—the Democratic Party remains a capitalist party, thoroughly loyal to the interests of the ruling class. Its main difference with the Republicans is a fear that Reagan's methods will lead to mass uprisings of the more oppressed workers, like

the recent uprisings in Britain. Working people have nothing to gain by placing their future in its hands. We can only defend ourselves against the capitalist attacks by building a powerful, mass social movement totally independent of the capitalist parties. The place to start building this movement is in Washington, D.C., on September 19. □

## San Jose Strike Wins Gains for Women in the Struggle for Equal Pay for Comparable Work

CITY workers in San Jose, California, recently won a major victory in the struggle of women workers to win equal pay for equal or comparable work. On July 14, after a 10-day strike, San Jose city officials agreed to upgrade the salaries of women whose jobs are not identical to traditionally "male" occupations, but which require the same levels of skill and responsibility. The strike marked the first time in U.S. history that any union has walked out over the issue of comparable pay for women.

The struggle for comparable pay began in 1978 when Mayor Janet Hayes, who was known as a feminist, commissioned a research firm to conduct a study of salaries paid to women and men working for the city. It concluded that women were paid anywhere from two to 20 percent less than men doing work requiring similar skills or responsibilities.

In negotiations for a new union contract last spring, leaders of AFSCME Local 101, which represents San Jose city workers, demanded \$3.2 million over the next four years to upgrade the salaries of women workers. Hayes insisted that the city could only pay \$1.4 million, and could not guarantee funds past 1982, when the city council comes up for re-election. She also rejected union demands over wage increases for all city workers.

AFSCME workers responded by striking on July 5, defying state

1979 Occupation	Usual weekly earnings		Women's earnings as percent of men's
	Women	Men	
Professional-technical	\$263	\$372	71
Managerial-administrative, except farm	235	399	59
Sales	159	311	51
Clerical	183	287	64
Craft	188	310	61
Operatives, except transport	159	253	63
Transport equipment operatives	186	277	67
Nonfarm laborers	159	213	75
Service	139	208	67
Farm	130	163	80

laws banning public worker strikes. The union reported that 1,500 out of the 2,000 it represents joined the strike. This would indicate enormous support for the union, as only 1,000 workers are actually AFSCME workers. But city officials claimed that only 400 workers walked out. Two days later the city council threatened to fire the strikers.

Then on July 12, the council rejected a compromise settlement worked out by its own chief negotiator. Finally on July 14 workers voted by a wide margin to accept a settlement that included the \$1.4 million originally offered to upgrade women's wages, plus pay raises of 7.5 percent in 1981 and 8 percent in 1982 and amnesty for the strikers.

Although the AFSCME workers

did not win all they wanted, they did establish the right of workers to negotiate and strike over the issue of equal pay for comparable work for women. This victory was won through the militancy of the workers in AFSCME and the San Jose area, women and men alike. While about 400 women played a leading role on the picket lines, the entire union membership backed demands for equal pay for women. And after the city council rejected the compromise settlement, the Santa Clara County Central Labor Council organized demonstrations to support the strikers.

THE San Jose strike attacks the heart of the sexist job discrimination built into U.S. capitalism. In the past 30 years the number of women workers has jumped from 29.6 to 42.5 percent of the total

workforce. During this period women have made some gains in breaking into traditionally "male" job preserves. But most women remain locked into low paying women-dominated job categories as secretaries, teachers, and sales or office clerks.

The 1963 Equal Pay Act established the right of women to earn the same pay as men doing identical jobs. While this was a step forward, it did nothing to improve the wages of most women workers. On the contrary, the average wages of women are actually falling in comparison to men. In 1955 women earned 64 cents for every dollar earned by men. But in 1979 they earned less than 60 cents for every dollar earned by men!

In recent years women have taken their fight for comparable pay for comparable work to court, with mixed results. On June 14 the Supreme Court ruled 5-4 that women jail matrons in Oregon had the right to sue for the same pay as male guards, even though their jobs were not identical. However, Justice William Brennan, who wrote the majority decision, explicitly refused to rule on the issue of comparable pay itself. Earlier this year a federal judge in Colorado rejected a suit by nurses for comparable pay, saying the issue was "pregnant (!) with the possibility of disrupting the entire economic system of the United States." The Supreme Court refused to review the decision.

In other cases a federal judge in

St. Louis rejected a comparable pay suit by clerical workers at the University of Northern Iowa, while a federal appeals court in Philadelphia ruled in favor of women working for Westinghouse Corporation. This mess of conflicting decisions means that comparable pay suits will be tangled up in the courts for years. Moreover, women workers have no guarantee that the Supreme Court, which will have to rule on the issue sooner or later, will act in their favor.

THE San Jose strike shows that working women don't have to rely on the courts to win their rights. It also demonstrated that women workers cannot count on pro-capitalist women politicians to respect their needs. Although the mayor of San Jose and seven out of 11 city council members are women, they tried to fire the strikers who fought for comparable pay.

On the other hand, the strike does show that organized labor has the power to win women workers the wages and respect they deserve for their work. It remains true that the unions need to make far greater efforts than they have in the past to address the special concerns of women workers if they are to unionize women-dominated industries. The San Jose strike marks an important first step in this direction. Hopefully it will encourage working women outside the organized labor movement to recognize that the unions can be a powerful ally in the fight against job discrimination. □

## The WOI

The following reader of the To Ghana, West A

Dear Torch:

The big capital Fords and Rocke the USA are un ever, the conditi and peasant farm able that man ( merely existing. from toilet soap in short supply, the few items ar pocket of the wo sections of the pr the Ghanaian wo cian." What fi How the worker just miraculous s daily wage of 12 c feed a six year hours let alone t The situation is parents (includin been foregoing br so that the kids c

The condition farmer who lives area is deplorable cation system cuts rest of the count kerosene sells at Clinics are few and the few are witho Ghanaian farmer a necessities as tooth erages and even become mirage. T man continues to o the down-trodden v the few items at And they are doing ity.

## Unions don't look out for

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Now, there two c Ghanaian society—t and the Plebeians. The men, building and r tors, timber merchant government officials c patrician class, while the factory workers, m ers, etc., form the un



...s march in Washington, D.C.

... recent uprisings in Britain. ... working people have nothing to ... by placing their future in its ... ds. We can only defend our- ... es against the capitalist attacks ... uilding a powerful, mass social ... vement totally independent of ... capitalist parties. The place to ... t building this movement is in ... shington, D.C., on September

## in the Work

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# The plight of Ghana's workers and peasants

The following letter is from a reader of the Torch/La Antorcha in Ghana, West Africa.

Dear Torch:

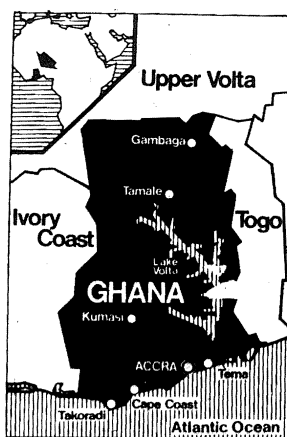
The big capitalist bosses as the Fords and Rockefellers as known in the USA are unknown here. However, the conditions of the workers and peasant farmers are so unbearable that man can be said to be merely existing. Everything here—from toilet soap to basic drugs—are in short supply, and the prices of the few items are just beyond the pocket of the worker. In fact some sections of the press have described the Ghanaian worker as "a magician." What fitting description. How the worker is able to exist is just miraculous since the minimum daily wage of 12 cedis (C12) cannot feed a six year old child for 12 hours let alone the entire family. The situation is such that many parents (including myself) have been foregoing breakfast and lunch so that the kids could be sustained.

The condition of the peasant farmer who lives in the very rural area is deplorable. Poor communication system cuts him off from the rest of the country. A gallon of kerosene sells at 25 cedis (C25). Clinics are few and far between and the few are without drugs. To the Ghanaian farmer and worker, basic necessities as toothpaste, milk, beverages and even toilet rolls have become mirage. The big businessman continues to cheat and exploit the down-trodden worker by selling the few items at fantastic prices. And they are doing so with impunity.

## Unions don't look out for workers

The government which employs about 80 percent of the workforce seems to be doing nothing to alleviate the plight of the worker. In fact, in April this year, the Trades Union Congress (TUC), which is supposed to be the mouthpiece of the workers, threatened to call for a two day strike action if the government did not show concrete signs of alleviating the plight of the workers. The government reaction was the calling of a round table conference with the Congress. The statements issued by both the government and the Congress were not surprising to many observers. The Congress was to be made involved in the distribution of the so-called 15 essential commodities which include rice, soap, textile, cutlass, sugar, etc. Now, the Congress is said to be involved in the distribution but they are not reaching the workers and peasants. In fact a cutlass which is the basic farming implement in the forest area now sells openly at 50 cedis (C50).

Now, there two classes in the Ghanaian society—the Patricians and the Plebeians. The big businessmen, building and road contractors, timber merchants and the top government officials constitute the patrician class, while the farmers, the factory workers, miners, teachers, etc., form the underprivileged



plebeian class. The former continues to give the latter the minimum daily wage of 12 cedis in a country where a man with a family of one would have to spend 50 cedis a day. The patricians ride in Peugeot 504 and BMW luxury cars while over 50 workers would have to squeeze themselves into a wooden "mammy" truck which is built for 30 passengers. The whole system is just disgusting. Exploitation of man by man.

In the educational field the situation is worse. The big bosses send their children to the private elementary schools popularly called "International Schools" where the fees are so high that the common man would not dare approach it. The lot of the peasant farmer and the worker is the public school, where the yearly fee is three cedis. But what prevails in the public schools? No books, no furniture, ramshackle buildings, etc. As a professional teacher, I sometimes feel frustrated and disgusted with the whole system. For instance, in my classroom of 36 pupils, about a third of them are without tables and chairs so these poor kids have to squat while writing. Three pupils have to share a book during reading lessons and pens and pencils are hard to come by. The school building deserves to be seen rather than description. A mere shed which is on the verge of collapsing. In fact, whenever the weather becomes cloudy, we have had to dismiss the children to their homes for fear of the shed collapsing on them in stormy weather....

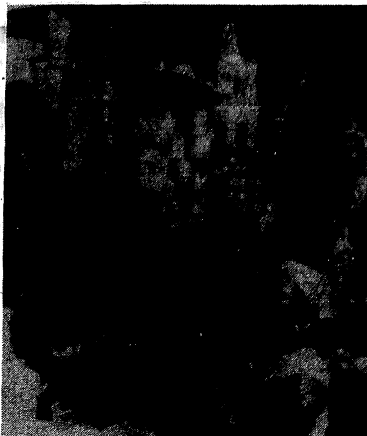
## Phony socialists in power

Such is the situation now. But do we have to hope in the ruling Peoples National Party (PNP)? Do we have to hope that should the

opposition party (Popular Front Party—PFP) win the 1983 elections our lot would be bettered? In fact by their previous performances it can be safely stated that neither of the two parties is on the side of the oppressed workers. The ruling PNP, which claims to be the Convention Peoples Party (CPP) incarnate and of which its top hierarchy is made up, preached socialism during the 1979 electioneering campaign. (The leaders continue to address themselves as comrades.) But while in power from 1957 to 1966, a state-capitalist system of government was established and naked exploitation and corruption became the order of the day.

The opposition PFP on the other hand claims to be the erstwhile Progress Party (PP) incarnate and believes in capitalist system. Really, their three years rule from 1969 to 1972 witnessed assault on the working class. In fact in 1971 they dissolved the TUC which is the only mouthpiece of the workers for calling a strike in protest against the national development levy, under which monies were deducted compulsorily from the meagre salaries of workers.

The military is neither on the side of the worker. In fact the performance of the two military regimes

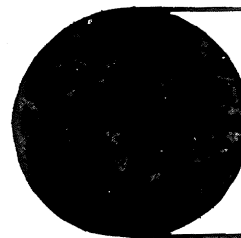


A Ghanaian marketplace. Tinned food is available but basic goods are scarce and high-priced.

we have lived under clearly proves the dictum that the worst civilian regime is better than the best military government. Not only do they exploit and oppress the workers but they also use the meagre foreign exchange to purchase military equipment to silence all genuine opposition.

The workers and peasant farmers would have to fight for themselves or else we would continue to be drawers of water and hewers of wood. There is the urgent need for the formation of a mass movement with its ideology based on Marxism-Leninism. For unless the workers and peasants are themselves on the political saddle, the exploiters will continue to exploit and the gnashing of teeth will continue. . .

**Yours in International Solidarity, A Ghanaian reader**



## WORLD IN REVOLUTION

### Islamic clergy tightens grip over Iran

The Islamic clergy, led by the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, is consolidating its hold over Iran with an iron grip. Former President Abolhassan Bani-Sadr, who waged a long struggle against Khomeini, was driven into exile in France on July 29, five weeks after the Iranian Majlis (parliament) stripped him of his office. Bani-Sadr was joined in exile by Massoud Rajavi, leader of the Mujahedeen-e-Khalq, a leftist Islamic group that in recent months had led popular opposition to the clergy's rule. Within Iran itself, Khomeini's supporters are conducting a reign of terror against their opponents. Since June over 260 people have been executed and over 2,000 jailed by the government. Meanwhile, Khomeini's allies in the Islamic Republican Party (IRP) are tightening their control over the state apparatus. In a staged election July 25 their candidate for president, former Prime Minister Mohammed Ali Rajai, was "elected" to replace Bani-Sadr. He promptly appointed Hojatolislam Mohammed Javad Bahonar, leader of the IRP, as prime minister and effective head of the government. We can be sure a similar process is occurring at the lower levels of government.

The clergy will also continue to eliminate what's left of the gains the workers and peasants won in the revolution against Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi in 1979. Khomeini's "Islamic Republic" is in reality a form of state-capitalist society based on nationalized property, in which Islamic rhetoric will serve to cover up the exploitation of Iranian workers and peasants. Khomeini counts on the thousands of mullahs organized in the IRP to be the cadres of this state. And he relies on the ex-peasants and youth who have flocked into the cities and are organized in the pasdaran (Islamic militia), as a paramilitary force to stamp out all opposition.

The Iranian left has temporarily given up efforts to mobilize mass resistance to Khomeini. The Mujahedeen have gone underground and are conducting urban guerrilla warfare against the regime. Their most notable action came on June 28 when militants blew up the IRP's national headquarters and killed 70 of its leaders. Since then they have carried out several other bombings and assassinations. The Mujahedeen gained experience in this kind of warfare against the shah, and may be able to keep it up indefinitely.

The Mujahedeen was not able to organize the working class to take power in its own name before the clergy consolidated its hold over Iranian society. But it is not clear they even intended to. Instead of following a policy of explaining the class nature of the state—that it remained bourgeois after the overthrow of the shah—they formed a political alliance with the liberal capitalist politicians led by Bani-Sadr. In fact, they are continuing to maintain this alliance even though Bani-Sadr is now calling on the Iranian army to overthrow Khomeini and take power in Iran. In short, the Mujahedeen are offering Iranian workers a choice between a military dictatorship led by the ex-shah's butchers in the army, or an Islamic dictatorship led by Khomeini's butchers in the IRP. This is not a revolutionary socialist solution to the crisis in Iran.

### Ninth Irish hunger striker dies

Thomas McElwee, an Irish Republican Army (IRA) militant imprisoned for fighting against British imperialist rule in northern Ireland, died on August 8 after a 62-day hunger strike. He was the ninth IRA prisoner to die since prisoners began fasting on March 1. His death follows those of Kieran Doherty on August 2 and Kevin Lynch on August 1. The hunger strikers are hoping to force the British government into recognizing their status as political prisoners. But British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher is refusing to grant this.

The hunger strike has rallied mass support for national unification in southern Ireland. The Irish Republic won independence from British rule in 1921 but remains under neo-colonial domination. Doherty was elected to the Dail Eirann (the Republic's parliament) from his cell in June. His death set off riots in the Monaghan district that elected him to the Dail. Earlier, on June 18, 15,000 demonstrators battled police in front of the British Embassy in Dublin. They were protesting not only Thatcher's refusal to meet the hunger strikers' demands, but also the collaboration of the Irish government with British imperialism in northern Ireland.

But in northern Ireland itself the impact of the hunger strike may be falling off. The death of Bobby Sands, the first hunger striker to die, provoked mass rebellions in northern Ireland. While similar uprisings have broken out after the death of each fasting prisoner, they have declined both in numbers and in force. While the prisoners themselves seem determined to maintain their protest, differences have begun to show up among their friends and relatives over whether the fasts should be continued. On July 31, Patrick Quinn, unconscious after fasting 47 days, was given medical treatment and nourishment at the insistence of his family. But on August 7, 250 relatives of other strikers met and declared their complete support for the hunger strike.

—PB

# YOUTH REBELLIONS SW

By PAUL BENJAMIN

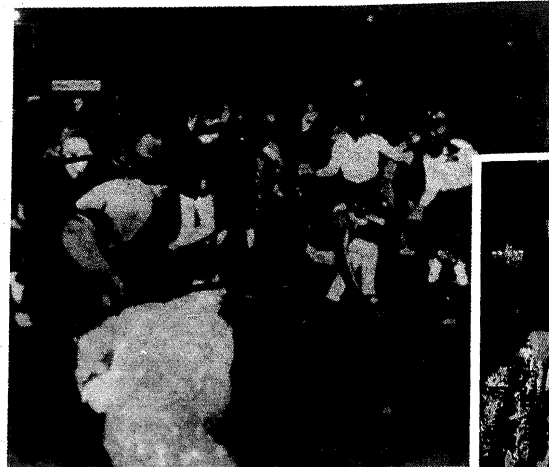
Millions of people in Britain—along with a worldwide television audience—watched the July 29 wedding of Prince Charles to Lady Diana Spencer. It was by all accounts an impressive sight, complete with glittering cavalry regiments, horse-drawn carriages and solemn ritual.

That same morning a young man—David Moore—died in a Liverpool hospital. He had been run over by a police car during street-fighting between police and unemployed youths the previous night.

Behind all the pomp and circumstance of the royal wedding, Britain is still reeling from the youth rebellion that erupted earlier in July. From July 3 to July 13, thousands of Black, Asian and white working class youth fought fierce street battles with police in cities all over the country. By the time the fighting was over, hundreds of cops had been injured, millions of dollars worth of property destroyed, and over 2,500 people jailed.

The rebellion began in London's Southall district, a working class community that includes many Indian and Pakistani families. On the night of July 3, two busloads of "skinheads"—young white toughs with ties to the fascist National Front—were in Southall for a rock concert. When it was over they spilled into the streets, wrecked Indian and Pakistani shops, and handed out leaflets for a "White Nationalist Crusade" demonstration. The cops showed up but refused pleas from neighborhood leaders to arrest the racists, or at least get them out of the district. Then the neighborhood youth took matters into their own hands, attacking with whatever they could find both the skinheads and the cops protecting them.

The next place to blow up was Toxteth, an integrated district of Black and white working people in Liverpool. On July 5



July rebellion brought rot in British capitalist society out in the open. While young workers in Liverpool and other cities battled cops in the streets, the government staged a lavish wedding for Prince Charles.

Black and white youths freed a young Black motorcyclist who was being harassed by police. Then they barricaded the streets and used Molotov cocktails, bricks and rocks to drive back the cops. When police formed lines to clear the streets, the youths commandeered cars and trucks, drove them into the police lines and broke them up. The police were forced to retreat from the area. Once they were gone, the neighborhood turned out and helped themselves to goods

from local stores. The cops finally regained control of the streets by using tear gas, a favorite weapon of British troops in northern Ireland, though one that had never previously been used on the mainland. But fighting resumed the next night.

When Parliament met on July 8 Britain's Conservative Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher blamed the weekend's events on a breakdown in "family discipline" and demanded a return to law and order. Home

Secretary William Whitelaw promised better helmets and shields for police, saying: "In the end what matters is that the police must win." Not surprisingly, such statements by government leaders only fanned the flames. That night 1,000 youths in Manchester besieged a local police station for hours while fighting continued in Liverpool and erupted in the Wood Green district of North London. In Manchester itself, police claimed they were facing "guerrilla warfare" by youths who posted lookouts with CB radios and used roving vans to carry gasoline bombs.

Over the next four days the rebellion spread not only to other major cities, but also to smaller towns throughout England and even into Scotland. It peaked on the weekend of July 11-12, when streetfighting was reported in 19 cities across the country.

Meanwhile, a battle of another sort was raging in Parliament. Members of the opposition Labour Party shouted down Thatcher after she claimed that the revolts had nothing to do with social grievances but were "the product of simple greed." Members of Thatcher's ruling Conservative Party called for licensing the police—who routinely patrol without guns—to use armored cars and plastic bullets (also used in northern Ireland) to restore order. Some even wanted to put the army on alert. But by July 13 the rebellion had spent most of its force.

## British racism on the rise

In its aftermath all kinds of people are trying to figure out how such events could take place in a country that prides itself on

respect for order and genial police/community relations. Many liken them to the 1960s urban uprisings in the U.S., and the Kerner Report summarizing the causes of those U.S. revolts has become required reading for British political commentators.

Is Britain going through its own version of Watts, Detroit or Miami? Clearly anger over racist attacks by police and right-wing thugs played a role in the recent events. In Southall, community leader Shambha Gupta told reporters: "All the people of Southall know the police are downright racist." And in London, a youth who was born in Ghana, and has lived in the U.S., said: "I've met all kinds of people from all different cultures and the British are the most racist. It's a disease they carry with them."

With the decline of British capitalism, the capitalists are increasingly using Blacks and Asians as scapegoats for the country's



Skinheads in Britain. While not all skinheads are racists, many support the National Front and other fascist organizations.

# Important Lessons From British Strug

Although the British youth rebellion occurred over 3,000 miles from the U.S. and in a country with different institutions and traditions, it can help workers and oppressed people in the U.S. understand the possibilities and problems we face in building the kind of revolutionary working class movement we need.

There are many lessons to be drawn from the British youth revolt. For now, we would like to focus on three of these.

First of all, the British youth rebellion demonstrates the potential for mass workers' uprisings in the imperialist countries of Western Europe and North America. In the past, the worldwide conquests of the imperialist ruling classes have tended to dampen or limit the class struggle in these countries. In particular Britain built up a world empire that lasted through World War II. By systematically looting their colonies and through other means, the British capitalists were able to partially meet the demands of British workers for a better life and to infect their consciousness with British nationalism. In this way, the capitalists succeeded in keeping the workers loyal to British capitalism.

Although the British world empire has long since collapsed, this loyalty persists among older, more conservative workers brought up in the imperialist tradition. While these workers maintain a high level of trade union militancy (within the past 10 years alone, they organized mass strikes in 1972, 1974 and 1979), their illusions in, and support for, the capitalist system remain largely intact.

The young workers who went into the

streets in July don't share the consciousness of the other workers. They, correctly, see no future for themselves in Britain. As a result, they are not loyal to the system and are no longer willing to follow the traditional code of behavior devised by the ruling class to confine political protests within "safe" limits.

In a broad sense, U.S. imperialism is travelling down the road marked out by the British empire. The U.S. replaced Britain as the major world imperialist power after World War II. But today the world domination of the U.S. capitalists is declining under the impact of successful national liberation struggles of the peoples of Vietnam, Zimbabwe and Nicaragua. Moreover, major U.S. industries like steel, auto and rubber are threatened by more efficient foreign competitors, and the entire U.S. economy is in crisis.

As a result, workers and oppressed people in the U.S. are facing the same kind of capitalist offensive that provoked the youth uprising in Great Britain. Like Margaret

Thatcher's government in Britain, the Reagan administration is trying to resolve the economic crisis by driving down working people's living standards while providing giveaways for corporations and individual capitalists. And as in Britain, a racist, reactionary government is encouraging the closet Nazis in the so-called Moral Majority and the open fascists in the Klan and the Nazi organizations to step up their attacks on the more oppressed sections of the working class—gays, women, Latins, Blacks, Asians, etc. The result—we can't say when—will be the same kind of uprisings and rebellions as occurred in Britain.

Second, the British rebellion shows that alliances between Black and white workers are possible. The fact that Black, Asian and white youths fought together against the cops marks a welcome development in the class struggle in Britain. Older generations of white workers in Britain were raised in an almost all-white society, and schooled in the racism built into British imperialism. Fascist groups like the Nation-

al Front have been trying to organize white working class youth with some success, as seen in the skinheads' attack on Indians and Pakistanis that set off the youth revolt. But in areas like Southall and Toxteth, where some of the heaviest fighting between young people and police took place, Asians, Blacks and whites live together and have united against their oppressors.

In the U.S., unfortunately, examples of such multinational unity within the working class are few and far between. Overall class consciousness among workers is lower in the U.S. than in Britain.

But Reagan's attacks on the working class are creating the basis for such alliances. Reagan's budget cutbacks and his entire economic strategy will hit Latin and Black people particularly hard. But poor and not-so-poor white workers will also take a beating. For instance, it is a little-known fact that the majority of people who depend on welfare programs and food stamps—programs under attack by the ruling class—are white. While some will join up with the racists in the hope of improving their lot at the expense of Blacks and other oppressed people, others will fight back against the capitalists, and will look for allies to help them in this struggle.

This will open up new opportunities for the millions of Black and Latin people who are already seeking ways to defend themselves against the capitalist attacks.

On the negative side, the British youth

rebellion illustrates the large gap that exists between the organized workers—those working and in unions—and those workers who are unorganized and/or unemployed. One of the striking features of the recent events in Britain was that the organized labor movement did nothing to support the young workers who went into the streets against the Thatcher government.

British workers have powerful trade unions that include about half the working population. The union leadership plays a major role in the British Labour Party. Both union officials and Labour Party leaders have been condemning Thatcher's anti-working class program for over two years. The youth rebellion offered a tremendous opportunity to mobilize the entire working class against the government. But union leaders ignored this opportunity. While Labour Party representatives in Parliament denounced the Thatcher government, they supported the government's efforts to suppress the youth.

In the U.S., the gap between the organized labor movement and the masses of unorganized, unemployed and underemployed workers is, if anything, even greater than in Britain. The unions include less than 20 percent of the workforce, and that figure is declining. Tens of millions of women workers, undocumented workers, Southern workers, Black workers and unemployed youth have absolutely no ties to the organized labor movement. The union bureaucracy is doing almost nothing to organize these workers and has done even



Thatcher and Reagan at recent conference in Canada. Reagan is carrying out the same kind of anti-working class program that provoked British youth rebellion.

# LIONS SWEEP BRITAIN

William Whitelaw promised better shields for police, saying: "In that matters is that the police must surprisingly, such statements by leaders only fanned the flames. 1,000 youths in Manchester local police station for hours, continuing in Liverpool and the Wood Green district of North Manchester itself, police claimed facing "guerrilla warfare" by posted lookouts with CB radios and vans to carry gasoline bombs.

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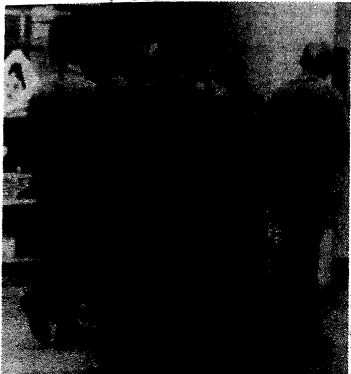
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With the decline of British capitalism, the capitalists are increasingly using Blacks and Asians as scapegoats for the country's



**Skinheads in Britain. While not all skinheads are racists, many support the National Front and other fascist organizations.**

economic and social problems. Blacks and Asians make up about 4 percent of Britain's population. Some have lived in Britain for generations. Most arrived after World War II, when British capitalists encouraged immigration to gain a supply of cheap labor. Although many of the Blacks and Asians were born and raised in Britain, they are all treated as if they are foreigners.

Thatcher herself declared that Britain was being "swamped by people from different cultures" during her 1979 election campaign. More recently, in June her government passed a law effectively denying Black and Asian members of British Commonwealth countries—who also have British citizenship—the right to live permanently in Britain. Fascist groups like the National Front openly call for throwing all Blacks and Asians out of the country. And the police constantly harass their communities. Under these circumstances, it is hardly surprising that the victims of this racist treatment are beginning to fight back.

## Rejecting a society that offers nothing

But while there are similarities between the British rebellion and the Black uprisings in the U.S., there are also major differences. In Britain, thousands of white working class youth fought side by side with Black and Asian militants, and also took on the cops on their own. Many Black and white youths explicitly deny that race played a major role in the fighting, stressing instead their common hatred of the police. As one Black youth—accompanied by a white friend—put it: "We hate the buses [police]. It's as easy

as that, isn't it? They come in and push us around. This isn't Black against white, how could it be? Look, we're together."

Labour Party leaders and trade union officials are blaming Britain's massive unemployment, which has hit young people, both Black and white, particularly hard, as the underlying cause of the revolts. Thatcher's government is carrying out a wholesale attack on British workers, similar in many respects to President Reagan's program in the U.S. Since she took office, unemployment in Britain has risen to its highest level since the 1930s depression. Over 2.8 million workers—11.8 percent of the workforce—have no jobs, and the total is expected to reach three million before the end of the year. Workers in declining industrial cities like Liverpool have borne the brunt of this. For instance, in Liverpool's Toxteth district, unemployment stands at 43 percent for white workers, 47 percent for Black workers, and over 60 percent for Black youth. A week before the rebellion, the government's jobs agency for school graduates in Liverpool listed only 12 openings for the entire city.

Thatcher has been forced to institute an abrupt about-face on jobs policy in the wake of the youth uprisings. During the rebellion she insisted that unemployment had nothing to do with it, and rejected pleas from within her own party for a jobs program for young workers. But on July 27, facing a censure vote in Parliament and pressure from more moderate members of her Cabinet, she reversed her stand and approved a \$1 billion package of job subsidies and training programs for youth.

In addition to the question of unemployment, some commentators are also pointing to the long-term deterioration of British urban life as a cause for the revolt. They cite the "urban renewal" programs that destroyed traditional neighborhoods, and the

national housing crisis that is forcing thousands of working class families to live in broken-down homes without electricity or running water.

All these factors certainly contributed their share to the frustration and anger among British youth. But the total impact of the rebellion goes far beyond any of them. What's really going on is that a whole generation of young workers is striking out



**Cops capture a young militant. Over 2,000 were jailed during youth uprising.**

against virtually the entirety of British society, a society that offers them absolutely nothing—no jobs, no future, in short, no life. The cops were the youths' main target not only because of their harassment, but also because they are the ever-present symbols—and guardians—of a society that British youth are coming to despise. □

## From British Struggle

...e been trying to organize white youth with some success, as skinheads' attack on Indians and at set off the youth revolt. But Southall and Toxteth, where the heaviest fighting between young police took place, Asians, Blacks live together and have united oppressors.

...e, unfortunately, examples of national unity within the working class and far between. Overall class solidarity among workers is lower in the U.S. than in Britain.

...e's attacks on the working class the basis for such alliances. Budget cutbacks and his entire strategy will hit Latin and Black workers particularly hard. But poor and white workers will also take a beating. In fact, it is a little-known fact that many of the people who depend on welfare payments and food stamps—propped up by the ruling class—are the same who will join up with the police to improve their lot at the expense of Blacks and other oppressed workers who will fight back against the ruling class and will look for allies to help them.

...e up new opportunities for Black and Latin people who are seeking ways to defend themselves against the capitalist attacks.

...e active side, the British youth

...e rebellion illustrates the large gap that exists between the organized workers—those working in unions—and those workers who are unorganized and/or unemployed. One of the striking features of the recent events in Britain was that the organized labor movement did nothing to support the young workers who went into the streets against the Thatcher government.

British workers have powerful trade unions that include about half the working population. The union leadership plays a major role in the British Labour Party. Both union officials and Labour Party leaders have been condemning Thatcher's anti-working class program for over two years. The youth rebellion offered a tremendous opportunity to mobilize the entire working class against the government. But union leaders ignored this opportunity. While Labour Party representatives in Parliament denounced the Thatcher government, they supported the government's efforts to suppress the youth.

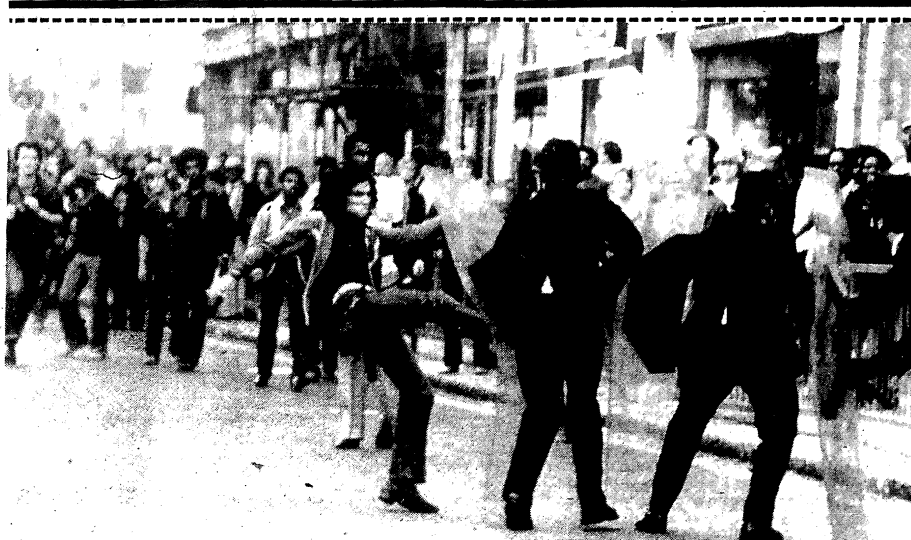
In the U.S., the gap between the organized labor movement and the masses of unorganized, unemployed and underemployed workers is, if anything, even greater than in Britain. The unions include less than 20 percent of the workforce, and that figure is declining. Tens of millions of women workers, undocumented workers, Southern workers, Black workers and unemployed youth have absolutely no ties to the organized labor movement. The union bureaucracy is doing almost nothing to organize these workers and has done even

less to defend their interests. As a result, the more oppressed workers have little knowledge of and sympathy for trade unions that do nothing for them.

For their part, the capitalists are doing all they can to maintain and widen the gap between organized and unorganized workers. They call on better-off workers to support campaigns against so-called "welfare cheats" on the grounds that welfare recipients are supposedly getting a free ride at their expense. At the same time they try to isolate unorganized workers fighting to defend their living standards by claiming they are "greedy" and "lazy" people who are really the cause of inflation. If the capitalists succeed in this divide-and-rule maneuver, they will be able to pick off each section of the working class and thus defeat the entire class.

In Britain today the struggle appears to have temporarily died down. One reason for this is precisely the failure of the organized workers to defend the unemployed youth.

It is in the interests of all workers, in



**Black and white youths joined together to fight police. Here a Rastafarian defies police while young Black and white workers move into the streets behind him.**

Britain and the U.S., to overcome the split between the unorganized and unemployed workers and those workers in the unions. In both countries the workers in the unions must not only fight to defend their own living standards and working conditions; they should also work to make the unions take the lead in building a militant mass social movement fighting for the rights and needs of all workers and all oppressed people. This means organizing the unorganized, fighting

for jobs, fighting against racism and sexism and to defend the rights of all oppressed people.

At the same time, unorganized and unemployed workers should not lose heart, but should fight back and organize themselves any way they can; they should also recognize that the struggles of the organized workers to defend their gains and the unions themselves are in the interests of all workers.

—PB

# Faction Fight Breaks Out in SWP; Leadership Calls for New International Perspectives

By ROD MILLER

The Socialist Workers Party (SWP), the largest left organization in the U.S. claiming to be Trotskyist, is involved in a heated internal dispute over the fundamental political course of the organization. The dispute appears to have broken out in sharp form during the SWP's pre-convention discussion period leading up to its national convention this August, though the issues involved have been brewing inside the organization for some time.

The factional character of the SWP's internal debate seems to be fueled not only by the importance of the issues themselves, but also by difficulties the organization is having with its work. Since making a sharp turn in 1978 from an almost exclusive orientation to college campus-based activity to work in industrial workplaces and unions, the SWP has reportedly lost nearly 25 percent of its membership—that is, about 400 people. In addition, despite sending nearly 800 people into major industries, the group has been virtually unable to recruit in these situations.

The struggle inside the SWP is centered on two distinct but interrelated questions. One involves the international strategy of the SWP, the other its perspectives for work in the U.S., in particular, activity in the workplaces and in the trade unions. Given space limitations, and since the debate over international perspectives goes to the very heart of the SWP's program, we will confine ourselves here to reporting on the debate around this question.

## 'New mass Leninist international'

The struggle over international perspectives is centered around a proposal by the SWP Political Committee for a new international strategy. The Political Committee, led by National Secretary Jack Barnes, has proposed that the SWP should seek to construct a new international revolutionary party in conjunction with several international political leaderships that the SWP leadership claims are moving toward Trotskyism. These currents include: 1) the Sandinista (FSLN) leadership in Nicaragua; 2) the New Jewel Movement, led by Maurice Bishop, prime minister of Grenada;

3) sections of the leadership of the national liberation struggle in El Salvador; 4) sections of the leadership of the Polish independent labor organization, Solidarity; and 5) Cuban Premier Fidel Castro and the "Castro leadership team" of the Cuban Communist Party.

Barnes and his co-thinkers in the SWP leadership are aware that not one of these forces describes itself as Trotskyist. In fact, they are explicitly hostile to Trotskyism. Yet, the SWP leadership maintains that through the "dynamics of struggle," the "logic of objective conditions" and the "law of permanent revolution," these forces are becoming (or, in some cases, already are) fully revolutionary Marxists and Leninists and, without knowing it, revolutionary Trotskyists.

The goal of this new international strategy as outlined by the SWP Political Committee is to form what they call a "new mass Leninist international," of which the SWP would presumably be the U.S. section. This new international would not be explicitly Trotskyist but would be, as the SWP leader-



Jack Barnes.

ship terms it, "Trotskyist in practice."

Formally, this is a radical departure from previous SWP perspectives. Until now, the SWP has claimed to stand for building the Fourth International, the international party organized by Leon Trotsky to carry forward the program of Lenin and the Bolsheviks. The SWP today remains part of an

international organization, the United Secretariat of the Fourth International (USec), the largest of several groups claiming to actually be the Fourth International. Apparently, however, the SWP's Political Committee no longer views the United Secretariat as the "worldwide party of socialist revolution," although they have not (yet) openly said this. What they have said is that they no longer favor building Trotskyist parties in Cuba, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Grenada or Poland. In these countries their followers would join and be "loyal builders" of the "unconsciously Trotskyist" Cuban Communist Party, FSLN, New Jewel Movement, etc.

In essence, this represents the formal abandonment of the Trotskyist political program and principles that, at least on paper, the SWP leadership has claimed to stand on for 40 years. For example, the Trotskyist program calls for "political revolutions" to overthrow the Stalinist bureaucracies in the countries the SWP has historically considered to be "degenerated" or "deformed" workers states (Russia, Poland, China, etc.). This perspective also calls for the building of Trotskyist parties in these countries to lead the workers in such political revolutions. Today, however, the Barnes leadership is contending that Trotskyists should support, for example, the Walesa leadership of the Polish Solidarity organization—which is certainly not building a Leninist party in Poland and is not for the revolutionary overthrow of the Stalinist regime in that country.

Similarly, while the SWP has always maintained that the Castro regime in Cuba is some kind of a workers state, until recently they considered that state to be bureaucratically distorted, requiring a fight by revolutionaries for workers' democracy in Cuba—for democratic workers' councils, factory committees, trade unions, etc., through which the workers and peasants could actually run the economy and the state. Now, the SWP Political Committee claims that such a struggle is no longer necessary, since Fidel Castro himself is "concerned" about bureaucratism and is supposedly fighting it himself.

The SWP leadership's perspectives also abandon the historic criticisms Trotskyists have made against the class-collaborationist popular front, against strategies



Clockwise from top: Members of Sandinista (FSLN) government in Nicaragua are greeted by "Castro leadership team" in Cuba; Lech Walesa, leader of the Solidarity union in Poland; Maurice Bishop, head of the ruling New Jewel Movement in Grenada—all "Trotskyists in practice," according to the SWP Political Committee.

centered on rural-based guerrilla warfare, against the theory of the "two-stage" revolution, against, in short, the basic theoretical outlook of the Stalinist movement.

This abandonment is not being done openly; it is thinly covered by the rather remarkable claim that the leaderships the SWP proposes to embrace are "unconscious Trotskyists." In effect, the SWP Political Committee is proposing to politically liquidate the SWP and, if it can get its way, the entire USec into what are in fact Stalinist, petty bourgeois nationalist and reformist political currents.

## Minority opposes new strategy

Not surprisingly, this perspective has raised more than a few eyebrows inside the SWP. Almost in a single stroke, fundamental programmatic views the SWP has claimed to have held for decades are being thrown out the window. Groupings opposing or questioning various aspects of the Barnes leadership's strategy have developed in a number of SWP branches, including San Francisco, Oakland, Chicago, Tidewater (Virginia) and New York. While we do not yet know the outcome of the debate at the SWP's recently concluded convention, we do know that threats against minority leaders for violating "democratic centralist norms" had been made during the pre-convention discussion.

The forces opposing the "new

international strategy" have raised various differences with the leadership's perspectives. Some are challenging the Political Committee's claim that Nicaragua today is a workers state and that the Sandinistas are "Trotskyists in practice." These people have pointed to the lack of workers' councils or other effective means of mass, democratic decision-making and to the fact that the FSLN is maintaining an alliance with elements of the anti-Somoza bourgeoisie. They have also pointed out that the FSLN is retaining a large private sector of the economy (only Somoza's holdings have been nationalized), has failed to nationalize the land and turn it over to the peasants and has in fact broken strikes and jailed working class militants, including Trotskyists.

Oppositionists have also questioned the Barnes leadership's uncritical assessment of the leftist insurgents in El Salvador. They have correctly argued that these forces are pursuing a popular front-type alliance with liberal bourgeois forces, are following a Stalinist-Menshevik strategy of a "two-stage revolution" and are basing their approach primarily on guerrilla warfare in the countryside instead of the urban workers. Oppositionists have reminded SWPers that, just a few years ago, the SWP waged a struggle against forces inside the USec who favored substituting a peasant-based guerrilla strategy for the organization and mobilization of the working class. Yet, argues the minority, this is precisely the program and strategy of the leftist insurgents in El Salvador with whom the SWP

leadership now proffers. Moreover, there is at least some unease in the notion that Fidel is the ally of the Soviet ruler, the Trotskyist in practice." 1) Fidel Castro who Russian invasion of Cuba in 1968 and support attempt to conquer today. It is the same who is a declared Poland's Solidarity, called Leonid Brezhnev leader of the world's. This is the same Fidel rules over a country workers and peasant rights and have no economy or Cuban whole. Apparently, consider the notion of Castro, who has been murdered, more than Trotskyists, is now an Trotskyist" to be a bi

## Minority limits by SWP orthodoxy

Despite the many criticisms and criticisms members have raised, the minority is trying to counterpose an "orthodox" version of SWP Political Committee's. This leaves the opposition on a weak ground. In the first new strategy is only the course of the political course that has been pursuing for years in a second place, it is pro "orthodoxy" the minority finding that led directly to the Barnes leadership's current perspectives. This is some explanation.

Central to the SWP's Trotskyism" is the notion given state can be a state"—"degenerated, formed," "bureaucraticized" or otherwise—in the any direct control by themselves over that state. was put forward by Trotsky analysis of the Stalinist Russia. Trotsky maintained Soviet Union remained a state even after the Stalinist state had totally deproletarianized the working class of any power, instead of any rights whatsoever. While sons for this error are Trotsky was left arguing essence of a workers state

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leadership now proposes to merge.

Moreover, there appears to be at least some unease in the SWP over the notion that Fidel Castro, a close ally of the Soviet rulers, is a "Trotskyist in practice." This is the same Fidel Castro who supported the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 and supports the Russian attempt to conquer Afghanistan today. It is the same Fidel Castro who is a declared opponent of Poland's Solidarity, and who has called Leonid Brezhnev "the great leader of the world's proletariat." This is the same Fidel Castro who rules over a country in which workers and peasants lack basic rights and have no control over the economy or Cuban society as a whole. Apparently, some SWPers consider the notion that this Fidel Castro, who has jailed, if not murdered, more than a few Trotskyists, is now an "unconscious Trotskyist" to be a bit far-fetched.



*Among the forces the SWP leadership hopes to unite with in a new international party are sections of the leftist leadership in El Salvador. Barnes' opponents have correctly argued that these forces are pursuing a popular front-type alliance with liberal bourgeois elements, are following a Stalinist-Menshevik strategy of a "two-stage revolution," and are basing their approach primarily on guerrilla warfare in the countryside instead of on the urban workers. Just a few years ago the SWP waged a struggle against forces inside the USec who favored precisely this program and strategy.*

### Minority limited by SWP orthodoxy

Despite the many correct questions and criticisms which SWP members have raised, most elements of the minority are attempting to counterpose an old "orthodox" version of SWP politics to the Political Committee's proposals. This leaves the oppositionists on weak ground. In the first place, the new strategy is only the culmination of the political course the SWP has been pursuing for years. In the second place, it is precisely the "orthodox" the minority is defending that led directly and logically to the Barnes leadership's current perspectives. This requires some explanation.

Central to the SWP's "orthodox Trotskyism" is the notion that a given state can be a "workers state"—"degenerated," "deformed," "bureaucratically distorted" or otherwise—in the absence of any direct control by the workers themselves over that state. This idea was put forward by Trotsky in his analysis of the Stalinist regime in Russia. Trotsky maintained that the Soviet Union remained a workers state even after the Stalinist bureaucracy had totally deprived the working class of any political power, indeed of any political rights whatsoever. While the reasons for this error are complex, Trotsky was left arguing that the essence of a workers state (in fact,

the dictatorship of the proletariat) is not whether the workers actually run the state, but whether or not the means of production are nationalized in the hands of the state. In so doing, Trotsky defined what was a state-capitalist society as a workers state.

Trotsky's error was made in the context of analyzing the degeneration of the first workers state to ever exist, a state established by an actual working class revolution. Trotsky never argued that workers states could be created without working class revolutions and against the desires of the workers themselves. But after World War II, when the Russian army occupied Eastern Europe and, after a time, nationalized property and eliminated the private capitalists, it became clear that working class revolutions were not needed, to create societies essentially the same as Russia. In subsequent years, non-working class guerrilla struggles in China, Cuba, Vietnam and elsewhere led to the establishment of similar state-capitalist regimes. The USec, however, having defined workers states as those regimes where the private capitalists had been overthrown and property nationalized—whether or not the workers controlled the state and the economy—was led directly to the notion that working class revolutions were not necessary to create workers states and, moreover, that Trotskyist parties were not needed to lead these supposed socialist transformations. Rather, as in China, Cuba, etc., Stalinists and even petty bourgeois nationalists could do the job.

This left the USec with little reason to exist. The USec could consider the Stalinists a bit too brutal or claim that perhaps workers' democracy would be a "good thing," but after all, if workers states were being created right and left without the intervention of Trotskyists, why be a Trotskyist? Why have a Trotskyist organization at all, especially when no successful revolution of any kind has been led by Trotskyists? If petty bourgeois nationalists (like Fidel Castro at the time of the Cuban revolution) or reformists (like Lech Walesa and his allies in the Solidarity leadership) or even Stalinists (Castro today or the Vietnamese and Chinese communist parties) can lead successful working class revolutions, what is the meaningful perspective for a "Trotskyist" organization? Why not instead merely

support or even join those forces that are creating "workers states"?

In short, the old SWP orthodoxy constantly leads to a tendency to capitulate to, and liquidate into, the Stalinist, petty bourgeois nationalist and other forces that may create state-capitalist societies, but are definitely not for establishing actual workers states.

Thus, the problem the minority faces is that it is trying to fight the SWP leadership while basing itself on the same basic theoretical assumptions that the SWP Political Committee itself accepts and which in fact lead logically to its new strategy. As long as this is the case, the oppositionists can score some points, raise some doubts, make some telling criticisms of the Sandinistas, Castro and the SWP leadership. They can even correctly charge that the SWP leadership is liquidating Trotskyism and the Fourth International. But what they cannot do, until or unless they come to an understanding of the state-capitalist nature of the Stalinist and nationalist statist regimes, is counterpose a truly revolutionary strategy and program.

Assuming that the Barnes leadership triumphs inside the SWP (as is almost certain), the SWP will have formalized a rightward drift that has been evolving in practice for decades. The "new strategy" represents a virtual abandonment of even the pretense to stand for the

"Transitional Program, the theory of permanent revolution and the absolute necessity of building working class Leninist vanguard parties. But the SWP Political Committee's claim that forces like the Sandinistas and the New Jewel Movement are moving rapidly leftward, in fact toward "unconscious Trotskyism," may be a difficult one to maintain for long. Whatever confusion may exist in the mind of Jack Barnes, the Sandinistas, the New Jewel Movement and major forces in the El Salvadorean liberation struggle are rather clear about their political direction. All these forces are affiliated with the social democratic Second International (which includes the Israeli Labor Party and the ruling German Social Democratic Party among its members). This is a rather circuitous route to revolutionary Trotskyism (conscious or unconscious), to say the least.

As for Fidel Castro and the "Castro leadership team," why should these people want to tie themselves to what they undoubtedly call the "Trotskyite" SWP? Even if, as the SWP leaders claim, Castro really supports Solidarity in Poland, opposes the Russian invasion of Afghanistan and would like to see more workers' democracy in Russia, but can't say any of these things for fear of offending the bureaucrats in the Kremlin (who send him around \$10 million a day), why would he offend the Kremlin

bureaucrats even more by forming an international party with "Trotskyites"? To put it differently, the idea that Fidel Castro would ever even entertain the notion of joining with the SWP to build a "Trotskyist in practice" international party is a real belleronger.

The "new strategy" of the SWP leadership can only head the organization toward a serious crisis. While it is difficult to predict how quickly such a crisis will develop, sooner or later the fiction that "Trotskyists in practice" abound around the world will collapse. When it does, SWP members are likely to be seriously demoralized and thoroughly disoriented politically. The road forward for those inside the SWP today who are looking for a truly revolutionary perspective, who want to fight for a truly democratic socialist society, and who want to fight Stalinism rather than capitulate to it, is to reject the notion that states over which the workers have absolutely no control are "workers states." It means repudiating the idea that socialist societies can be established without working class revolutions. It means breaking with the illusion that middle class nationalists, reformists and Stalinists can create "workers states" "for" the working class. This is the only way to escape from the political dead end in which, as the present faction fight reveals, the SWP finds itself today. □

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# PATCO

(Continued from page 3)  
paid off.

In addition, there are some helpful effects to the airlines from the strike, despite the losses. Deregulation of the airline industry has resulted in a mushrooming of new airlines and new routes for already established airlines. This in turn has led to half-empty planes and lower fares. Now the strike is creating de facto re-regulation and the result will be fewer flights, fewer empty seats, and the end of promotional fares. The large airlines especially will profit from this.

Another problem for the strikers is that working people, who could be the allies of PATCO, are unorganized and generally uninformed as to the true importance and meaning of the strike. The media is bombarding the public with stories about "greedy \$40,000-a-year traffic controllers who disrespect the law" and it is having an effect.

In addition, almost all those most

directly affected by the strike—the government, the airlines and business people who, together with executives on private planes, make up the bulk of air travellers—are willing to accept a level of financial loss and inconvenience in order to win politically, that is, to win a major battle against the union movement.

Perhaps most important, the U.S. labor bureaucrats have done nothing to help the controllers. AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland issued a press statement and walked a PATCO picket line for the cameras for a few minutes. United Auto Workers President Doug Fraser and International Association of Machinists leader William Winpinger have done about the same. The outrageous thing about this is that these same union leaders say they understand that Reagan is trying to bust the union and that this means something serious for them.

## McNeil / Detloff

(Continued from page 9)

plant with much publicity in the local newspapers. They claimed to be there investigating a right-wing religious cult (The Way, International) that no one at the plant has ever heard of. The real purpose was to intimidate the workers at the plant—the same reason that management had for quadrupling plant security on some shifts recently.

The firings at the tank plant are part of a nationwide campaign by the FBI and the government to drive militants and socialists out of the defense industry. These firings are occurring at a time when the U.S. defense industry is gearing up toward war production and the ruling class wants to root out any opposition to their plans of speed-up, layoffs and automation. They would also like to set a pattern for workers in other industries to make sacrifices so the bosses can maintain their profits.

At Lockheed Aircraft in Georgia, 14 supporters of the Socialist Workers Party have been fired. Twenty-seven workers at the NASSCO shipyard in San Diego, California, have been fired for participating in a demonstration

against health and safety violations by the company. Three of these workers, including two supporters of the Communist Workers Party, have been framed up by an FBI agent-provocateur and convicted on bomb charges. The list goes on across the country. The whole picture looks very much like the opening rounds in the McCarthyite witchhunts of the 1950s.

The firings at the tank plant, along with the other attacks on militants and socialists across the U.S., pose a very serious threat to the unions in this country and to the working class as a whole. They are the opening shots in a nationwide campaign by the capitalists to divide, intimidate and beat down the working class. We must all stand together against the ruling class's moves to strip us of all our rights.

Your support is needed now to force Chrysler to back down on the firings of Comer McNeil and Brian Detloff. For further information on these firings, or to help in winning back the jobs with full back pay, contact: Tank Plant Defense Committee, PO Box 8373, Detroit, MI 48213; (313) 921-8398. □

But there are positive signs as well. The PATCO strikers are holding firm and morale is high. Only 1,000 out of 13,000 controllers who went on strike have returned to work despite the heavy pressure from the president of the United States. The union prepared a 55-page manual last year (the government wasn't the only party that did some advanced planning) and this is one reason for the tightness of the strike. Another is the militant attitude of most of the controllers. Many controllers say the conditions they work under have been so bad they would rather be fired than to go back with things unchanged—as expressed on one picketing controller's T-shirt, "Take this job and shove it."

The international support the

strike has gotten is another positive development. From August 10 through press time the Canadian controllers have refused to control planes to and from the States, saying that U.S. air space is unsafe. This has limited flights between Europe and the U.S. to four per hour, down from the normal 20 per hour. This disruption is beyond what business, the government or the airlines can afford to deal with for long.

What could really open up the situation, however, is if other workers, particularly those in unions, were organized to support the strike. The labor movement could make a real difference with a few simple practical steps. The AFL-CIO could set up picket lines at the airports and actually shut them

down. Short of that, or building up to that, a one-hour work stoppage could be called everywhere to show that the unions, all unions, are ready to defend themselves from Reagan. Along with this, a political education campaign could be launched to counter the distortions that the capitalist media puts out. Finally, the already planned AFL-CIO-called March of Washington for Jobs on September 19 could be used to rally support for PATCO.

PATCO itself has taken the first step in building support for the strike by calling a rally directed to the labor movement on August 26 in New York City. It is crucial that the labor movement, and workers in general, heed this call.

**Victory to the PATCO strike!  
Stop Reagan's union-busting!**

## Postal Contract

(Continued from page 8)

ity." At two pre-contract demonstrations in New York, groups of bureaucrats actively discouraged postal workers from chanting "No Contract, No Work." In addition, Biller and Sombrotto cancelled plans for a national demonstration in Washington. And Sombrotto's disciple in New York, Branch 36 President Joe Giordano, cancelled the regular July union meeting which would have been able to organize the membership for the contract struggle! The result of all this was that when the contract expired, rank and file workers and many stewards didn't know what to do.

### Local leaders defy tops

Clearly the rank and file has to take control of the struggle. A first step would be to vote down the sellout and send the bargainners back to get something better. The bureaucracy itself has created some openings. In the APWU, the leadership split over the settlement, with a significant number of national officers and local presidents coming out against it. At an APWU regional conference in Allentown, Pennsylvania, on July 25, local officials ignored a lengthy plea from Biller and voted to recommend rejection. In Sombrotto's

home branch in New York, a number of stewards—including some from his old machine—are against the sellout. In New Jersey, the Postal Workers Defense Committee, which has fought for amnesty and better working conditions for three years, sent out a national mailing and organized opposition to the contract in its area.

The union leadership is attempting to scare the members into voting "Yes" by threatening to call an immediate strike if the contract

is rejected. This cynical maneuver is by the very same leaders who failed to prepare the union for a strike in the first place. Certainly they won't call one now when the pressure for a strike is much less than it was in July.

However, a strike is still necessary. Only through the power of a national strike can postal workers possibly win a contract that meets their needs. Further, a national postal strike right now, effectively uniting postal workers with the militant air traffic controllers, would give a powerful thrust to a broader fightback by workers and oppressed people against all the capitalist attacks. □

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Lo que sí haría mucho, de hecho, es si otros trabajadores, especialmente los que están en uniones, se organizaran para apoyar a la huelga. El movimiento sindical haría una gran diferencia en la situación con unos pocos pasos pequeños. La AFL-CIO podría establecer líneas de piquete en los aeropuertos y realmente cerrarlos. Menos que eso, o reparando para eso, podría organizarse por todas partes una huelga general de una hora para mostrar a los sindicatos, todos los sindicatos, están listos a defenderse contra una campaña a Reagan. Con esto, una campaña educativa política podría ser organizada para contrarrestar las tentativas de Reagan de utilizar para or- PATCO mismo ha tomado el primer paso en desarrollar apoyo para una huelga por el movimiento sindical. Es esencial que el movimiento sindical responda a esta llamada. Retornar a la Huelga de PATCO! Parar los esfuerzos de Reagan por quebrantar las uniones!

### Una llamada por la solidaridad

El apoyo internacional que ha conseguido la huelga es otro desarrollo positivo. Desde el 10 de agosto, los controladores canadienses han rechazado a controlar los aviones hacia y desde los EU, diciendo que el espacio aéreo de los EU no está seguro. Esto ha limitado los vuelos entre Europa y los EU a cuatro por hora, bajo el nivel usual de 20 por hora. Esta interrupción es más que la comunidad negociante, el gobierno o las aerolíneas pueden arquantar a la larga.

Aquí un grupo en Long Island, NY



entan